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As regards the contents of the letters, the correspondence mainly deals with the Diet of Augsburg and the debate on the Lord's Supper. Reading the letters one can feel the tension over how the Diet will end. Bucer writes about his fear that he should flee the city, especially because of the deal between Catholics and Lutherans against the *Oberdeutschen*. Bucer's main correspondent in these months is Huldrych Zwingli, whom Bucer advises to demonstrate openly that Zwinglian and Lutheran theological positions cohere. These letters are informative, while also providing proof that Bucer's willingness to conform to consensus did not originate from his diplomatic qualities or even from a dogmatic indifference, but rests on his specific theology. For Bucer the debate on the Lord's Supper is a fight over words, a fight that forgets the essential meaning of this sacrament. Because of the evidence provided on these issues, volume 4 is an important contribution to understanding the biography as well as the theology of Bucer.

Some letters are actually small treatises on ecclesiology, on images, liturgy, and on the Lord's Supper. Bucer was particularly inspired to write such letters between January and September 1530.

The importance of Bucer's correspondence far exceeds the world of Bucer research, extending into the larger field of early modern history in general. Therefore we can earnestly hope that Reinhold Friedrich and his team will be able to continue working in this speed and with this quality.



Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions: The Question of Orthodoxy regarding the Theology of Hanserd Knollys (c. 1599–1691). Barry H. Howson. Leiden: Brill, 2001. 377 pp. \$117.00. ISBN 9004119973.

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In a polemic against heresy entitled *Gangraena* (1645), Presbyterian Thomas Edwards accused the former Church of England cleric and Calvinistic Baptist, Hanserd Knollys, of Anabaptist heresy. In the same year the *Minutes* of the Westminster Assembly refer to Knollys's "venting his Antinomian opinions." There are later accusations leveled to the effect that he was a proto-hyper-Calvinist and Fifth Monarchist as well. In the mid-seventeenth century proliferation of religious sects, the emergent Particular or "Calvinistic" Baptists were especially vulnerable to such charges of schism, heterodoxy, and millennialist enthusiasm. Christopher Hill has argued for an extreme fluidity of beliefs and relationships among the English dissenters of this revolutionary period, which view tends to render such multiple theological affiliations plausible and indeed likely. In his study of the career and thought of Hanserd Knollys, Barry Howson takes issue with this angle of interpretation and offers his readers an engrossing revisionist account of a remarkable case in point where the varied accusations of heterodoxy represent more credibly the diverse polemical assumptions of the accusers than any marked heterogeneity of theological commitment on the part of the accused.

Hanserd Knollys's life spanned most of the seventeenth century. He is an important figure in the early history of the Particular Baptists whom he joined in the early 1640s. He signed the Baptist *Confession* of 1644/46. Looking back on his career in writing his autobiography of 1672, Knollys laments having to "prove and vindicate" himself from the false charges of radical Anabaptism and Antinomianism. The question of Knollys's Calvinistic orthodoxy has, as Howson points out, vexed historians ever since. This study is a forensically formulated attempt to set the record straight. Knollys is put on trial, as it were, in connection

with the four principal charges of heresy: Antinomianism, hyper-Calvinism, Anabaptism, and Fifth Monarchism. Building upon the research of Pope Duncan and Michael Haykin, Howson has constructed a theological biography which constitutes the most substantial study of Knollys's theology to date, and offers a valuable contribution more generally to the fields of seventeenth-century Baptist theology and history. The scope of Howson's study is broad and includes excellent summaries of the chief radical Reformed theologies of seventeenth-century England and New England. Howson offers useful historical sketches of the history of the Antinomian controversies on both sides of the Atlantic, of the emergence of hyper-Calvinist soteriology in the late seventeenth century, of the growth of the Anabaptist ecclesiology in England, and of the radical eschatology of the Fifth Monarchists. His methodology throughout is to synthesize the historical and the theological aspects of the inquiry. This approach, combined with a systematic overview and discussion of these principal accusations of heterodoxy leveled against Knollys, render this a uniquely valuable study. In a general treatment of the theological context of these accusations, Howson establishes a standard of mid-seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy based on the views of the "Reformed community of Presbyterians, Church of England divines and, to a lesser extent, Independents" (24). The *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England, the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, and the *Savoy Declaration* are taken as representative of the standard of orthodoxy against which Knollys is diversely measured by his contemporary critics.

While the genre of theological biography may appear a somewhat unfashionable approach, Howson manages to shape his forensic inquiry in a manner which succeeds in holding the reader's close attention. Throughout, Howson succeeds in providing a uniquely nuanced analysis of Knollys's theology. It is conceded that certain elements of his doctrine were indeed Antinomian, Anabaptist, and even Fifth Monarchist; Knollys, after all, upheld believer's baptism, a voluntarist ecclesiology, and the clear separation of church and state. With the Fifth Monarchists he looked forward to a literal millennium, yet rejected the use of force to achieve this end. Nonetheless, Howson maintains, Knollys maintained an unimpeachably orthodox soteriology. This exploration of Knollys's theology is extremely thorough and highly engaging. The well-constructed narrative, for both the prosecution and the defense, is presented with balance and clarity. When the justice sitting on the bench finally hands down his ruling at the conclusion to this volume, the reader is thoroughly equipped with the critical theological evidence necessary to evaluate the verdict. For this reader a number of questions remain outstanding. For instance, whether a separatist ecclesiology may tend to push Knollys's soteriology in a hyper-Calvinist direction. How is it that Knollys comes to share a number of conclusions so closely with the Anabaptists in ecclesiology, political theology, and sacramental practice, and yet remains "uninfluenced" by them? By accepting the practice of believer's baptism, is it not reasonable for the adherents of the traditional standards of orthodoxy, that is the *Thirty-Nine Articles* and the *Westminster Confession*, to suppose that Baptists had indeed passed into the "alien abyss" (as Murray Tolmie expresses it) of Anabaptism? Whether one agrees with Howson's verdict or such questions remain unresolved, this monograph is most definitely a valuable and highly readable contribution to the field of seventeenth-century English theology and history.

