

Stephen, Baron

De Regimine Principum (1509)

Translated and Edited by P.J. Mroczkowski

New York, Bern, Frankfurt/M., Paris, 1990. X, 167 pp., 4 ill.

American University Studies: Series 17, Classical Languages and Literature. Vol. 5

Print: ISBN 978-0-8204-0648-0 hardback (Hardcover)
SFR 64.00 / €* 56.70 / €** 58.30 / € 53.00 / £ 42.00 / US\$ 68.95

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Book synopsis

This is the first modern edition of a Latin treatise published in London and in Paris between 1509 and 1520. The author once held the title of confessor to Henry VIII of England, imaginably the most obstreperous of penitents. Stephen Baron, a Franciscan living at Cambridge, advises Henry VIII on how to be a wise Christian king. Using a triadic structure reminiscent of Dante, he reviews the vices which beset a prince, the virtues he should practise, and the burdens which pertain to his exalted office. Though rooted in the Scholastic tradition, he is touched by the Erasmian elegances of early Tudor humanism. The editor provides an introduction, an English translation facing the original, and an extensive commentary. A preface and an epilogue set the work in the context of political thought through parallels with Thomas More.

Reviews

«...(the editor) has provided the treatise with a concise introduction, a clearly edited text accompanied by a facing translation, and a full and sufficient commentary. ... For anyone wishing to gain a useful impression of general university culture around the turn of the sixteenth century, this treatise will provide a welcome introduction, as it is also instructive about the conventional background ... against which the coming debate about the nature of the Tudor polity took place.» (James McConica, *Medium Aevum*)

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