

Douglas H. Parker and Bruce Krajewski , eds. *William Roye's A Brefe Dialogue bitwene a Christen Father and his stobborne Sonne: the First Protestant Catechism Published in English*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1999. Pp. 305. Cloth \$60.

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William Roye was an early Tudor Protestant. A Franciscan friar, he left his order in 1524 or thereabouts and journeyed to the Continent, where he helped William Tyndale with the translation of the New Testament. In 1626 he was in Strassburg, where he translated *De Pueris Instituendis* of Wolfgang Capito, the city's leading reformer. He published his translation there in 1527. The volume under review is a critical edition of that work.

At the beginning of Roye's *Brefe Dialogue*, the stubborn son of the title confronts his devout father with a brash question: "Thynkest thou thy sylfe then a christen man?" "God forbid els," the father replies, sharply, and the dialogue is under way, the son proceeding sceptically to test the various tenets of his father's faith. His questions explore their way through each of the articles of the Apostles' Creed, and they end by seeking advice on how he might put his life in order, for his father has won him over. The dialogue in fact is a cover for a catechism, which often enough obtrudes from the fiction: "What frute then receavest thou by these wordes?" "It bryngeth to my remembraunce the mercifullness of god my father." It is a readable and a useful document nevertheless, digesting in 100 pages the attitudes and doctrine of early Tudor Protestantism. Justification by faith alone lies at the centre of it, as an experience, not just as a doctrine: "For he is acorsed that fulfilleth not all whatsoever the lawe commaundeth. Yet when I remember that Christ hath satisfied for me / I feale and perceave in my herte / all thynges to be safe and forgoeven." Its Eucharistic teachings are Zwinglian: Christ is in the elements "[n]ot that he therefore shulde be breade / or els hidden other vnder brede or wyne. but because I doute not / that he once hath soffered death for me. whose maner was ever wount to declar spretuall thynges by corporall tokens." It argues for double predestination, and in doing so it shows how the search for assurance of election might produce a piety rivalling that of justification: "But howe canne manne knowe whether he be electe of god or no?" "Surely by the frutes of his herte. and specialli yf they be grownded in brotherly love and charite." It emphasizes the responsibility of the civil authority to destroy, for the sake of the weaker brethren, the images in the churches: "Wherfore he that hath power to avoyde soche falce ydols out of the waye / and to clense churches ... from all abominacions / as are domme stones / blynde stakes / and deffe postes / with all soche paynted mammettes on

bordes / or pillers / and negligently omitteth it vndone ... abuseth gretly his fredom. and maye with oute fayle wayte for the sharpe scourge / and cruell judgement of god." And Roye, speaking in his own voice about the book and its reader, illustrates how central the act of reading, public and private, was for the community for whom he was writing: "Werfore he that entendeth to socke here out eni swetnes / first must conceave in hym silfe the flammes of a christen herte / whiche of their owne nature lighten and inflam there neghbour. That when by redyng he is made ryche / he shall also be gladd and able to healpe and sucker wother."

The edition that Professors Parker and Krajewski have produced is meticulous, thorough, and, like *A Breffe Dialogue* itself, useful. They have constructed their text from the two surviving copies of the 1527 edition and have collated it with a copy of the 1550 edition, which was published in London, and with an 1874 transcription of a copy of the 1527 edition. Their introduction summarizes the dialogue, sets it in its biographical, historical, and literary (that is, catechetical) context, and compares it in detail with the Latin and the 1527 German text of Capito's *De Pueris Instituendis*. They provide a full commentary on *A Breffe Dialogue*, and they print as an appendix the whole of Capito's Latin text. They list separately—and conveniently—the 114 emendations they have made to Roye's text.

In Capito, the father asks the questions, and the son answers. Roye alters his source by giving the son the questions, and Professors Parker and Kajewski are right to emphasize the literary potency of Roye's decision. The encounter of a resistant son and an unfailingly patient father gives *A Breffe Dialogue* a dramatic texture that catechisms conventionally lack, and where catechetical answers conventionally ring with the glib confidence of a youngster who has done his memory work, Roye's carry a certain weight of experience and wisdom. As the editors acknowledge, however, Roye's achievement is inconsistent, for his liveliest interests are theological and evangelical, not literary. Yet his prose, like that of so many of the early Tudors, is consistently impressive, whether he is celebrating his subject ("The lordes wordes are light / and lighten the vnderstondyng of the simple / directing theym all wayes to belefe and love") or coming down hard upon it ("they have so gotten their heddes vnder their girdles / that they suppose theym selves nether to have eyes to se / eares to heare / nor tonges to speke"). The editors might profitably have looked harder into Roye's practices and achievements as a stylist, and on the historical side (admittedly the suggestion is speculative) they might profitably have looked harder into the connection between Strassburg and the English Church. The year before *A Breffe Dialogue* was issued in London, Martin

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Bucer arrived in England, where he was to have an extensive influence on the Church. It is at least curious that the London *Brefe Dialoge* was compiled from sheets of the original Strassburg edition (only the title page and preface are new). Speculation aside, however, Professors Parker and Krajewski have made a solid contribution to scholarship in this book. The University of Toronto Press and the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada are to be congratulated for funding its publication. It will be as useful to scholars at the end of the century as it is now.

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Armand Garnet Ruffo, ed. *(Ad)dressing Our Words: Aboriginal Perspectives on Aboriginal Literatures*. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books, 2001. \$16.95.

This anthology of critical work on Aboriginal literatures is intended, as stated by Ruffo in the introduction, as “a follow-up to Theytus’ 1993 anthology *Looking at the Words of Our People*” (5). Like the seminal text edited by Jeannette Armstrong, the sequel is published by the Aboriginal publishing house Theytus in British Columbia and also features contributions by Aboriginal writers exclusively. The list of contributors includes well-known authors like Janice Acoose, Kateri Akiwenzie Damm, Daniel David Moses and Greg Young-Ing (most of whom are already featured in Armstrong’s collection) as well as emerging Canadian Aboriginal scholars like Neal McLeod, Randy Lundy and Jonathan Dewar who are also published in other anthologies like *Literary Pluralities; Plain Speaking: Essays on Aboriginal Peoples & the Prairie*; and *Creating Community: A Roundtable on Aboriginal Literatures*. With its exclusive emphasis on Aboriginal theorizing, Ruffo’s anthology successfully conveys, as he states himself, “reoccurring themes ... which deal with some of the most compelling issues facing Aboriginal Peoples today” (14). However, since the overall focus is not *issues* but their mediation through *words*, this book also foregrounds the wide range of Aboriginal writing, the diversity of styles, themes, and genres (*ad)dressing* a plurality of literary expressions and thereby subverting the homogenizing concept of “Native lit.”

As the editor Armand Garnet Ruffo provides in his introduction to the volume a useful summary of each article in the order of their appearance in the book, I will utilize the space for this review for an overview