an example of a preacher doing so. The objection is that if we copy the Puritan method entirely, we might lose sight of the text for the trees. Rather, what I am reminded of as I read these chapters is the content of the Puritans’ sermons, with their abundance of Scripture references and their huge emphasis on applying the text to their various categories of hearer. It is above all the impassioned Puritan manner in which Christ was depicted to congregations, and in which congregations were presented with a plea to the repentant and words of comfort and encouragement to the regenerate, that is exemplary to us. In particular, the chapter on John Bunyan and preaching to the heart should be read in this regard. I would also single out the chapter on John Flavel and coming to Christ. Neither those seeking to become familiar for the first time with the Puritans (something that I would urge anyone to do who has not already read up on them) nor those already familiar with the Puritans will have any cause to regret buying A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life.

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In December 2011, I defended my doctoral dissertation about German translations of English and Dutch Reformed devotional literature during the 17th century. One of the opponents posed the question whether there had been translations in the opposite direction, that is, from German into English. Fortunately, I could refer to a thesis of a PhD-student from Hamburg, which had been defended, but, unfortunately, not been published at that moment. In 2012, this dissertation, written by Corina Flügge under supervision of the church historian Johann Anselm Steiger, was published. I am now able to assess the fruit of her research project.

Until the 1970s, scholars in the field of literary studies were convinced that during the 17th century hardly any German writings were translated into English, unlike the era before in which many writings and songs Martin Luther’s had been translated. These scholars, among others
Gilbert Waterhouse in his well-known *The Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Seventeenth Century* (1914), ascribed this to the poor literary quality of the German literature of that time.

The author of the present dissertation, however, discovered that a number of Lutheran devotional books were translated into English, particularly books that were already popular in Germany and other countries. By mapping out the reception of these works in England, Flügge tries to correct the above-described negative image. Some Lutheran devotional books were translated many times, and were quoted and imitated by other authors. In regard to the works of Johann Gerhard, Flügge speaks about a “wave” of translations (see, for example, “Gerhard-Welle”, pp. 203, 303).

Flügge has embedded her research into the framework of cultural transfer. From this concept, she has borrowed the insight that the reception of cultural phenomena is to a large extent affected by the demands of the recipients of the target culture. In conducting her research, Flügge has combined a theological and church historical approach with methods and insights from literary, book, and translation studies.

This has led to an overview which I will summarize here. On the basis of content and genre the translations can be classified into three phases. During the first phase, from 1548 until 1550, under King Edward VI, mainly doctrinal books with polemical parts against the Roman Catholic Church, like catechetical books, particularly from Urban Rhegius, were translated. During the second phase, from 1575 until 1615, under Queen Elisabeth and King James I, mainly prayer books for private use were translated, particularly the famous prayer book of Johann Habermann. During the third phase, which overlaps with the previous one – it runs from 1611 until 1680 – many meditation books, especially Johann Gerhard’s *Meditationes sacrae*, were translated. This type of literature had been developed by Jesuits and had become very popular. Protestant authors adapted meditation books written by Jesuits to their confession. Devotional authors from both confessions drew on the same heritage: Patristic writers.

The investigation is not confined to the translations and editions between 1548 and 1680. Flügge also discusses the translations that appeared before 1548, under King Henry VIII, when the publication of Protestant literature was not allowed, as well as translations at the
beginning of the 18th century. An example of the last period is the translation of Johann Arndt’s *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum*, translated by the German Anton Wilhelm Böhme, who operated as a mediator between Halle Pietism and the London-based Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge.

The English translations of German devotional books probably were not intended as an alternative to native English devotional literature, but as an addition of the native literature that was already present and which seems to have had a strong demand. However, the topics and genres of this literature were shifting during the course of the 16th and 17th century: from catechetical to prayer to meditation literature.

This shift of content was connected to a shift in the background the translators were coming from: in the first phase it was primarily theologians, in the next phases mainly educated lay people. Both groups had different scopes: the theologians wanted to contribute to the consolidation of the English Reformation by communicating theological content, the lay people wanted to contribute to the devotion of themselves and their fellow Protestants.

This difference in background and scope affected the translation method: the theologians translated more literally, the lay people translated simplified syntax and vocabulary, translated Greek passages into English, changed Bible verses to English Bible translations, and made explanatory additions.

As the German works were received in the context of the Church of England, most translators wrote prefaces to deal with differences between the German Lutheran Church and the Church of England. Only in a few cases, passages from the text that dealt with theology and piety were adapted to the doctrines of the English church. Much more usual was adaption to the English political situation: in Habermann’s prayer book, for example, petitionary prayers for English rulers were added.

Not only were there differences in scope and method between translators, but also between different versions of the source text. These differences could stem from different preferences among the translators as well as from the taste of their audience. An example is the first translation (1646) of the first book of Arndt’s work on true Christianity. In the preface, the translator presented his edition as a critic of the institutionalized Church of England under King Charles I and his archbishop William Laud. Regarding the source text that the translators
used, it is remarkable that most of them used a Latin translation of the German original. One translator used a French translation, and another the original German.

The next and last steps of Flügge’s investigation concern the readers and their reading and writing practices. It was likely the middle class that read these books, which consisted of people with a wide range of education levels. A large part of the readers seem to have been women. Some of the readers went a step further than reading: they referred to the translations in their own works or incorporated quotes from these writings in their own books.

Apart from these church-, translation- and book historical components, Flügge’s PhD-study also contains a theological analysis of the Lutheran doctrines that are contained in the translation. In addition, she attempts to give a definition of the term “Erbauungsliteratur” (devotional literature), which she derives from the use of the word “Erbauung” by the original authors in their prefaces, dedications, and main texts. From the intention of the writings, she helpfully divides “Erbauungsliteratur” into four categories: informatio, consolatio, mediatio, and motivatio. The book ends with a summary of the findings (ch. 13), a bibliography of the translations, a synopsis of the English versions of Arndt’s Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum, and indices of sources, literature, historical persons, and abbreviations.

Flügge has provided us with a good overview of a neglected topic: the English translations of German devotional literature in the Early Modern times. Although Flügge states that her dissertation can serve to view the period of Lutheran orthodoxy within the European context and to shed new light on it (p. 22), in her concluding remarks she does not turn back on this. However, one of her conclusions could be that German Lutheranism had a wider influence than Central and Northern Europe. The strength of her study is that she has investigated the whole range of this transfer process: the situation of the target culture, the different steps of the transfer (production, distribution, reception) and interactions between them, the agents who were involved, and the ways in which the target culture and the translator affected the translations. To map out this whole range, Flügge has modeled an interdisciplinary approach in a competent manner. Her investigation would have gained in relevance when she would have compared her results on translations, translators, translation methods, and readers, with the insights that studies of
transfer processes between other languages, for example from English into German, have provided. At first glance there seems to be many similarities. The fact that most translators made use of a Latin translation may appear distinct, but can be explained by the large-scale unfamiliarity with the German language in England during the 16th and 17th century. Conversely, English was also obscure in German speaking areas at this time and many of the German translators of English devotional literature used translations, particularly into Dutch.

In regard to the definition of “Erbauung”, it would have been more fruitful if Flügge would have sorted out what the original authors describe as their scope in prefaces and dedications.

In the concluding remarks, Flügge points to a potential next research step that would deepen our understanding of the intercultural transfer of piety: an investigation of English translations of continental European Reformed devotional books (p. 308). This would indeed enrich our understanding of intercultural transfer of theology and piety in Early Modern European Christianity. In such a research project – in which the competences of several researchers should be combined – the investigation of translation processes should be related to larger questions within the field of church history: to what extent was Lutheranism as international as Calvinism? Can the translation processes be related to irenic policies, for example by Elisabeth I or James I, or to efforts to unite the Lutheran and Reformed church by, among others, John Dury and the Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge? And, finally, to which extent was Lutheranism more compatible with the Church of England, as being a “semi-reformed Church” (p. 33) than orthodox Calvinism?

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