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Review: Brenz als Kontroverstheologe. Die Apologie der Confessio Virtembergica und die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Johannes Brenz und Pedro de Soto

Amy Nelson Burnett

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, aburnett1@unl.edu

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structures and practices. Upper-level undergraduates, graduates and scholars with interests in confessional identity-building will benefit greatly from this carefully-researched and well-written book.

CALVIN COLLEGE

KARIN MAAG

Brenz als Kontroverstheologe. Die Apologie der Confessio Wirtembergica und die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Johannes Brenz und Pedro de Soto. By Matthias A. Deuschle. (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, 138.) Pp. xv + 347. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006. €84. 3 16 149015 0; 13 978 3 16 149015 6; 0340 6741
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Johannes Brenz is known primarily as the organiser of the Württemberg Church and as one of the major figures in the development of Lutheran Christology. This book looks at another aspect of Brenz's career, his role as defender of Lutheran theology against challenges by Catholic theologians. In 1555 the Spanish Dominican Pedro de Soto published an attack on the Württemberg Confession, which had been written by Brenz and presented at the second session of the Council of Trent in 1552. This led Brenz to write a lengthy *Apology of the Württemberg Confession* that was published over the next four years in four parts: a prolegomena that was Brenz's overall response to de Soto and three pericopes concerned with de Soto's specific criticisms of the *Confession*. The *Apology* offers significant insights into the development of Brenz's theology during the crucial years following the Augsburg Interim and preceding his major Christological writings of the 1560s. Deuschle's interest in Brenz's *Apology* is primarily theological, but in part I he anchors that theology in the particular historical circumstances of the *Apology's* composition, describing the development of Brenz's exchange with de Soto, the involvement of others on both the Catholic and the Lutheran side, and the repercussions of the controversy outside of Germany. Part II analyses the structure and contents of the Württemberg Confession and describes the goals and method of the *Apology*. Part III is an in-depth analysis of the *Apology* that focuses on the three core issues that Brenz saw as separating Lutherans and Catholics: Scripture instead of tradition as a source of authority; Christ instead of the pope as the head of the Church; and the assurance of faith instead of uncertainty about one's salvation. Deuschle highlights the *Apology's* importance as one of the earliest Protestant discussions of fundamental theological principles and as a clue to the direction that Brenz's theology would take over the next two decades. His book will be of particular interest to those interested in the early development of Lutheran Orthodoxy, especially as embodied in the Württemberg theological tradition that Brenz founded.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

AMY NELSON BURNETT