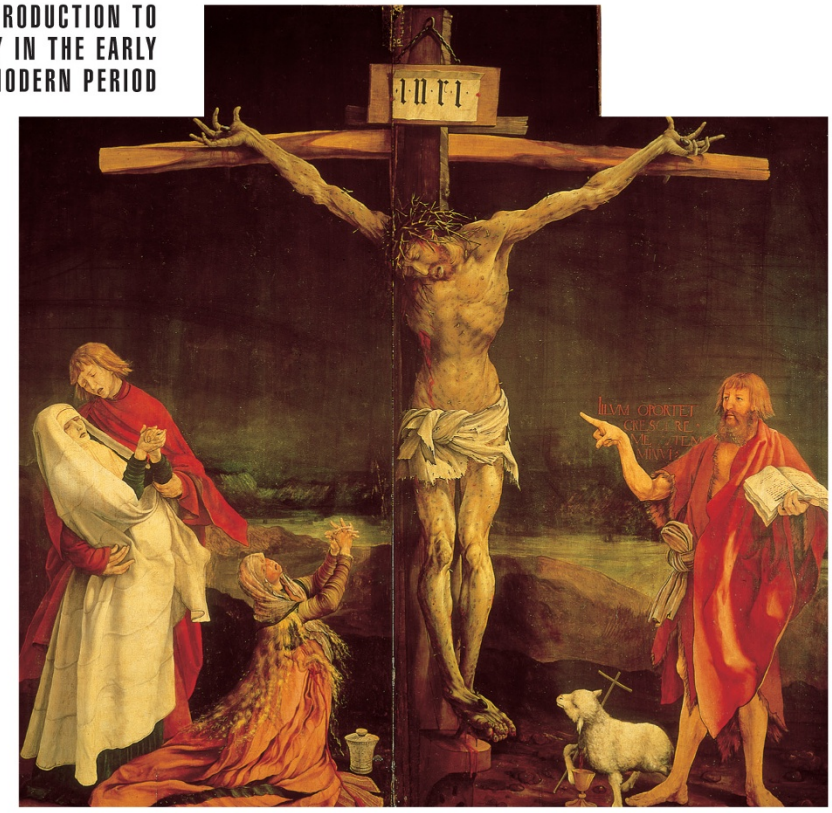
The Reformation Theologians

AN INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD



Edited by
Carter Lindberg

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The Reformation Theologians

An Introduction to Theology in the Early Modern Period

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Blackwell Publishing

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Boston, 2001

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Abbreviations

ARG	*Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte/Archive for Reformation History*
BSLK	*Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963
BSRK	*Bekenntnisschriften der Reformierten Kirche*, Leipzig, 1903
CH	*Church History*
CHR	*Catholic Historical Review*
CO	*Ioannes Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. Wilhelm Baum, Edward Cunitz, and Eduard Reuss, 59 vols. (vols. 29–87 of *CR*), Brunswick: A. Schwetschke & Son (M. Bruhn), 1863–1900
CR	*Corpus Reformatorum: Philippi Melanchthonis opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. K. Bretschneider & H. Bindseil, 28 vols., Halle: Schwetschke, 1834–60
CS	*Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum*, 19 vols., Leipzig and Pennsburg, PA, 1907–61
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*
CTM	*The Collected Works of Thomas Müntzer*, trans. and ed. Peter Matheson, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988
CW	*The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1963–97
FC	Formula of Concord
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
LQ	*Lutheran Quarterly*
LuJ	*Lutherjahrbuch*
LW	*Luther's Works*, American edition, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut Lehmann, 55 vols., St. Louis and Minneapolis: Concordia Publishing House and Fortress Press, 1955–86
MBW	*Melanchthons Briefwechsel: Kritische und Kommentierte Gesamtausgabe. Regesten*, ed. Heinz Scheible, 8 vols. to date, Stuttgart–Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1977–

MBW.T1	*Melanchthons Briefwechsel: Kritische und Kommentierte Gesamtausgabe. Texte*, ed. R. Wetzel, 2 vols. to date, Stuttgart–Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1991–
MSA	*Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl (Studienausgabe)*, ed. R. Stupperich, 7 vols., Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1951–75
MSB	*Thomas Müntzer, Schriften und Briefe*, ed. Günther Franz, assisted by Paul Kirn, Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1968
NZSTh	*Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie*
OER	*The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand, 4 vols., New York: Oxford University Press, 1996
OS	*Ioannis Calvini opera selecta*, ed. Peter Barth, Wilhelm Niesel, and Dora Scheuner, 5 vols., Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1926–52
SCJ	*Sixteenth Century Journal*
Tappert	*The Book of Concord*, ed. Theodore Tappert, Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*
WA	*D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 60 vols. to date, Weimar: Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1883–
WA Br	*D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Briefwechsel*, 15 vols., Weimar: Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1930–78
WA TR	*D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden*, 6 vols., Weimar: Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1912–21
Z	*Huldreich Zwinglis sämtliche Werke*, ed. E. Egli et al. (vols. 88– of *CR*), Berlin, Leipzig, and Zurich, 1905–
ZKG	*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*
ZThK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

Introduction

Carter Lindberg

> It is through living, indeed through dying and being damned that one becomes a theologian, not through understanding, reading, or speculation. Martin Luther (*WA* 5:163, 28f.)

The purpose of *The Reformation Theologians* is to introduce the theologies of selected theologians of the sixteenth-century Reformations to students of historical theology, church history, and the history of Christianity as well as to all persons interested in "how we got this way." In addition to this historical goal, there is also a contemporary interest. In the words of Bernd Moeller: "We need the spiritual and intellectual energies that the Reformation has to offer. Moreover, the Christian life, the church, and contemporary theology have so many ties to the Reformation that for our own self-knowledge we should always be aware of this relationship, and should continually examine it and test its relevancy for today."[1]

The selection provides as inclusive a range of theologians as possible within the limitations of a single book of reasonable length. The cast of characters includes professors of theology and persons without formal theological education, clergy and laity, men and women, and advocates of nearly all the reforming options of the "long" sixteenth century (1400–1600). The "usual suspects," of course, are here. In the words of Heinz Schilling, "In the beginning were Luther, Loyola, and Calvin."[2] But, of course, these Reformers were not "the beginning" in the sense of being sui generis. They and their contemporaries did not drop full-blown from heaven but rather were nurtured in the context of late medieval theology and piety, and stimulated by the contributions of humanism. Space, however, precludes more than a bow in the direction of these influences by the inclusion of Lefèvre and Erasmus.[3]

Many others besides medieval theologians and humanists were regretfully excluded. Some of the "excluded" have at least cameo roles in the following essays; others remain in the wings. There will always be "Reformers in the wings," as David Steinmetz so aptly titled his effort to expand our horizon of reformers. Indeed, there were so many Reformation theologians that a series of studies devoted only to Reformation dissidents recently published its twentieth volume.[4] Much has been accomplished in recent

years to provide a long overdue public stage for, or at least to shine more light upon, those "in the wings" who preached and wrote and legislated for reform, including women.[5]

Yet even a cursory scan of the recently published *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, let alone the magisterial German *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, still in process, reveals the limitations of the present selection. Other Reformers – lumped under the rubric of the "common man" – who were clearly more than just a Greek chorus on the Reformation stage also remain beyond the scope of this text.[6]

The stage itself was also of great significance for both the roles of the Reformers and how they played them. Our focus is on the theologies of the Reformers, but we dare not forget, as Luther himself so vividly stated, that these theologies developed in the midst of life.

> Very little in the Reformation was stable. Not only did the formulation of religious ideas take place amidst wars, persecution and plague, but the very language which the evangelical groups conscripted to their cause formed a brilliant prism, whose diverse colours transformed as it was manipulated. Terms such as church, authority, nation and even reformation itself were variously and often in contradictory ways used in the sixteenth century.[7]

The keen awareness that theologies cannot be abstracted from their historical contexts was already expressed by Bernd Moeller's 1965 warning that the Reformation is too important to be left to the systematic theologians. Without sensitivity to "the Reformation as history," Reformation theology itself may be oversimplified. "After all, this theology had such a great impact in history precisely because it was intricately interwoven into history."[8] Richard A. Muller has more recently made the same point with regard to Calvin. "A clever theologian can accommodate Calvin to nearly any agenda; a faithful theologian – and a good historian – will seek to listen to Calvin, not to use him."[9] The following chapters therefore should be read in conjunction with historical surveys and studies.[10]

Moeller's call for a historical view of the Reformation continues to find a receptive audience, especially among English-speaking scholarship where social history has been ascendant for nearly a generation now. The social historical approach to the Reformation emphasizes the centrality of communal, political, economic, and social goals that stimulated collective behavior. Thus a leading social historian of the Reformation, Thomas A. Brady, Jr., suggests that "perhaps the time has come for a new approach . . . the Reformation as an adaptation of Christianity to the social evolution of Europe."[11] The proposals for this are legion: the Reformation as "urban event," "anticlerical event," "ritual event," "communal event," "confessional and social disciplining event," and even "pyschological event."[12] Without gainsaying these and similar approaches, our motif is the Reformation as theological event. John O'Malley's comments about François de Sales, Filippo Neri, and Teresa of Avila may be applied to the Reformation theologians as a whole: "These individuals and phenomena can be studied from many perspectives, but is it not incumbent upon us to study them for what they head-on purported to be about, the sacred?"[13]

Thus it is time to affirm once again, with due appreciation for historical contexts, that theological ideas matter, and that theology may be a motor for historical events

and not just driven by them. To think otherwise is an anachronistic "Alice in Wonderland" view of the Reformation in which theology is only the linguistic cloak for the Reformers' "real" motivations. Indeed, it was precisely theology that enabled the reform impulse effectively to cross social and political polarizations.[14] As recently as 1989, Steven Ozment wrote: "The study of the Reformation still awaits a Moses who can lead it through the sea of contemporary polemics between social and intellectual historians and into a historiography both mindful and tolerant of all the forces that shape historical experience."[15]

More words of caution are in order. Our title is not as straightforward as it seems. It should be clear by now that the definite article, "The," does not mean that only those in our volume are Reformation theologians. Also, recent scholarship raises questions about both "Reformation" and "theologians." "Reformation" – how is this word defined and used? "Theologians" – what criteria delineate a theologian? Let us begin with the last and work back to the first, at the same time being aware that these terms are also intimately related.

Theologians

What makes a theologian? More to the point for the figures in this text: "What makes a person a Christian?"[16] Their answers varied and sometimes conflicted, but they agreed that theology is not an abstract intellectual exercise but rather the application of the living voice of the gospel to the lives around them. Theology is for proclamation.[17] It is noteworthy that – sharply put – the Reformation began as a pastoral event rather than as an academic discussion among professors of theology. In this sense, the Reformers stand in continuity with the early church's understanding that "believing" is rooted in "worship" – *lex orandi, lex credendi*.[18] For the Reformation theologians there is an "indissoluble intertwining of affect and intellect, piety and erudition, prayer and thought. . . . *Theology proceeds from worship and returns to it.*"[19]

Note, therefore, in the following chapters the consistent concern to provide works of instruction and edification in the vernacular, as well as the drive from Lefèvre on to make the Scriptures and liturgical materials available in the languages of the laity. The great majority of Luther's first publications were in German rather than the Latin of academe, and were sermons and devotional writings addressed to the fundamental issues of the religious life: the need for God's love and acceptance, and the anxiety before death.[20] Luther first became known not so much as a church rebel, nor even so much as a learned theologian, but rather as a pastor and reformer of the spiritual life.[21]

> Theology was no longer kept under lock and key in academic institutions, but had become the *cause célèbre* of a new public awareness. . . . [T]heology, seen as both the knowledge of faith and practical wisdom applicable to the problems of life, was to be brought out of the monasteries and universities into the streets and city halls. . . . [Luther] succeeded in freeing scholarly theology from the Babylonian captivity of secret and secretive academic debate.[22]

The same point may be made of other Reformers. They gained their audience through devotional and pastoral works, a point often overlooked in the modern interest in their theological systems. In fact, even a doctrinal emphasis such as predestination was in its Reformation context not a theological abstraction but an expression of pastoral care that lifted the burden of proof for salvation from human shoulders and placed it squarely on God, where it belongs. The conviction that God is in charge of the universe afforded those in spiritual turmoil and those being persecuted for their faith "unspeakable consolation."[23]

Our representative theologians agreed that the Word of God, God's address to humankind, takes precedence over words about God. Yet, as the following chapters make clear, they did not always agree on the interpretation and application of that Word. Indeed the content of the proclamation was so crucial, that it became church-dividing. With salvation at stake, Reformation theologians were rarely timid in their assertions.[24]

Thus we are reminded that as highly trained in theology as some of our examples were, they remained "innocent" of our contemporary methodological interest in "objectivity." The modern academic ideal of bracketing personal commitment in order to provide comparative and alternative views for discussion or on the supposition that all is relative or that content is discovered through dialogue was alien to the minds of most of our examples. Equally alien was the modern apologetic effort to make the Christian faith "plausible." Indeed, for Reformation theologians, the electrifying power of the gospel – God's justification of the godless – was totally implausible.[25] Hence Luther's sharp response to Erasmus's philosophical reflections on the freedom of the will: "The Holy Spirit is no Skeptic, and it is not doubts or mere opinions that he has written on our hearts, but assertions more sure and certain than life itself and all experience."[26] Such a stance may be offensive to modern ears, but it reminds us that for the Reformation theologians the truth of God's promise was at stake – at times even literally, for the person who proclaimed it![27]

Reformation

Given the Reformers' conviction that the Word of God "is most certainly true," but that its proclamation became church-dividing, is the title of our text misleading? Was there one Reformation or many? The image of the unity of the Reformation is nicely illustrated by a 1521 Zurich woodcut, "The Godly Mill," and a 1617 Dutch broadside, "The Light of the Gospel Rekindled by the Reformers."[28] The two illustrations roughly suggest both the time-span and continental breadth of the Reformation. The former depicts a grain mill that, as the full title states, "operates by the grace of God." In the upper left corner the flame of the Holy Spirit descends from God the Father and propels the mill wheel. Christ stands by the grain hopper and pours into it the four Evangelists and Paul. Erasmus, whose edition of the New Testament was so helpful to Luther and whose humanism was influential upon Zwingli, is the miller shoveling the meal of the gospel into a sack. Behind Erasmus stands Luther, kneading the meal into the bread of evangelical teaching that is then distributed by another figure (Zwingli?) to representatives of the ecclesiastical

establishment, who reject it. Above the heads of the recalcitrant clergy and pope is a bird croaking "ban, ban" (Luther was banned on January 3, 1521). A large figure of "Hans the Hoeman," the symbol of the peasantry, looms behind the Catholic clergy, wielding a flail to protect the proclamation of the gospel and to threaten the representatives of the ecclesiastical establishment.

The Dutch broadside depicts 16 Reformers (Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon, Beza, Bucer, Bullinger, Vermigli, Knox, Jerome of Prague, Zwingli, Hus, Wyclif, Zanchi, Perkins, Flacius, and Oecolampadius) crowded around a table with a group portrait of six others (George of Anhalt, John à Laski, Farel, Sleidan, Marnix, and Junius) on the wall behind them. This harmonious union of Reformers, including their "forerunners," Wyclif and Hus, are presented in a kind of Last Supper scene. In the place of Christ is Luther, with a bible open upon the table, flanked by Calvin, also pointing to a book (bible?). Opposite them, in the place of Judas, are a cardinal, a devil, the pope, and a monk, who represent the fourfold form of Catholic false faith. There is a blazing candle in the center of the table, also set upon a bible, that signifies the truth of divine light brought into the open by the Reformers. The Catholic opponents are depicted as the servants of darkness who are attempting in vain to blow out the candle.

These pictures raise all the issues about the Reformation now debated by modern historians and theologians: unity or plurality? If unity, in what did it consist? How long did the Reformation last – a *longue durée* including the late Middle Ages or an episode between 1517 and 1525? Furthermore, these triumphalist representations of the Reformation, and their continuation in more recent "Whiggish" interpretations,[29] do not merely omit Catholic reform but portray the Catholic establishment arrayed with all the forces of evil and obscurantism against reform. The Dutch broadside also illustrates roots of reform – a so-called "First Reformation" – in Wyclif and Hus, a claim once again coming to the fore among their descendants.[30] The pictures are also significant for what they do not portray. "The Godly Mill" does depict the "common man" in the form of the peasant defender of the first Reformers, but the Dutch engraving omits the "common man," and gives no hint of either the so-called Radical Reformers such as Karlstadt and Müntzer or lay theologians such as Schwenckfeld and Argula von Grumbach.

Was there one Reformation or many Reformations? Was there a unified Reformation theology to the extent that we can speak of "Reformation theology" and "Reformation theologians"? Scholarly debate has swirled around these questions for some time, and has not yet concluded. In an extended review of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, Merry Wiesner-Hanks, one of its editors, states that the *Encyclopedia* reflects the demise of older "orthodoxies" of Reformation scholarship and the rise of new approaches.[31] The "old orthodoxies," both topical and methodological, include the older textbook assumption that the Reformation was bracketed by the *Ninety-five Theses* (1517) and the *Peace of Augsburg* (1555).[32] This time frame focussed the Reformation in the works of a few theologians, hence isolating the Reformation from both early modern social and economic history and continuity with the medieval age. The new approaches that Wiesner-Hanks highlights include awareness of the importance of the institutions created in the latter half of the sixteenth century as well as such topics as "confessionalization," "social disciplining," and "popular

religion."[33] Regarding the question of the one and the many Reformation(s), she points to the present

> stress on diversity within Protestantism and Catholicism, on a Reformation that was . . . "pluriform and polycentric"[34] . . . This is not only a Reformation made up of a number of subsidiary Reformations – peoples', urban, communal, princes' – but a Reformation in which these subsidiary movements did not occur in a neat chronological progression, but were interwoven and synchronic. There is no reassuring chain of begats here, nor strong Hegelian dialectic, but a variety of ideas, plans for action, and significant players.[35]

Theologically this is evident in the different understandings of that Reformation watchword *sola scriptura*. Whereas Luther understood Scripture as God's promise, Karlstadt and then the South German and Swiss Reformations viewed Scripture as God's law or blueprint for society.

> To search for unity in the Reformation leads in a false direction, certainly for the years from 1519–1530. The pursuit obscures at least three revolutionary changes: 1. the development of multiple reformation theologies; 2. the rise of autonomous political movements like the Knights' Revolt, the Peasants' Revolt and urban uprisings; 3. divergent interpretations of the goals of the Reformation by various social groups.[36]

However, it is premature to assume that the debate over the plurality of the Reformation is settled. Recently in Germany, three church historians locked horns over whether it is legitimate to speak of *the* Reformation rather than a plurality of impulses, movements, confessions, and interests. Bernd Moeller argued for the unity of the Reformation on the basis of the reception of Luther's theology of justification by grace alone, facilitated by the massive publication of his pastoral and sermonic writings. "Grosso modo the Reformation is tantamount to the reception of Luther."[37] In response, Dorothea Wendebourg argued that the "unity" of the Reformation is a construct imposed upon a plurality of reforming movements by the Counter-Reformation. With reference to the Dutch engraving depicting Protestant harmony mentioned above, she stated: "[It is] a beautiful image of Reformation unity, but we know that it wasn't so. Not harmony, but conflict, not community but refusal of communion fellowship in the Lord's Supper – that was the reality." Furthermore, the "left wing" of the Reformation, including such figures as Karlstadt and Müntzer, the Swiss Anabaptists, and German Spiritualists, was not only criticized but also persecuted by the Magisterial Reformers.[38] Thus it was the Counter-Reformation's "pox" on all the reforming houses that projected "unity" upon the disparate movements.

On the other hand, Wendebourg's claim appears dubious in light of the fact that the term "Counter-Reformation" itself stemmed from Protestant anti-Catholic bias. "The first names for the epoch were devised by Protestants. The model and standard for understanding Catholicism was what happened in Protestantism. Thus 'Counter-Reformation' and 'Catholic Reformation.'"[39] Ironically, these Protestant labels for early modern Catholicism projected a unity upon it that obscured its own diversity and complexity.[40] The continuation of the Protestant model for defining the Reformation

may be seen in repeated efforts to locate the unity of the Reformation in the doctrine of justification.

Martin Brecht and Berndt Hamm, challenged by Ulrich Gäbler's claim that the concept "Reformation" eludes definition because of theological diversity,[41] argue that there is a consistency in Reformation theology that is historically rooted in the emphasis upon justification as the center and limit of theology. After a discussion of variations on this theme, Brecht states that for Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin: "The essential solidarity exists in the doctrine of justification through faith alone and in the related anthropology of the justified sinner. Where this central teaching is not shared, for example by many representatives of Spiritualism, one is not able to speak of reformatory theology."[42]

Hamm, who adds Melanchthon to Brecht's "big three," posits that recent studies have so emphasized the diversity within the Reformation that it is increasingly difficult to maintain and delineate a core Reformation theology, especially in relation to the doctrine of justification. Consequently, either a common Reformation theology fades from view or the theology of grace is so weakly formulated that a clear demarcation from the Catholic understanding of grace no longer appears possible. "At this point resigned historians meet euphoric ecumenists, who in any case are of the opinion that the doctrine of justification is not church dividing."[43] The latter part of Hamm's point is of interest in light of the theological controversy in Germany over the recent Lutheran–Roman Catholic "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification."[44] There is a sense in which the controversies of the present are fought through the controversies of the past.[45] Historical study might well carry the same inscription found on a car's passenger-side mirror: "Caution, objects in mirror are closer than they appear." Theologians read the Reformation sources with an eye on contemporary faith and life.[46] In short, theologians are not antiquarians.

More recently, Scott Hendrix set forth his agreement with Moeller, and upped the ante. "A broader definition of the Reformation's agenda is needed in order to ground both its coherence and its significance, for not only has the unity of the Reformation been challenged, but also its significance." Common to all the Reformers was the desire "to uproot the old religion and plant the new."

> [I]s it possible to speak meaningfully of one Reformation with a common agenda? I believe one can do this if the agenda – rerooting the faith in Europe – is seen as the common goal of the Reformation and the disagreements are understood to be different conceptions of how this rerooting could best be accomplished. Protestants and Catholics agreed that the abuses of medieval piety should be abolished, but they disagreed, as did Protestants among themselves, about the extent of that abolition.

In short, differences among the theologians "have to be understood as differences in strategy and not as competing interpretations of Christianity."[47] Hendrix's displacement of theological differences by differences of tactics or strategies echoes earlier claims that it was strategy, not theology, that separated Luther and Karlstadt in the early phase of the Reformation in Wittenberg.[48]

Hendrix illustrates his bold move to create a procrustean bed for Reformation theologians by reference to Cranach the Younger's famous painting of the vineyard of the Lord in the Wittenberg town church. Yet what is immediately striking about

Cranach's late Reformation painting is that the vineyard is divided into two parts. On the left side, the pope and his followers are destroying the vineyard, whereas on the right side, Luther and his followers are restoring and tending it. The didactic and polemical use of artwork in the Reformation period may indeed express Reformation "oneness," but far more often than not that unity is confessionally specific and exclusive.[49]

Furthermore, one need not look hard or far for sharp and mutual condemnations between Reformation theologians. Not without reason, Melanchthon is said to have sighed on his deathbed that finally he would be delivered from the *rabies theologorum*, "the madness of the theologians." Luther referred to Karlstadt as a theologian who had "swallowed the Holy Spirit, feathers and all," and to Müntzer as the devil incarnate. These feelings were mutual.[50] In an apparently mellower mood, Luther summarized his evaluation of others in the slogan: "Substance and eloquence = Philip [Melanchthon]; eloquence without substance = Erasmus; substance without eloquence = Luther; neither substance nor eloquence = Carlstadt."[51] Erasmus wrote to Bucer that one of the reasons he had not joined the evangelical movement was

> the constant in-fighting between the leaders. Leaving aside the Prophets and Anabaptists, just look at the spiteful pamphlets written by Zwingli, Luther and Osiander against each other. . . . The Gospel would have looked good to everyone if the husband had found it made his wife nicer, if the teacher saw his student more obedient, if the magistrate had seen better-behaved citizens, if the employer found his employees more honest, if the buyer saw the merchant less deceitful.

Similarly the humanist Willibald Pirckheimer wrote: "I confess that I initially also was a good Lutheran, as was also our blessed Albrecht [Dürer], for we hoped the Roman knavery as well as the roguishness of the monks and parsons would be improved. But as one watched and waited, matters got worse. . . ." And Calvin wrote to Bullinger concerning Luther's "inordinately passionate and brash character," and warned "that if you engage in battle with him nothing is achieved except provision of entertainment for the unbelievers." But Calvin also appealed to Bullinger to remember "what a great man Luther is, and by what extraordinary spiritual gifts he is distinguished."[52]

In general, the humanists were disappointed that the Reformation did not markedly improve morality. But as Luther himself made clear, *the* issue of reform was not the ethical regeneration of society but the proclamation that salvation is received, not achieved. The very point of justification by grace alone is that discipleship is not dependent upon its results.

> Doctrine and life are to be distinguished. Life is as bad among us as among the papists. Hence we do not fight and damn them because of their bad lives. Wyclif and Hus, who fought over the moral quality of life, failed to understand this. . . . When the Word of God remains pure, even if the quality of life fails us, life is placed in a position to become what it ought to be. That is why everything hinges on the purity of the Word. I have succeeded only if I have taught correctly.[53]

Luther stated the importance of theology even more sharply: "Doctrine directs us and shows the way to heaven. . . . We can be saved without love . . . but not without pure doctrine and faith." Doctrine and life are incomparable; and therefore the devil's argument about "not offending against love and the harmony among the churches" is specious.[54]

It is clear from the above sketch that while there are broad areas of consensus there is not harmony or unity among the proliferating studies of Reformation history and theology. We should not therefore expect the following essays to exhibit what the field as a whole has not achieved. Contributors agreed to address specific theological subjects such as justification and sanctification, hermeneutics, ecclesiology, sacraments, and ethics, but had a free hand to develop the significance and reception of their assigned theologian. Thus each chapter stands on its own, but at the same time sheds light – and perhaps some heat – upon the other chapters. The advantage of a collection such as this is that readers are *not* subjected to a one-dimensional perspective normed by a particular Reformer, but rather are provided with multiple views of Reformation theologians. Read as a whole, this volume provides a window on the theologies of the Reformation period as well as the passionate commitment of our subjects to "reroot" the Christian faith. In a broad sense they all shared a commitment expressed by the motto *ecclesia semper reformanda* – the church always reforming. What they contribute to our own participation in the ongoing reform of the church is the crucial importance of theology to this task.

Notes

1 Bernd Moeller, "Problems of Reformation Research" in his *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, trans. H. C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards, Jr. (Durham, NC: Labyrinth Press, 1982), 16. Francis Higman makes the point that a contribution of church history is enabling a better understanding of contemporary society. Francis Higman, *Lire et Découvrir. La circulation des idées au temps de la Réforme* (Geneva: Droz, 1998), 14.

2 Heinz Schilling, "Luther, Loyola, Calvin und die europäische Neuzeit," ARG 85 (1994), 5–31, here 9. Schilling continues: ". . . with such a sentence a book on the early modern period may begin. . . ."

3 Heiko A. Oberman has stimulated much of the research on the late medieval context of the Reformation. See his *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963) and *Werden und Wertung der Reformation: Vom Wegestreit zum Glaubenskampf* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1977). See also Charles G. Nauert, Jr., *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 144:

> The true programme of Christian humanism, which concerned humanistic studies as an essential part of religious renewal and concentrated on both pagan and Christian Antiquity as a source of inspiration, was essentially the creation of two men, the French humanist Jacques LeFèvre d'Etaples (c.1460–1536) and the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1467?–1536), with Erasmus being by far the more important.

4 *Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux des seizième et dix-septième siècles*, under the general editorship of André Séguenny (Baden-Baden and Bouxwiller: Valentin Koerner). Besides David C. Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), see the similar efforts by B. A. Gerrish, ed., *Reformers in Profile: Advocates of Reform 1300–1600* (Philadelphia:

Fortress Press, 1967); Martin Greschat, ed., *Gestalten der Kirchengeschichte: Die Reformationszeit*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1981); and Hans-Jürgen Goertz, ed., *Profiles of Radical Reformers: Biographical Sketches from Thomas Müntzer to Paracelsus* (Kitchener: Herold Press, 1982).

5 See Merry Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). See also her chapter "Family, Household, and Community" with bibliography in Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History 1400–1600* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), vol. 1: 51–78. A special edition of *The Sixteenth Century Journal* (31/1 [Spring 2000]) is devoted to "Gender in Early Modern Europe."

6 See Heiko A. Oberman, "*Die Gelehrten die Verkehrten:* Popular Response to Learned Culture in the Renaissance and the Reformation" in his *The Impact of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 201–24, here 224: "Reformation propaganda found a ready and alert audience, as is succinctly formulated in one of the most impressive Reformation pamphlets: 'Don't believe them when they say, "ja, die bawrenn verstehen die sach nicht."' " Luther's self-consciously broad appeal is reflected in his statement that "in my office of teacher, a prince is the same to me as a peasant." LW 46:75; WA 18:393, 22f., cited by Hans-Christoph Rublack, "Reformation und Moderne. Soziologische, theologische und historische Ansichten" in Hans Guggisberg and Gottfried Krodel, eds., *The Reformation in Germany and Europe: Interpretations and Issues* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1993), 17–38, here 29. More than any other contemporary scholar, Peter Blickle has striven to bring "the common man" center stage. See his *The Revolution of 1525. The German Peasants' War from a New Perspective*, trans. Thomas A. Brady, Jr. and H. C. Erik Midelfort (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); *Communal Reformation. The Quest for Salvation in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1992); and *From the Communal Reformation to the Revolution of the Common Man* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998). For critical responses to Blickle's work see the reviews by Mark U. Edwards, Jr. in *Historische Zeitschrift* 249 (1989), 95–103, and *CHR* 79/2 (1993), 332–3.

7 Bruce Gordon, "The Changing Face of Protestant History and Identity in the Sixteenth Century" in Bruce Gordon, ed., *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, 2 vols. (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 2:7. For lively description and analysis of Reformation rhetoric see Peter Matheson's *The Rhetoric of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998) and *The Imaginative World of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000).

8 Moeller, "Problems of Reformation Research," 7. This essay originally appeared as "Probleme der Reformationsgeschichtsforschung," *ZKG* 14 (1965), 246–57.

9 Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 188.

10 See for example: Thomas Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994/5); Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996) and companion volume, *The European Reformations Sourcebook* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000); Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); and Andrew Pettegree, ed., *The Reformation World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

11 Thomas A. Brady, Jr., "Social History" in Steven Ozment, ed., *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research* (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1982), 161–81, here 176. See also Heiko A. Oberman's comments on "the loaded language of social analysis" in his *The Impact of the Reformation*, 179–83.

12 The literature is too extensive to list in detail, but representative scholars associated with these designators include: A. G. Dickens, Hans-Jürgen Goertz, Robert Scribner and Susan Karant-Nunn, Peter Blickle, Heinz Schilling, and Erik Erikson. For overviews see Walter Ziegler, "Sozial- und Religionsgeschichte in Deutschland in der frühen Neuzeit. Eine historiographische Bilanz," *ZKG* 110/3 (1999), 372–85; and Craig Harline, "Official Religion – Popular Religion in Recent Historiography of the Catholic Reformation," *ARG* 81 (1990), 239–57.

13 John W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 139.

14 Berndt Hamm, "Reformation 'von unten' und Reformation 'von oben': Zur Problematik reformationshistorischer Klassifizierungen" in Guggisberg and Krodel, *The Reformation*, 256–93, here 289. See Heiko A. Oberman, *The Reformation: Roots & Ramifications*, trans. Andrew Colin Gow (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 203:

> The de-confessionalization of Reformation history has brought forth more balanced judgements, but there is also a price to pay. The events of the first half of the sixteenth century are no longer subjected to narrowly dogmatic interpretation, but theological interpretation has also been banished. . . . [T]hose frequently proclaimed as the "true reformers", [are] those not motivated by theological considerations. They are often presented as the "real" agents, seen from the social perspective, behind the progressive, forward-looking decisions and events of the Reformation.

Older Marxist historiography understood theology as the language of the time for social and economic issues. But see also Tom Scott's critique of Blickle's affirmation of the role of theology in the Communal Reformation: "In a sentence, I believe that it was possible to achieve a Communal Reformation without the introduction of evangelical religion." Tom Scott, "The Communal Reformation between Town and Country" in Guggisberg and Krodel, *The Reformation*, 175–92, here 192.

15 Steven Ozment, ed., *Religion and Culture in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989), "Introduction," 4. However, Ozment also noted (3): "To a remarkable degree, religion emerged as the unifying theme of the conference, far more than either 'cities' or 'culture.' "

16 In Luther's "Letter to the Christians at Strassburg in Opposition to the Fanatic Spirit" (1524) he wrote:

> My sincere counsel and warning is that you be circumspect and hold to the single question, what makes a person a Christian? Do not on any account allow any other question or other art to enjoy equal importance. When anyone proposes anything ask him at once, "Friend, will this make one a Christian or not?" If not, it cannot be a matter of major importance which requires earnest consideration. *LW* 40:67–8

17 See Gerhard O. Forde, *Theology is for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). See also Oswald Bayer, "Geistgabe und Bildungsarbeit," chapter 21 in his collection *Gott als Autor: Zu einer poietologischen Theologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999).

18 The abbreviated version of Prosper of Aquitaine's (c.390–c.463) *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* – "the rule of prayer should lay down the rule of faith." See Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1: *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 339.

19 Oswald Bayer, *Theologie*, vol. 1 of *Handbuch Systematischer Theologie*, ed. Carl Heinz Ratschow (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), 18.

20 See, for example, Jared Wicks, SJ, "Applied Theology at the Deathbed: Luther and the Late-Medieval Tradition of the *Ars moriendi*," *Gregorianum* 79/2 (1998), 345–68.

21 Bernd Moeller, "Die Rezeption Luthers in der frühen Reformation" in Berndt Hamm, Bernd Moeller, and Dorothea Wendebourg, *Reformationstheorien: Ein kirchenhistorischer Disput über Einheit und Vielfalt der Reformation* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 16–17. See also Oswald Bayer, "Luther's Ethics as Pastoral Care," *LQ* 4/2 (Summer 1990), 125–42. See Mark U. Edwards, Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 164: "Thanks to these largely pastoral and devotional works, Luther became Germany's first best-selling vernacular author, speaking to a far wider audience than, say, the humanists who had used the press before him."

22 Oberman, *The Reformation*, 207. See also Higman, *Lire et Découvrir*, 87–106, 179–200, 531–44.

23 Article 13 of the *Belgic Confession of Faith* (1561). See Lindberg, *The European Reformations Sourcebook*, 208.

24 See Harding Meyer, " 'Delectari assertionibus' On the Issue of the Authority of Christian

Testimony" in Carter Lindberg, ed., *Piety, Politics, and Ethics: Reformation Studies in Honor of George Wolfgang Forell* (Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1984), 1–14.

25 See Gerhard Sauter, "Rechtfertigung VI" in *TRE* 28 (1997), here 342–44, with English translation in *LQ* 11/1 (Spring 1997), here 83.

26 *LW* 33:24. Also, *LW* 33:21, "Nothing is better known among Christians than assertion. Take away assertions and you take away Christianity." See Leif Grane, *Martinus Noster: Luther in the German Reform Movement 1518–1521* (Mainz: Zabern Verlag, 1994), 294: "With very few exceptions his [Luther's] theology was no obstacle because they [humanists] at first had no base on which they could make up their minds about it – unless they began to realize that without theology in the sense of *assertiones* it would never be possible to pass from talking to acting."

27 Martyrologies representing all parties in the Reformation conflicts became in themselves theologies of history showing the continuity, and thereby authenticity, of the present-day church under the cross with the suffering of the early church. See for example, David Watson, "Jean Crespin and the Writing of History in the French Reformation" and Andrew Pettegree, "Adriaan van Haemstede: the Heretic as Historian," both in Bruce Gordon, ed., *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, 2 vols. (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 39–58, 59–76; Robert Kolb, *For All the Saints. Changing Perceptions of Martyrdom and Sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987); and Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

28 Both illustrations are in Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, 176, 378. The Dutch broadsheet is also described and discussed in Dorothea Wendebourg, "Die Einheit der Reformation als historisches Problem" in Hamm, Moeller, and Wendebourg, *Reformationstheorien*, 30–51, 31–2.

29 See Philip Benedict, "Between Whig Traditions and New Histories: American Historical Writing about Reformation and Early Modern Europe" in Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood, eds., *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 295–323.

30 See the arguments advanced by Czech theologians that the "first" Reformation was initiated by Hus, and that therefore the sixteenth-century Reformation was the "second" Reformation. Much of this material is available in the publications of the "Prague Consultations," a multilateral ecumenical dialogue sponsored by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. My critical responses are "A Specific Contribution of the Second Reformation" in Milan Opocenský, ed., *Towards A Renewed Dialogue: Consultation on the First and Second Reformations* (Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1996), 39–62 and "Towards a More Comprehensive and Inclusive View of the Reformation and Its Significance for Today" in the "Prague VI" Consultation (forthcoming). Zdenek David suggests that the preoccupation of Czech historians and theologians with expanding the concept of the Reformation to include the Utraquist movement is a misguided tendency that may be a central European variant of the Whig interpretation of history. Zdenek David, "The Strange Fate of Czech Utraquism: The Second Century, 1517–1621," *JEH* 46/4 (October 1995), 647–8.

31 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Traditional Orthodoxies and New Approaches: An Editor's Perspective on the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation," *CH* 67/1 (March 1998), 107–13. See also the review by Mickey Mattox in *LQ* 14/2 (Summer 2000), 225–30.

32 See, for example, the classic textbooks of the prior generation: Harold J. Grimm, *The Reformation Era 1500–1650* (New York: Macmillan, 1954; revised 1965), and G. R. Elton, *Reformation Europe 1517–1559*, 2nd edn, with an Afterword by Andrew Pettegree (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999). The first edition was in 1963. Pettegree remarks that Elton's narrative presentation of the Reformation "as a drama formed principally through the conflicts of its leading actors" went out of fashion with the rise of social history in the sixties. "No history of the sixteenth century would now begin as Elton does, with Martin Luther, nor even with the Reformation; though thankfully, the contrary fashion for writing the history of the age almost without mentioning Luther seems also to have passed." Pettegree, "Afterword," 236.

33 For introductions to these approaches see Heinz Schilling, "The Reformation and the Rise of the Early Modern State" in James

D. Tracy, ed., *Luther and the Modern State in Germany* (Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1986), 21–30; Heinz Schilling, "Confessional Europe" in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, *Handbook*, 2:641–81; R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550–1750* (London/New York: Routledge, 1989). Reviews of the debate over confessionalization include Joel Harrington and Helmut Walser Smith, "Confessionalization, Community, and State Building in Germany, 1555–1870," *Journal of Modern History* 69/1 (1997), 77–101), and Thomas Kaufmann, "Die Konfessionalizierung von Kirche und Gesellschaft," *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 121/11 (1996), 1008–25; 121/12 (1996), 1112–21. See also Susan Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) and Robert W. Scribner, "Elements of Popular Belief" in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, *Handbook* 1:231–62.

34 David Lotz, "Protestantism: An Overview" in *OER* 3:352.

35 Wiesner-Hanks, "Traditional Orthodoxies," 111.

36 Miriam U. Chrisman, "The Reformation of the Laity" in Guggisberg and Krodel, *The Reformation*, 627–46, here 627.

37 Bernd Moeller, "Die Rezeption Luthers in der frühen Reformation," in Moeller, Hamm, and Wendebourg, *Reformationstheorien*, 10. See also Thomas A. Brady, Jr.'s review in *SCJ* 27/1 (Spring 1996), 286–9; I have used Brady's translation.

38 Wendebourg, "Die Einheit," 32.

39 O'Malley, *Trent and All That*, 120.

40 Ibid., 121–2.

41 Ulrich Gäbler, *Huldrych Zwingli: His Life and Work*, trans. Ruth Gritsch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986), 47:

> In view of the diversity of theological positions among sixteenth-century Protestants, the concept "Reformation" cannot be precisely defined historically. Although earlier – and still today, in confessional Lutheran research – it was commonly equated with the theology of the Wittenberg reformer, the precise meaning of the term is increasingly obscured in the literature. If the term is used anyway, it is to point out that what happened was disengagement from the traditional church and its doctrine. With regard to content, various ways of dealing with this newly won viewpoint can be imagined. Luther's theology was probably the most significant force, but it was in no way the only effective one.

Martin Brecht, "Theologie oder Theologien der Reformation?" in Guggisberg and Krodel, *The Reformation*, 99–117, here 99; Berndt Hamm, "Was ist reformatorische Rechtfertigungslehre?," *ZThK* 83/1 (1986), 1–38, here 2, n. 3.

42 Brecht, "Theologie," 116.

43 Hamm, "Was ist reformatorische Rechtfertigungslehre?" 2.

44 For the statement and commentary see *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification: A Commentary by the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1997). The controversy was widely covered in public media such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, as well as theological journals. See my "Do Lutherans Shout Justification But Whisper Sanctification?," *LQ* 13/1 (1999), 1–20, here 13–14, 19. See also Johannes Brosseder, Ulrich Kühn, and Hans-Georg Link, *Überwindung der Kirchenspaltung: Konsquenzen aus der Gemeinsamen Erklärung zur Rechtfertigungslehre* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000) and Eberhard Jüngel, ed., *Zur Rechtfertigungslehre*, Beiheft 10, *ZThK* (1998).

45 O'Malley, *Trent and All That*, 80, 82. Hamm, "Was ist reformatorische Rechtfertigungslehre," 2, makes the point that our questions about the Reformation get caught up in the contemporary evangelical churches' search for identity.

46 Histories of interpretations of the Reformation document that personal and ideological involvement in historical studies is by no means limited to theologians. See for example, A. G. Dickens and John M. Tonkin, *The Reformation in Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985). That personal involvement with the past extends to other eras as well is illustrated by Norman F. Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages: The Lives, Works, and Ideas of the Great Medievalists of the Twentieth Century* (New York: William Morrow, 1991).

47 Scott Hendrix, "Rerooting the Faith: The Coherence and Significance of the Reformation,"

Princeton Seminary Bulletin 21/1 (n.s., 2000), 63–80, here 64–5, 67, 72, 73. O'Malley, *Trent and All That*, 76, points out that the Catholic scholar, H. Outram Evennett, made a comparable point well over a generation ago when he claimed "that both the Reformation and the 'Counter-Reformation' were two different outcomes of the same general aspiration toward 'religious regeneration' that pervaded the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries." Hendrix, 71, credits Jean Delumeau's thesis on the Catholic Reformation as Christianization (*Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977]) for stimulating his own argument. On Delumeau see John W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That*, 100–3, and his references to Michel Despland, "How Close Are We To Having A Full History of Christianity? The Work of Jean Delumeau," *Religious Studies Review* 9/1 (January 1983), 24–33; Robert Birely, SJ, "Two Works by Jean Delumeau," *CHR* 77 (1991), 78–88; and Heiko A. Oberman's review in *SCJ* 23/1 (1993), 149–50.

48 See Ulrich Bubenheimer, "Scandalum et ius divinum. Theologische und rechtstheologische Probleme der erste reformatorische Innovationen in Wittenberg 1521/22," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 90 (1973), 263–342, here 287: "The legal theological problem of the Wittenberg reform movement was a problem less of the contents of the reforms than strategies of reform." James S. Preuss, *Carlstadt's 'Ordinaciones' and Luther's Liberty: A Study of the Wittenberg Movement 1521–22* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 2: "It is the contention of this study that the fundamental issues in 1521–22 were issues of religious *policy*. . . . To be sure, the theologies of Carlstadt and Luther were by no means identical in 1521–22, but neither were theological differences the decisive reason for their separation."

49 See Andrew Pettegree, "Art" in Pettegree, *The Reformation World*, 461–90, with reference to the vineyard painting on 477.

50 For a review of their mutual condemnations see my "Theology and Politics: Luther the Radical and Müntzer the Reactionary," *Encounter* 37/4 (Autumn 1976), 356–71.

51 *WA TR* 3:619; *LW* 54:245. Cited by Moeller, "Problems of Reformation Research," 11.

52 Lindberg, *The European Reformations Sourcebook*, 262–5.

53 *LW* 54:110.

54 *LW* 27:41f.

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