

Memoria – theologische Synthese – Autoritätenkonflikt

Herausgegeben von
IRENE DINGEL

*Spätmittelalter, Humanismus,
Reformation*

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Mohr Siebeck

Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation
Studies in the Late Middle Ages,
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herausgegeben von Volker Leppin (Tübingen)

in Verbindung mit

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90



Memoria – theologische Synthese – Autoritätenkonflikt

Die Rezeption Luthers und Melanchthons
in der Schülergeneration

herausgegeben von
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unter Mitarbeit von
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Vorwort

Nach dem Tod Martin Luthers im Jahre 1546 und im Zuge der innerprotestantischen Kontroversen, die im Anschluss an das Augsburger Interim von 1548 eingesetzt und auch Philipp Melanchthon betroffen hatten, sahen sich die Schüler der beiden großen Wittenberger Reformatoren vor der Herausforderung, ihre Theologie angesichts der veränderten politischen Konstellationen neu zu formulieren. Dabei spielte die spezifisch gepflegte, auf Luther und Melanchthon bezogene „Memoria“ eine große Rolle. Sie konnte den Weg ebnen für eine theologische Synthese, die Elemente der Theologie Luthers und derjenigen Melanchthons zu integrieren bestrebt war, aber auch eine auf Abgrenzung zielende Bekenntnisbildung befördern sowie Konkurrenzen und Autoritätenkonflikte auslösen.

Diesen Zusammenhängen gehen die hier versammelten Aufsätze nach, die aus einem Seminar des XII. Internationalen Kongresses für Lutherforschung in Helsinki 2012 hervorgegangen sind.¹ Allen Beiträgen liegt die Frage zugrunde, in welcher Weise Freunde und Feinde, Zeitgenossen und Schüler die Erinnerung an Luther und Melanchthon pflegten. Dabei rückt in den Blick, wie man die beiden Wittenberger Theologen in der Erinnerung stilisierte, ob und in welcher Hinsicht man ihnen Autorität zuschrieb oder ob sie und ihre Theologie möglicherweise sogar gegeneinander ausgespielt wurden. Über diesen Zugang zu den vorhandenen Quellen können die damit verbundenen „Fremdwahrnehmungen“ erhoben und mit den „Selbstwahrnehmungen“ der beiden Reformatoren kontrastiert werden, um so bis heute fortexistierende Klischees aufzubrechen. Die von Gesinnungsgenossen oder Gegnern und vor allem von den Schülern konstruierten Luther- bzw. Melanchthon-Bilder konnten – wie die verschiedenen Untersuchungen zeigen – aber durchaus auch von „Selbstwahrnehmungen“ bzw. Selbstbildern angestoßen oder abgeleitet sein. Die Grenzen zwischen Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung waren u.U. fließend. Zugleich lassen sich Mechanismen von Aneignung und Abgrenzung innerhalb der sich bildenden Gruppen aufdecken, die sich nicht nur auf die den Reformatoren beigemessene Autorität bezogen, sondern auch Fragen von Glauben und Lehre mit einschlossen.

Diese Perspektiven bzw. Fragestellungen lassen sich an den verschiedensten literarischen Gattungen verfolgen, deren Einbindung in unterschiedliche Kommunikationszusammenhänge stets zu berücksichtigen ist: an frühen biogra-

¹ Vgl. dazu den Seminarbericht in: LuJ 80 (2013), 251–256.

phischen Veröffentlichungen, polemischem Schrifttum, Leichenpredigten und -reden sowie historiographischen Quellen.

Dass diese Sammlung von Fallstudien nun der Öffentlichkeit übergeben werden kann, ist den Herausgebern der Reihe *Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation*, allen voran Prof. Dr. Volker Leppin, zu verdanken, die die Aufnahme in das Verlagsprogramm befürwortet und befördert haben. Ein großer und aufrichtiger Dank geht darüber hinaus vor allem an Frau Dr. Andrea Hofmann für ihre zuverlässige redaktionelle Arbeit und Vorbereitung der Drucklegung, bei der ihr in bewährter Weise die studentischen Hilfskräfte des Leibniz-Instituts für Europäische Geschichte zur Seite standen. Auch ihnen sei an dieser Stelle herzlich gedankt.²

Mainz, im August 2015

Irene Dingel

² Die in diesem Band verwendeten Abkürzungen folgen SCHWERTNER, SIEGFRIED M., Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete, Berlin u. a. ³2014.

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VERA VON DER OSTEN-SACKEN

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Luther and Melanchthon in the Esteem of Georg Spalatin

SCOTT H. HENDRIX

Georg Spalatin (1484–1545) died one year before Martin Luther (1483/84–1546) and fifteen years before Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560). Hence he was unable to form a perspective of the reformers from the same distance that later generations have been forced to do. Nonetheless, he did enjoy one advantage over later admirers and critics: he worked intensively with both men in Wittenberg during the earliest years of the Reformation – with Luther from 1516 (at the latest) to 1525 and with Melanchthon from 1518 to 1525. For the last twenty years of his life Spalatin was the leading evangelical pastor in Altenburg, but he corresponded with both reformers and conferred personally with them almost every year. Spalatin also wrote a history of the Reformation entitled *Annales Reformationis oder Jahrbücher von der Reformation Lutheri*, but it was not printed until 1718 after Ernst Salomon Cyprian (1673–1745)¹ decided to edit and publish the entire manuscript that lay in the archive at Gotha.² Its enthusiastic portrayal of the reformers was unambiguous, but the *Annales* remained unpublished for so long that Spalatin's perspective of Luther and Melanchthon must be checked by the character of the relationships they formed as contemporaries.

Georg Spalatin und Martin Luther met in Wittenberg after Spalatin became the librarian to Elector Frederick the Wise (1463–1525) and the supervisor of studies for Frederick's nephews attending the university. The first known contact was made in February of 1514 when Luther responded to Spalatin's request for an opinion of the Reuchlin affair.³ The request was sent to Luther by way of their common friend, the Augustinian Johann Lang (c 1487–1548), who had made

¹ Cf. Ernst Koch / Johannes Wallmann (eds.), Ernst Salomon Cyprian (1673–1745) zwischen Orthodoxie, Pietismus und Frühaufklärung. Vorträge des internationalen Kolloquiums vom 14. bis 16. September 1995 in der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, Gotha 1996 (Veröffentlichungen der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha 34); WA.B 14, 291.

² SPALATIN, GEORG, *Annales Reformationis oder Jahrbücher von der Reformation Lutheri* aus dessen Avtograph ans Licht gestellt von Ernst Salmo Cyprian, Leipzig 1718, in: Wilhelm Ernst Tentzels *Historiographi Saxonici*, Historischer Bericht vom Anfang und ersten Fortgang der Reformation Lutheri, zur Erläuterung des Hn. v. Seckendorffs *Historie des Luthertums* mit grossem Fleiß erstattet, und nunmehr in diesem andern Evangelischen Jubel-Jahr, Nebst einer besondern Vorrede, auch nützlichen, noch niemals publicirten Uhrkunden und nöthigen Registern mitgetheilet von D. Ernst Salomon Cyprian, Consistorial- und Kirchen-Rath zu Gotha, Leipzig 1718.

³ WA.B 1, 19–24 (no. 7).

the acquaintance of Spalatin and Luther during the years spent by all of them in Erfurt.⁴ On two occasions Luther and Spalatin were simultaneously students in Erfurt and both had lived in Wittenberg since 1511, but no evidence for their personal acquaintance prior to 1514 has surfaced. After 1516, when Spalatin was taken into service as the Elector's confidential secretary, he no longer resided full-time in Wittenberg but was required to travel with the Elector's party. In spite of moving from place to place, Spalatin's position as the electoral liaison to the university and the awkward Luther affair quickly intensified the relationship between the two men. Proposals for academic reform that engrossed Luther and his colleagues were submitted to Spalatin for Frederick's approval. The conflict with Rome and its aftermath, which required Frederick to walk a fine political and diplomatic line, necessitated even closer contact between his secretary and Luther. Their correspondence concerned not only political matters but also theological and biblical questions that posed a challenge to Spalatin, who had studied jurisprudence but no theology.

Saxon electors had other residences besides Wittenberg. Among them were Torgau, where Spalatin first entered the service of Frederick; Weimar; and Altenburg, where Spalatin benefitted from a canonry at the *Stift* of St. George. Since Frederick preferred the residence in Wittenberg and his hunting castle at Lochau, Spalatin was often in Wittenberg where he and Luther could meet in person. They also had opportunities to converse outside Wittenberg. In October of 1518, after Frederick and Spalatin attended the imperial Diet at Augsburg, Spalatin could have remained in town and accompanied Luther to the sessions with Cardinal Thomas Cajetan (1469–1534).⁵ Instead of Spalatin, however, Frederick chose other advisors to remain by Luther's side: Johann Rühel,⁶ who later served the counts of Mansfeld and was invited by Luther to be a godfather of his son Martin (1531–1565),⁷ and Philip von Feilitzsch (c 1473–1532), who belonged to an old noble family in the Vogtland.⁸ Spalatin returned to Saxony but was not in Wittenberg when Luther finally arrived home from Augsburg on 31 October 1518. Much disappointed, Luther wrote to him hurriedly without mentioning the ninety-five theses or the significance of the day. He did, however, divulge his emotions to Spalatin. He was filled with both hope and fear, reported Luther, wondering why his struggle seemed so important to many prominent people.⁹ It

⁴ STIEVERMANN, DIETER, Zum Sozialprofil der Erfurter Humanisten, in: Gerlinde Huber-Rebenich/Walther Ludwig (eds.), *Humanismus in Erfurt*, Rudolstadt 2002 (*Humanismusstudien* 1 = *Acta Academiae Scientiarum* 7), 33–53; JUNGHANS, HELMAR, *Der junge Luther und die Humanisten*, Weimar 1984, 53–56.

⁵ HENNIG, GERHARD, Cajetan und Luther. Ein historischer Beitrag zur Begegnung von Thomismus und Reformation, Stuttgart 1966 (*AzTh R.* 2,7).

⁶ Documented 1518–1543.

⁷ WA.B 6, 220 f. (no. 1889).

⁸ LENK, LEONHARD, Art. Feilitzsch, von, NDB 5 (1961), 57 f.

⁹ WA.B 1, 224–226 (no. 105), here 224.

was not the only time that Luther expressed naiveté about his situation, nor was it the only opportunity for Spalatin to remind him of the potential danger he faced.

By 1521 Spalatin was fully occupied with the Luther matter and arrived in Worms with the Saxon party in early January when the Diet was scheduled to begin. While waiting, Spalatin worked behind the scenes to obtain from Emperor Charles V (1500–1558) the assurance that Luther would be invited to Worms under a safe conduct, and on 16 April Luther arrived in the city.¹⁰ According to Spalatin, the public appearances of Luther at the Diet were the only occasions on which he and Frederick had any contact. Even then they did not speak directly to each other.¹¹ For example, after Luther refused to recant, Frederick summoned Spalatin, not Luther, to his quarters and told Spalatin that Luther spoke well but was still too audacious.¹² It was not a compliment but rather an expression of uncertainty about the consequences that Luther's refusal might entail for Saxony and for Frederick himself. Despite the uncertainty, however, both Frederick and Luther were supported at Worms not only by Spalatin but also by other advisors and friends.¹³ They included the same Philip von Feilitzsch who stayed with Luther in Augsburg, Friedrich von Thun (c 1450–1535),¹⁴ whom Frederick appointed to be Luther's constant escort, the Wittenberg jurist Hieronymus Schurff (1481–1554),¹⁵ who was Luther's legal advisor, Luther's colleague Nikolaus von Amsdorf (1483–1565),¹⁶ and Justus Jonas (1493–1555), who was about to join the faculty.¹⁷ Together with Spalatin some of them accompanied Luther to sessions of a special commission charged with persuading Luther to yield. After that attempt failed, the advisors told Luther that Elector Frederick had promised to shelter him. Luther reluctantly agreed, and immediately Spalatin and his colleagues began to make the arrangements for Luther's departure and eventual kidnapping.¹⁸

¹⁰ HÖSS, IRMGARD, *Georg Spalatin 1484–1545*, Weimar 1956, 190–194.

¹¹ LUDOLPHY, INGETRAUT, Haben Sie tatsächlich nie miteinander gesprochen? Luther und sein Landesfürst Friedrich der Weise, in: *Luther 53* (1982), 115–121; ID., *Friedrich der Weise, Kurfürst von Sachsen, 1463–1525*, Göttingen 1984, 384.

¹² SPALATIN, *Annales Reformationis* (as in note 2), 49 f.

¹³ Cf. STIEVERMANN, DIETER, Sozial- und verfassungsgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen Martin Luthers und der Reformation – der landesherrliche Rat in Kursachsen, Kurmainz und Mansfeld, in: Volker Press / Dieter Stievermann (eds.), *Martin Luther. Probleme seiner Zeit*, Stuttgart 1986, 137–176.

¹⁴ MITZSCHKE, Art. Thüna, Friedrich von, *ADB* 38 (1894), 212 f.

¹⁵ WEBER, ANDREAS OTTO, Art. Schurff, Hieronymus, *NDB* 23 (2007), 760 f.

¹⁶ KOLB, ROBERT, Art. Nikolaus von Amsdorf, *OERef* 4 (1996), 27 f.

¹⁷ KOHLS, ERNST-WILHELM, Humanisten auf dem Reichstag, in: Fritz Reuter (ed.), *Der Reichstag zu Worms von 1521: Reichspolitik und Luthersache*, Worms 1971, 415–437; JUNG-HANS, HELMAR, Verzeichnis der Rektoren, Prorektoren, Dekane, Professoren und Schlosskirchenprediger der Leucorea vom Sommersemester 1536 bis zum Wintersemester 1574/75, in: Irene Dingel / Günther Wartenberg (eds.), *Georg Major (1502–1574). Ein Theologe der Wittenberger Reformation*, Leipzig 2005 (*Leucorea-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und der Lutherischen Orthodoxie* 7), 235–270, here 246.

¹⁸ Höss, *Georg Spalatin* (as in note 10), 198–200.

Before he met Luther, Spalatin had studied little or no theology. His humanist predilection was for history and Frederick took advantage of that interest. In 1510 he commissioned Spalatin to produce a chronicle of the Saxons and Thuringians, half of which Spalatin completed by 1516 but was never able to finish.¹⁹ In order to accept a clerical position, however, Spalatin had been ordained a priest in 1508 at the Erfurt cathedral by the same bishop who had ordained Luther one year earlier. In addition to his role as confidential secretary and advisor, therefore, Spalatin was qualified to serve the Elector as chaplain and confessor, and in 1519 he requested from Luther a *Trostschrift* for the ill ruler. The *Tessaradecas consolatoria pro laborantibus et oneratis*, as Luther entitled the original Latin version, had to be translated into German for Frederick. Spalatin not only made the translation but arranged for the publication of both versions although Luther had intended it for the Elector alone.²⁰ After he translated Luther's grateful dedication to Frederick, Spalatin realized that in German it would publicize the close relationship between the two men and undergird Luther's political support in Saxony just as work resumed on his legal case in Rome. Other German translations of pamphlets by Luther and Melanchthon made by Spalatin and Justus Jonas served similar popular and political agendas.²¹

After Frederick died in 1525, Spalatin left the court and accepted a call to Altenburg as evangelical pastor. Soon after arriving he married Katharina Heidenreich (or Streubel)²² and invited Luther to the wedding. Fearing for his safety on the road, Luther declined; but he wished the couple both offspring and happiness and declared he was as thrilled about Spalatin's marriage as he was about his own that had taken place only five months earlier.²³ Spalatin's fellow canons at the *Stift* of St. George were not so thrilled about his wedding. As celibate priests they demanded the marriage be dissolved, but Spalatin refused and instead urged Elector John (1468–1532) to reform the *Stift*. During the upcoming visitations in Electoral Saxony, Spalatin used his appointments as visitor and superintendent to make Altenburg an evangelical town. He was aided by his pastoral colleague, Eberhard Brisger (1490–1545),²⁴ who had been the last prior of the Augustinian cloister in Wittenberg, but it was not easy. They faced stiff and persistent oppo-

¹⁹ MECKLENBORG, CHRISTINA / RIECKE, ANNE-BEATE, *Georg Spalatin's Chronik der Sachsen und Thüringer*, Köln 2011 (Schriften des Thüringischen Hauptstaatsarchivs 4), see <http://spalatin.franconica.uni-wuerzburg.de> [accessed 23 January 2014].

²⁰ LUTHER, MARTIN, *Tessaradecas consolatoria pro laborantibus et oneratis* (1520), in: WA 6, 99–134.

²¹ Cf. BEYER, MICHAEL, *Übersetzungen als Medium des Transfers*, in: Irene Dingel / Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele (eds.), *Kommunikation und Transfer im Christentum der Frühen Neuzeit*, Mainz 2007 (VIEG.B 74, Abteilung für Abendländische Religionsgeschichte), 62–67.

²² Died 5 December 1551; WA.B 14, 370 (no. 35). The wedding took place on 19 November 1525; WA.B 3, p. 617, (no. 1).

²³ WA.B 3, 635 f. (no. 85).

²⁴ KÄHLER, ERNST, *Art. Brisger, Eberhard*, NDB 2 (1955), 618.

sition from the *Stift* and from the convent of Mary Magdalene, neither of which was fully dissolved until the 1540s.²⁵

Spalatin's move to Altenburg altered his relationship to Luther, but it would have changed even if Spalatin had remained in Wittenberg. His close relationship to Elector Frederick had ended and Elector John brought new advisors to court. After 1525 there was no need for the same intense (sometimes daily) correspondence between Luther and Spalatin. During his lifetime Luther sent over 400 letters to Spalatin but more than half of them were written between 1518 and 1525. Even so, the total number of letters sent to Spalatin far exceeded those sent by Luther to his other principal correspondents: Justus Jonas, Nikolaus von Amsdorf, Nikolaus Hausmann (c 1479–1538),²⁶ and Philip Melancthon. Unfortunately, because we have only twelve letters from Spalatin to Luther, the relationship between them must be studied mainly from Luther's side. Does the correspondence between 1525 and 1545 contradict in any way the enthusiasm expressed by Spalatin in the *Annales*? In 1518, for example, Luther addressed Spalatin as his own "most learned and dearest friend Georg Spalatin [who is] to be loved sincerely in Christ."²⁷ After 1525 did Spalatin remain so dear a friend to Luther, or did the distance between them change the way either man felt about the relationship?

Two historians disagree about Luther's attitude toward Spalatin. On the one hand, Matthieu Arnold argued that after 1525 Luther's letters to Spalatin lost intensity but not their warmth. Their later correspondence dealt not only with practical church matters but the letters also conveyed news and personal messages appropriate to their friendship. Then, during Spalatin's last years, Luther intervened in controversies that involved his colleague Brisger and other critics in Altenburg.²⁸ For Arnold, therefore, even though fewer letters were exchanged, Luther felt no less positive about Spalatin after 1525 than he did before Spalatin left Wittenberg.

Lyndal Roper, on the other hand, painted a completely different picture. She claimed that before 1525 Luther "bullied" Spalatin to make things happen at the university and "exploited" Spalatin's position at court. Then, once Spalatin married and moved to Altenburg, Luther became distant and cool because his contact was no longer at the center of power.²⁹ Roper also contended that after 1525 Luther's tone showed less respect. For example, in a letter written four months after Spalatin's wedding Luther allegedly made light of his own silence: "[Luther]

²⁵ SCHMALZ, BJÖRN, *Georg Spalatin und sein Wirken in Altenburg (1525–1545)*, Beucha 2009, 40–50.

²⁶ LAU, FRANZ, *Art. Hausmann, Nikolaus*, NDB 8 (1969), 126.

²⁷ WA.B 1, p. 188 (no. 85).

²⁸ ARNOLD, MATTHIEU, *La Correspondance de Luther. Étude historique, littéraire et théologique*, Mainz 1996 (VIEG 168. Abteilung Abendländische Religionsgeschichte), 38.

²⁹ ROPER, LYNDAL, "To his Most Learned and Dearest Friend". *Reading Luther's Letters*, in: *German History* 28 (2010), 283–295.

excused his own silence with a joke: he had not wished to disturb the honeymoon of the new husband.”³⁰ It is difficult to justify the harsh interpretations that Roper gave to this source and others. In the letter just mentioned Luther added that he had not written mainly because there was no cheerful news. Spalatin might have expressed displeasure at Luther’s failure to attend the wedding, but there is no record of such an expression. In fact, Spalatin did not invite to his nuptials any colleagues or friends with whom he had worked at the Electoral court, because he did not want to impose on them any hardship.³¹ In all likelihood, he also accepted Luther’s reason for not attending.

The relationship between the two reformers cannot be judged by letters alone. After 1525 Spalatin and Luther saw each other at least seventeen times: twice in 1527 at Torgau; once in 1528 at Altenburg and once in Wittenberg with Spalatin and his wife after Elisabeth Luther died,³² twice in 1529 at Altenburg; twice in 1530 at Coburg and Altenburg; probably in 1532 at Schweinitz or Torgau after Elector John died; at the end of 1536 in Lichtenberg. In 1537 they were together for several weeks, first at Schmalkalden and then in Wittenberg. In 1538 Spalatin saw Luther twice in Wittenberg and in 1539 twice again in Wittenberg; in 1542 Spalatin was present with Luther and Melanchthon in Naumburg and Zeitz and in 1543 Spalatin spent a week with Luther in Wittenberg. Even if Arnold may have judged the relationship after 1525 too charitably, it appears that Roper has intentionally portrayed Luther in the worst possible light. Her charge that Luther’s motive behind the “cooling of the relationship” was “chillingly single-minded” is unfounded.³³ On the contrary, in 1532 Luther congratulated Spalatin on the success of his sermons in the Franconian city of Schweinfurt, where Spalatin was replacing Luther during negotiations between the Schmalkald League and two Catholic electors, Albrecht of Mainz (1490–1545) and Ludwig of the Palatinate (1478–1544).³⁴ On Easter morning, Spalatin delivered a sermon in the church where the meetings were held; but on Easter Monday so many townspeople tried to enter the church that Spalatin had to preach in the open air. The same letter, which was dictated by Luther to Johann Bugenhagen (1485–1558),³⁵ conveyed

³⁰ *Ibid.* 288.293; WA.B 4, 41–44 (no. 989), here 41.

³¹ DREWS, PAUL, *Spalatiniana*, in: ZKG 19 (1899), 80.

³² WA.B 4, 548 f. (no. 1317).

³³ ROPER, To his Most Learned and Dearest Friend (as in note 29), 293.

³⁴ BRADY, JR., THOMAS A., *Protestant Politics: Jacob Sturm (1489–1553) and the German Reformation*, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 1995 (Studies in German histories), 80–82; KOHNLE, ARMIN, *Reichstag und Reformation. Kaiserliche und ständische Religionspolitik von den Anfängen der Causa Lutheri bis zum Nürnberger Religionsfrieden*, Gütersloh 2001 (QFRG 72), 398–401; SCHEIB, OTTO, *Erzbischof Albrecht von Brandenburg und die Religionsgespräche*, in: Friedhelm Jürgensmeier (ed.), *Erzbischof Albrecht von Brandenburg (1490–1545). Ein Kirchen- und Reichsfürst der Frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt am Main 1991 (BMKG 3), 140–155; EGER, WOLFGANG, *Kurfürst Ludwig V. der Friedfertige (von Wittelsbach), Pfalzgraf bei Rhein*, in: Reuter (ed.), *Der Reichstag zu Worms 1521* (as in note 17), 352–368.

³⁵ JUNGHANS, *Verzeichnis der Rektoren* (as in note 17), 240 f.

greetings from Luther's Katharina (1499–1552), Melanchthon, and Bugenhagen to Spalatin and his Katharina. Luther and Bugenhagen then commended the couple and their newly born daughter Anna to God.³⁶

Roper's argument depended in large measure on Luther's 1518 designation of Spalatin as his "most learned and dearest friend"³⁷. She appears to have assumed that for Luther a "dearest friendship" entailed an intense, lifelong correspondence even if the friends no longer lived and worked in the same town. Actually, Melanchthon also called Spalatin his "very best friend", once in 1518³⁸ and twice thereafter.³⁹ The person who pointed this out suggested that, despite the term "very best friend", the relationship between Spalatin and Melanchthon was more like the following:

"Abschließend lässt sich feststellen dass, durch diesen in weiten Teilen sehr intensiven Kontakt, etwas zwischen Spalatin und Melanchthon entstand, das man zwar nicht unbedingt als Freundschaft im eigentlichen Sinne bezeichnen kann – Vertrautheit trifft es wohl eher: Vertrautheit in den gemeinsamen Lebens-, Arbeits- und Interessenbereichen."⁴⁰

The relationship between Spalatin and Luther was the same kind of friendship: an intimacy and familiarity based on trust that did not require reaffirmation every day but could withstand the test of time. The evidence for the longevity of their friendship is substantial. Between March 1542 and Spalatin's death in January 1545, Luther sent eleven letters to Spalatin; only the Electoral court, Amsdorf, Jonas, and Anton Lauterbach (1502–1569)⁴¹ received more. Nevertheless, Spalatin may still have felt that Luther did not write to him frequently enough. In 1544, for example, Spalatin complained that he had recently received no letter from Jonas.⁴² In fact, Spalatin had high expectations of Luther, Jonas, and other correspondents since he himself was an avid letter writer. According to Christoph Scheurl (1481–1542),⁴³ even when Spalatin was tardy in responding,

³⁶ WA.B 6, 311 f. (no. 1934), Höss, Georg Spalatin (as in note 10), 256; Anna Spalatin was born on 16 January 1532.

³⁷ Cf. WA.B 1, 188 (no. 85).

³⁸ MBW.T 1, 91 f. (no. 35), MELANCHTHON, PHILIPP, *Ausgewählte Briefe*, vol. 1: 1517–1526, ed. Robert Stupperich, Gütersloh 1971, 53 f.

³⁹ MBW.T 2, 282–285 (no. 389); MBW.T 2, 418–420 (no. 460), MELANCHTHON, *Ausgewählte Briefe* 1 (as in note 38), 255–257.

⁴⁰ WEIDE, CHRISTINE, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Georg Spalatin und Philipp Melanchthon: eine Bestandsaufnahme*, in: Irene Dingel/ Armin Kohnle (eds.), *Philipp Melanchthon. Lehrer Deutschlands und Reformator Europas*, Leipzig 2011 (Leucorea-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und zur lutherischen Orthodoxie 13), 35–42.

⁴¹ LECHNER, WALTER, *Art. Lauterbach (Lawterbach, Luterbach, Lautenbach, Lawtirbach)*, Anton, in: *Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde e.V. (ed.), Sächsische Biografie*, Online-Ausgabe: <http://www.isgv.de/saebi/> [accessed 17 February 2014].

⁴² Spalatin to Jonas, 5 June 1544, in: *Der Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas, Hälfte 1/2*, ed. Gustav Kawerau, Hildesheim 1964 (Reprint Halle 1884/85), 119.

⁴³ STUMPF, CHRISTOPH A., *Art. Scheurl, Christoph*, NDB 22 (2005), 715 f.

he remained the most officious correspondent of all Scheurl's friends.⁴⁴ After he moved to Altenburg in 1525, Spalatin wrote persistently to the chief marshal of the Electoral court, Hans von Dolzig (1485–1551),⁴⁵ asking for relief both for himself and for the poor congregation he was serving. On three different occasions Spalatin also asked to be relieved of his regular parish duties. The last request was made in September of 1532, only five months after his sermons in Schweinfurt had drawn large crowds and congratulations from Luther. In that case Luther's encouragement made little difference to Spalatin once he was back in Altenburg and feeling very overworked.⁴⁶

Twice in 1544 Luther had to reassure Spalatin that he was among the reformer's best friends and respected Spalatin's work:

"Farewell, my Spalatin, and do not harbor any suspicion that we look down on your writings. You are the veteran among my best friends. Least of all would I look down upon you. I am an old man not far from the grave. Do not misinterpret my character and way of thinking or, if you prefer, my busyness and confusion; and as a good and upright friend do not doubt that you are dear and precious to my heart and will remain so – even if occasionally [you receive] a false [i. e., different] impression."⁴⁷

That same year, in a preface for Spalatin's *Magnifice Consolatoris Exempla*, Luther indicated that Spalatin's failure to accept Luther's praise of his book was the reason it was not published sooner:

"For this reason, my Spalatin, I wanted your book to be published, but time and again you pulled back from my grand praises, (I would say undeserved praises if your splendor were not known to me). I know I am nothing. Farewell in the Lord."⁴⁸

These comments suggest that the occasional tension in their relationship was caused more by Spalatin's feeling of isolation and feeble self-confidence than by Luther's temperament.

Spalatin was also among Melanchthon's most important correspondents, a group that included Joachim Camerarius (1500–1574),⁴⁹ Veit Dietrich (1506–1549),⁵⁰ and Hieronymus Baumgartner (1498–1565).⁵¹ The letters they exchanged numbered 220, of which 93 were written between 1518 and 1525. Of these 93 extant letters, however, only one was sent by Spalatin to Melanchthon. From

⁴⁴ Scheurl to Spalatin, 10 February 1521, in: Christoph Scheurl's Briefbuch. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformation und ihrer Zeit, ed. Franz von Soden / Joachim K. F. Knaake, Aalen 1962 (Reprint Potsdam 1867–1872), 121.

⁴⁵ FABIAN, EKKEHART, Art. Dolzig, Johann von, NDB 4 (1959), 64.

⁴⁶ SCHMALZ, Georg Spalatin (as in note 25), 119.

⁴⁷ WA.B 10, 523 f. (no. 3965), here 523.

⁴⁸ LUTHER, MARTIN, Vorrede zu Spalatin, *Magnifice consolatoria exempla et sententiae ex vitis et passionibus sanctorum collectae* (1544), in: WA 54, 113–115, here 115.

⁴⁹ Peter G. Bietenholz / Thomas B. Deutscher (eds.), *Contemporaries of Erasmus. A biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation* 1, Toronto, CA 1985 (CWE), 247 f.

⁵⁰ REUTHER, HANS, Art. Dietrich, Veit, NDB 3 (1957), 699.

⁵¹ PUCHNER, OTTO, Art. Baumgartner, Hieronymus, NDB 1 (1953), 664 f.

1525 to 1545, Melanchthon wrote to Spalatin on average six letters per year.⁵² Even after Spalatin moved to Altenburg, he was often together with Melanchthon wherever the Wittenberg theologians were gathered on specific occasions. At the Diet of Augsburg in 1530 Spalatin worked closely with Melanchthon. Two extant versions of the *Confessio Augustana* came from his pen: a complete Latin manuscript now held in Dresden and an incomplete German translation held in Weimar. In 1577 David Chytraeus (1531–1600)⁵³ called Spalatin's translation the original German version and claimed that it agreed word for word with the Latin text submitted at Augsburg and then taken to the archives in Mainz.⁵⁴ A week after hearing the *Confutatio*, Spalatin summarized in writing the main points that emerged from previous deliberations about defending the *Confessio Augustana*. That summary would become the initial text of the *Apologia* that Melanchthon would expand and complete in Wittenberg. Toward the end of negotiations it appears that Spalatin was less optimistic than Melanchthon about their prospects, but that did not inhibit Spalatin from traveling toward home with Melanchthon and Luther or from composing a poem for Melanchthon along the way.⁵⁵ On 8 October 1530 the party reached Spalatin's house in Altenburg. According to Johann Mathesius, both Luther and Melanchthon were present in Spalatin's house while Melanchthon worked on the *Apologia*. Suddenly Luther snatched the pen from Melanchthon's hand and told him: "We can serve God not only by working but also by resting."⁵⁶

Between early 1544 and January of 1545 Melanchthon wrote three letters to Spalatin and one to his widow Katharina. While Spalatin was suffering from depression, Melanchthon tried to convince him that he had no cause to be sad: "You have faithfully served the church of God, and the Elector's goodwill toward you is second to none."⁵⁷ The letter to Katharina contained a tribute and promises that both he and Luther would intercede with the Electoral court on her behalf. According to the tribute Melanchthon would have been overjoyed if Spalatin, a man of virtue and integrity, had kept his health and lived many more years. It would have profited the church that he always faithfully served.⁵⁸

⁵² WEIDE, *Der Briefwechsel* (as in note 40), 35 f.

⁵³ WOLF, ERNST, Art. Chytraeus, David, NDB 3 (1957), 254.

⁵⁴ KELLER, RUDOLF, David Chytraeus und die *Confessio Augustana*, in: Hans-Christoph Rublack (ed.), *Die lutherische Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland. Wissenschaftliches Symposium des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte* 1988, Gütersloh 1992 (SVRG 197), 235–247, here 244 f.

⁵⁵ PETERS, CHRISTIAN, *Apologia Confessionis Augustanae. Untersuchungen zur Textgeschichte einer lutherischen Bekenntnisschrift (1530–1584)*, Stuttgart 1997 (CThM.ST 15), 32 f.

⁵⁶ WA.TR 4, 673 (no. 5124); from the 1540 table talk collection of Mathesius who was in Altenburg in 1530 but probably did not witness the scene.

⁵⁷ MBW.T 13, 430 f. (no. 3687); CR 5, 481 (no. 3030).

⁵⁸ MBW.T 14, 128 f. (no. 3805); CR 5, 666 f. (no. 3127).

Toward the end of Spalatin's life, both Luther and Melanchthon had words of praise and gratitude for their colleague and friend. They did not, perhaps, fully appreciate how hard it was for Spalatin to move away from Wittenberg and to be no longer a part of the electoral court. He remained devoted not only to the electors but also to the university in Wittenberg. His letters from Altenburg urged the Elector's advisors to make sure that the university was adequately staffed and supported. The few extant letters from Spalatin to the reformers do not, however, contribute much to Spalatin's perspective of Melanchthon and Luther. There is one exception. On Christmas Day 1543, before his *Magnifice consolatoria exempla* was published, Spalatin explained to Luther what motivated him to edit this anthology. The letter concluded with an expression of deep gratitude:

"My dearest father and teacher in Christ, farewell. Before the Father of mercies and the God of all grace remember me and my family in your holy prayers. Above and beyond your other service we are indebted to you and yours for all the innumerable and incomparable benefits you have brought to the entire church catholic. In these last perilous times for people everywhere, we who profess Christ receive from the immense, heavenly grace and mercy of God our Father a portion of true and celestial light, knowledge and consolation."⁵⁹

For additional perspective we are dependent mainly on the *Annales*. As the name suggests, the *Annales* is more than a historical narration. It is a year-by-year chronicle of the Wittenberg Reformation that Spalatin based on his experience and on letters and documents to which he had access at the Electoral court. Published for the first time in 1718, the *Annales* comprises over 700 pages of text that cover the Reformation from 1518 through 1541. According to the editor Cyprian, pages at the front and back of the manuscript were missing and some of what remained had been damaged by moisture and mildew. As a consequence, unlike other histories of the Reformation, the printed *Annales* begin with the year 1518. Moreover, Cyprian claims that the title of the manuscript, *Annales oder Jahr-Bücher*, is his own and leaves no doubt about why he edited the work and had it published. The *Annales*, he writes, is a book that contains the unvarnished truth and came with integrity from Spalatin's heart.⁶⁰ Without question, Cyprian's perspective of the Reformation was shaped directly by Spalatin's chronicle.

Spalatin's own perspective is on plain display in the index. It contains many more entries for Luther than for Melanchthon. That fits Spalatin's (or Cyprian's) description of the Reformation as the *Reformation Lutheri*. Luther is the hero of a reformation that was initiated by him and ultimately belonged to him. According to Cyprian, however, Luther was not the only hero. In addition to Melanchthon, Cyprian gives Spalatin credit for what he believed to be the success of the Reformation. In the preface Cyprian cites a sermon published in 1580 by Wolfgang

⁵⁹ WA.B 10, 477 f. (no. 3950), here 478.

⁶⁰ Vorrede, in: SPALATIN, *Annales Reformationis* (as in note 2), a3r.

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