Konrad Eisenbichler provides an interesting and informative introduction as well as delightful woodcuts from the period. This collection will be of great interest to those scholars and students seeking to avoid stereotypical depictions of Savonarola.

MARY HEWLETT, *University of Windsor*.

Philip Benedict. *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002. Pp. xxvi, 670.

Impressively thorough, well-documented, and wide-ranging, Philip Benedict's social history of Calvinism covers the history of Reformed Protestantism in Europe from its origins until 1700. As Benedict points out, the last work to attempt this was John T. McNeill's *The History and Character of Calvinism* in 1954, so a new book on the subject is very welcome, especially one that takes account of "the actions and aspirations of ordinary men and women into a tale that long privileged the role of elite actors" (p. xviii). Dozens of informative and interesting illustrations as well as tables, charts, and maps provide an illuminating supplement throughout the work, and over 100 pages of notes reflect the depth of scholarship entailed in the writing of this book.

Benedict begins with the origins of the Reformed tradition in Wittenberg, Zurich, and Geneva (Part I), traces the expansion of this tradition in national churches throughout Europe (Part II), then discusses the transformations of this tradition in the seventeenth century (Part III), and finally questions the extent to which these traditions actually changed the lives of the men and women who practiced them (Part IV). Throughout this survey of the Reformed tradition, Benedict has four major objectives: (1) to provide a narrative of the origins and growth of Calvinism while accounting for the connection between the Reformed generation and this second generation reformer whose name it bears; (2) to revisit classic theories about the importance of Calvinism in the broader development of Western society; (3) to emphasize the importance of the struggles of church institutions in the history of the Reformed tradition; (4) to look at the emergence of Reformed modes of piety.

Benedict skillfully traces the Reformed tradition from its initial objections to Luther through its most influential proponents, most notably Zwingli, Bullinger, a Lasco, and finally Calvin. Although this work does discuss the main points of Calvin's governmental theories and his theology (especially with regard to the Eucharistic controversy and predestination), there is comparatively less material about Calvin than there is about Zwingli, for instance. This balance can be explained by the focus of the book; Benedict states, "The Reformed tradition broadly understood, not Calvinism in any of the narrower senses of that word, is this book's precise subject" (p. xxiii). Benedict's point that the Reformed tradi-

tion cannot necessarily be considered synonymous with "Calvinism" is well-taken, but in that case, it seems that his subtitle should not be "A Social History of Calvinism," but rather "A Social History of the Reformed Tradition."

Because "The result of the great phase of Reformed expansion was a family of churches that recognized a degree of kinship with one another, yet displayed considerable variety in their institutions and worship practices and were able to exercise varying degrees of control over the behavior of their members" (p. 124), the book's second section explores the development of the national churches during the sixteenth century, including France, Scotland, The Netherlands, the Empire, England, and, less predictably, contains a refreshing look at Eastern Europe (Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary). Each chapter includes detailed information about the relationship between the Reformation and the national church, as well as the politics that determined in which places the Reformation would continue to gain strength, and in which places it would ultimately not hold.

Having brought us to the conclusion of the sixteenth century with the national churches, Benedict changes directions in order to discuss the transformation of the Reformed tradition throughout Europe in the seventeenth century, because "many of the doctrines and practices that later generations have commonly associated with Calvinism and that would most profoundly shape the experience and aspirations of those raised within different strands of the mature Reformed tradition in fact were forged after the great reformer's death" (p. 293). Here are some important discussions about theological disputes centred upon predestination, infant baptism, and biblical literalism, as well as an explanation of the changing geographic distribution of the strongholds of the Reformed faith. An especially helpful chapter discusses the complex situation in the British Isles, including the tensions between the English and Scottish churches and the development of the New English church. Despite an occasionally confusing organization that sometimes seems bound by national discussions and at other times by theological ones, this part concludes with an excellent summary. This is indicative of the work as a whole, which has introductions and conclusions to each section that impressively clarify the argument.

Benedict's most original research is displayed in the final section, which offers a renewed look at the theories of Weber and others who have argued for a crucial connection between Calvinism and the socio-economic development of the modern world. Especially useful here is Benedict's chapter on the practice of piety, which attempts to determine to what extent the Reformed tradition actually changed the lives of the men and women who practiced it, with special attention to Bible study and reading. Benedict argues that even if practice sometimes fell short of prescription, "the bulk of the truly dramatic changes in organized worship decreed by the Reformed churches were ultimately accepted by virtually all church members with surprisingly little fuss" (p. 508). Nonetheless, he does not use this evidence to support a Weberian hypothesis, instead cautioning against an over-simplified history of cause and effect. In the book's final analysis, it is too difficult to attribute such complex historical movements to a single cause.

The Reformed tradition remains an important subject of study—not because it explains the entire psychology of our modern capitalist world, but because it offers the basis for understanding Protestant Christianity in an increasingly secular world.

An exhaustive, almost encyclopedic, display of information will leave readers feeling a bit overwhelmed, so many may find that the book is best read in sections and used as a reference work, especially because the index and notes are complete, accurate, and helpful. Nonetheless, Benedict's writing is not dry; amusing anecdotes frequently help to lighten the writing style and to provide poignant illustrations of his points. *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed* is a welcome reference work for anyone interested in the development of the Reformed tradition in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.

GRETCHEN E. MINTON, *University of Minnesota, Morris*

Laura Gowing. *Common Bodies. Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003. Pp. viii, 260.

In 1996, Laura Gowing published the pioneering and oft-cited *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London*, a work which transformed the study of court records in women's history. In that work, Gowing showed how the law was accessible even to women of modest social status as a means of resolving personal grievances: women used words in the everyday settings of the street, the alehouse, and the marketplace to stake out their own sexual reputations, and to regulate the conduct and social standing of their female neighbours. In her new eagerly-awaited book, Gowing has gone one step further: she has shown how women's touch was "one of the controlling mechanisms of early modern society, and one of the most intimate instruments of patriarchal regulation" (p. 80). It is a work that will appeal to early modern historians and literary scholars alike; it deserves an audience beyond these disciplines, as well as a wide general readership.

The introductory chapter, "Uncertain knowledge," maps the diagnostic tools that were applied to understanding human physiology in the seventeenth century, illustrating the competing modes of interpretation (which did not all conform neatly to Laqueur's "one-sex" model) and the importance of seeing and touching as primary diagnostic tools. "The politics of touch" charts the range of power relationships in which tactile exchange given and received by women was licensed—and enforced—in numerous social situations, such as the bedchamber (in which female servants often shared the same room, if not the same bed, as their employers). In "Consent and desire," sexual touch come into focus, as Gowing illustrates sex, consensual and otherwise, between women and men, and also those cases of erotic touch between women. This chapter is especially