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**von Friedeburg, Robert. Luther's Legacy: The Thirty Years War and the Modern Notion of "State" in the Empire, 1530s to 1790s**

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of the sacred dead and a growing attachment to the rituals that affirmed saintliness. The passages emphasize the confined nature of her existence and how little change there was in her inner spiritual experiences or sense of her faith. The diary ends with Margaret's claim that God placed everything in her memory and allowed her to put it down in Spanish despite it not being her native tongue.

The book concludes with a letter to her confessor and an account of her devotions. An appendix contains a note on her death, testimonials on her virtues, documents relating signs from her after death, and letters attesting to how her writings were regarded. There is an excellent bibliography with a relation of all manuscript sources, followed by a carefully arranged section listing primary and secondary courses.

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**von Friedeburg, Robert.**

*Luther's Legacy: The Thirty Years War and the Modern Notion of "State" in the Empire, 1530s to 1790s.*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Pp. vi, 441. ISBN 9-78-1-1071-1187-5 (hardcover) US\$154.95.

Martin Luther's legacy in Germany is multifaceted and complex. His life was intricately bound to the society that formed him, and he in turn left indelible marks on the religious, political, and social orders. Though these aspects of society are distinct, they function interdependently, in a continuing co-relationship of formation and re-formation, with Luther's voice remaining a sometimes subtle, sometimes not-so-subtle, influence on the generations after his death. Robert von Friedeburg, in his most recent volume, takes on an aspect of Luther's influence in his detailed decoding of the rise of the modern state in Germany. He uncovers the interrelationships of German life and thought in the emergence of the state, with particular reference to Luther's role in the story. With acute sensitivity to the subject matter and with exceptional erudition, von Friedeburg presents a compelling case for the unique nature of the German state and the reasons for its birth, and does so with force and precision.

*Luther's Legacy* traces the shift of authority from the rise of princes as the “heads of the household” in German-speaking lands to the birth of an independent nation “state”—a state that held all parties in the German lands accountable to it, and to one another. Von Friedeburg shows in detail how spatial demarcation lines became more significant before the Thirty Years’ War—a war he considers pivotal in the formation of this independent state. Though these spatial regions were not immovable, he demonstrates how important they were in the princes’ attempts to gain influence over their vassals by connecting their holdings to a manufactured idea of a historic “Fatherland.” As von Friedeburg notes, the princes used this idea of “Fatherland” to gain more authority over their vassals by depicting themselves as the benevolent and spiritually devout fathers of their regions—the ones to whom obedience was due, and who would also give proper protection and guidance. This did not last, however.

Von Friedeburg focuses on how the disaster of the Thirty Years’ War brought a radical shift in this favourable depiction of the princes, as the battered vassals grew unconvinced of the good nature of their rulers. He details how Luther’s revulsion of princely injustice—made vivid in his description of princes as “butchers,” along with other unattractive titles—was revived and used by a chorus of dissatisfied voices in protest. Though there were those who argued for “reason of state” to validate why conditions had to be the way they were, von Friedeburg explains that such argumentation brought further discontent to the strained relationship of the princes and their vassals, as the search for a more sustainable political structure became more desperate.

The post-war resolution of this unrest is found in the notion of “state” as something unbound by princely power and heritage, wherein both groups, prince and vassal, are held accountable for the peace and prosperity of the people. Von Friedeburg argues that it was this concept of state that transformed the public sphere and relations between the princes and their vassals into something new, with the princes now functioning not as lords of society but as “servants of the state.” He compares and contrasts the unique German developments of state with places like France and England in order to give a more exact depiction of the shifts in ideas and an understanding of the formation of states elsewhere. He is also careful to explain how this modern notion of the state was not embraced in a single moment, but advanced in different regions over time.

This volume possesses a wealth of historical information and thoughtful analysis. The author is fluent in the style of communication native to this

area of political and social development; he draws on an impressive array of scholarship, and is able to combine it and establish his position, while at the same time constructively addressing meaningful diverging perspectives. Moreover, von Friedeburg's acute sensitivity to the development of language as it relates to ideas and practices will be appreciated by any scholar, and especially by those interested in the changes in the German government from the time of Luther to the emergence of the modern state. Though his book will be of most benefit to scholars engaged in its particular field of study—scholars equipped to mine all the riches of the footnotes and finely-tuned linguistic analysis—von Friedeburg has also laboured to make it accessible to others, through various added translations for English readers and the employment of an accessible style of argumentation.

This work is a *tour de force* on the development of the modern state in Germany, and a gift for all who are fascinated by the way ideas and passions can transform an empire. It is also a reminder of how voices from the past, and Luther's in particular, continue to speak to critical issues of injustice today.

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**Webster, John.**

**The Duchess of Malfi: *An Authoritative Text, Sources and Contexts, Criticism.***  
Ed. Michael Neill.

A Norton Classical Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015. Pp. xlii, 405 + 4 ill. ISBN 978-0-393-9235-4 (paperback) US\$13.75.

First performed by The King's Men (one of London's most prestigious companies of players) in 1613–1614, *The Duchess of Malfi*, as Michael Neill states in his critical edition of this play, has gone from being one of the most popular stage plays of the English Renaissance to being neglected during the Restoration and the eighteenth century. The play underwent a renaissance in theatre and criticism in the twentieth century, largely under the influence of feminist criticism and an interest in how fictions of women and discourses of their agency and social roles contributed to the portrayal of women in cultural history.