extraits de ces sources non d’après les sources mêmes, mais d’après les travaux qui les concernent?

Faute d’une position et d’une conception historiques solides, tout le livre (peut-être à l’exception de la première partie du sixième chapitre sur l’imprimerie) consiste en une accumulation redondante de faits divers empruntés à plusieurs études, et en une succession insipide de détails événementiels qui pourraient devenir révélateurs à condition d’être comparés et interprétés à travers une (ou plusieurs) grille(s) d’analyse, ce qui n’est pas le cas. C’est pourquoi, la première et la deuxième parties du livre souffrent d’un mal contagieux: les faiblesses de la première partie ne peuvent que déteindre sur la deuxième. Sans constantes réelles sur les manifestations sociales de la musique, on ne saurait concevoir comment la musique dans sa forme et dans ses “techniques” a pu être suscitée ou transformée par des impératifs sociaux. Par exemple, si l’on n’a pas su répondre précisément à cette question: “A quel genre d’ensembles instrumentaux, à quelles formes musicales, à quel type de texte, de musiciens, de poètes, décorateurs, etc., faisaient appel les fêtes à grand déploiement (tels les carnavals ou les entrées royales),” on ne peut de toute évidence répondre à celle-ci: “Comment ou dans quelle mesure les fêtes à grand déploiement peuvent dicter certaines particularités dans la structure et le contenu, dans l’instrumentation de celles-ci, dans leurs textes, etc., et même dans leurs sources?” En fait, en l’absence de toute statistique, il est impossible de déterminer ce que reflète la distribution chronologique et géographique de ces dernières quant à leur rôle social, à leur contenu et aux influences qu’elles ont suscitées ou subies.

Il ne faut donc pas mettre en cause le manque de documents, de sources ou de renseignements, malgré que ceux-ci ne soient pas aussi nombreux qu’on l’eût souhaité. L’histoire a vu beaucoup d’historiens qui ont su faire “parler” des sources beaucoup plus disparates et beaucoup plus précaires que celles-ci. Il est évident que l’absence de toute problématique ne peut faire autrement que de mener à de tels résultats, même si l’on disposait de toutes les sources imaginables.

Un examen critique chapitre par chapitre s’avère donc inutile. Nous ne pouvons que regretter que ce livre, qui aurait voulu susciter des études similaires (voir préface, p. xiii), ne soit pas à la hauteur du but qu’il s’est proposé. Si l’idée de resituer la musique dans la société qui l’a fait naître correspond à un besoin croissant de la musicologie, nous croyons alors qu’il est temps qu’elle change ses méthodes historiques, faute de quoi l’histoire de la musique ne gagnera rien à l’interdisciplinarité. Le livre d’Isabelle Cazeaux constitue donc un effort louable, sans plus, effort qui devra dorénavant s’orienter différemment tant dans la forme que dans le fond, s’il ne veut pas demeurer stérile.

ELISABETH BERTRAND, Université de Montréal


The author begins by announcing that he is “forcing upon this study a certain
methodological collaboration" between two prominent recent approaches to Reformation studies, the intellectual history of the medieval antecedents of the Reformation and the social history of the Reformation in its urban setting. What emerges is a study of popular religion on the eve of the Reformation and in its first generation. Ozment's thesis is that the Protestant revolt against "the fear and uncertainty of the medieval viator" (as characterized by Heiko Oberman) explains the particular appeal of the Reformation to city dwellers (as pinpointed by Bernd Moeller).

Relying heavily on the mid-nineteenth-century work of Johannes Geffken, who published a collection of popular confessional manuals and catechisms, Ozment depicts "the burden of late medieval religion." According to his description it was legalistic, censorious and introspective. A religiosity centered on the sacrament of penance tried to enforce upon the laity a barely adapted version of the monastic ascetic ideal, which was at the same time infinitely demanding and psychologically unsatisfying. The largest of the four chapters, and half of the text, is devoted to the exposition of some fifty publications from the 1519-1526 period, which present "the original Protestant message" to a lay readership. These defenses of the Reformation, catechisms, plays, and social visions sometimes came from the pen of Reformers (Bucer, Farel), were sometimes the work of educated laymen (Lazarus Spengler of Nuremberg, Nicholas Manuel of Bern). They form a precise counterpart to the late medieval writings and constitute a massive attack upon their religious ideals. Ozment regards them as a call for the secularization of life. The Protestant writings attack the medieval sacramental system, the prerogatives of the clergy and the externals of late medieval religious observance on all fronts. They present the Old Faith as a systematic exaltation of clerical status which exploited the pious layman both materially and psychologically. From this widely disseminated pamphlet literature emerges the elemental popular force of early Protestantism, bumptious and angry, antisacramental, anticlerical and iconoclastic.

Beside this instructive study of the Reformation's transformation of lay-directed religious literature stand the parts of Ozment's book intended to show that what he has described explains the appeal of the Reformation in the Central European cities. He gives a résumé of pre-Reformation initiatives by city governments to establish maximum administrative control over local ecclesiastical life and notes the late medieval lay activity of establishing urban preachships. A last chapter describes a general pattern of urban Reformation in which the religious change is accomplished in three stages: (1) evangelical preaching, (2) militant popular support, and (3) grudging governmental establishment. The church ordinances and catechisms from the late twenties onward are sampled and analyzed as marking a consolidation of the Reformation in which Protestantism made its own religious demands upon the laity. The old "freedom fighters" became "new papists" perhaps, but without completely forgetting the liberating message of the Reformation gospel.

Ozment's study of the anticlerical and antisacramental pamphlets which the Reformation directed at the lay public has unquestioned value. More doubtful is his implication that he has explained the urban appeal of the Reformation. The
sections in chapters 2 and 4 which relate specifically to the cities are based on secondary material and lack a convincing connection to the main body of the book which describes popular religious literature. However, the connection of these two parts of the book is essential if Ozment’s union of social and intellectual history has indeed been consummated. Moreover, they are crucial to Ozment’s ambition to revise the findings of Bernd Moeller about the appeal of the Reformation to the German cities. Moeller sees the Reformed stream of Protestantism as having made the more successful appeal to the urban populace. With their Protestant theology of the Law, their covenental ecclesiology and their uncompromising antisacramentalism the Reformed churches were better adapted than the more individualistic Lutheranism to the religious corporatism of medieval cities which had long conceived of themselves as sacral communities. Ozment, who pictures the urban Reformation as modernizing, liberating (and essentially Lutheran), rejects the Moeller thesis, according to which it was founded on medieval anachronism, corporate discipline (and was in the majority Reformed).

Ozment does not enrich Moeller’s thesis so much as reduce it by half—and by much the more interesting half. Moeller would agree that the rejection of the clerical status and the liberating idealization of the lay condition which flowed from Luther’s writings of 1520 were significant factors in the urban appeal of Protestantism. But he would not reduce the Reformation in the cities to Luther’s “freedom of the Christian man.” Under its trumpeting of methodological change, the Reformation in the Cities is only a slightly disguised version of the particular view of Luther’s normative position in the Reformation which Ozment has disseminated in his two earlier books. Homo Spiritualis distinguishes between a dogmatic version of Luther’s early theology (the period studied is 1509-16) and an excessively conceptualized version of late medieval mysticism, defined as a full-blown anti-Lutheran heresy. Thus rigid lines are drawn between the “intrinsic” salvation of Tauler and Gerson and the “extrinsic” salvation of Luther. Since Luther had not at that time yet worked out clear distinctions between the infusion and the imputation of grace, the result is dubious. In Mysticism and Discontent Ozment follows Holl and others in finding mysticism to be the root of modern rationalism, but only by peering at Müntzer, Franck, Castello and others through the astigmatic glass of the idiosyncratic Lutheran doctrine of Word and Spirit (which is anachronistically set up as a criterion of orthodoxy). Now we are informed in his third book that the Reformed were, in the non-theological matters that really count, but epigones of Luther, except to the extent they later betrayed the liberty of the Christian man by becoming “new papists.” The thrust of Moeller’s scholarship has been to tell us that we cannot reduce the Reformation to a canonical Luther. The disguised message of Ozment’s writings is that we can, and that is the foundation of The Reformation in the Cities’ claim to be an advance beyond Imperial Cities and the Reformation.

Ozment has written a good book, but one which does not have the innovative significance in methodology and interpretation which he attributes to it.

JAMES M. STAYER, Queen’s University