

istoteleskritik zu unterscheiden, was sich auch darin niederschlägt, daß Luthers scharfe Kritik des scholastischen Aristotelismus und die Wittenberger Universitätsreform in ihrem konkreten Verlauf durchaus zu unterscheiden sind. Dieser Frage widmete sich Heinz Scheible in seinem Beitrag »Aristoteles und die Wittenberger Universitätsreform: zum Quellenwert von Lutherbriefen«, in dem er ein vorschnelles Ineinsetzen von Luthers Aristoteleskritik und Wittenberger Universitätsreform kritisiert. So weist Scheible namentlich anhand der Besetzung der Wittenberger Lehrstühle sowie von deren Lehraufträgen nach, daß bis 1521 noch der Aristotelismus scholastischer wie humanistischer Prägung namentlich die Lehrinhalte der Artistischen Fakultät bestimmte. Erst 1522 kommt es zu einem Zusammenbruch des alten Systems. Ab 1523 baut vor allem Melanchthon die neue reformatorische Universität auf, deren Lehrinhalte auch einen reformatorisch neu kommentierten Aristoteles einschlossen.

Wie Luther theologisch-kritisch mit Aristoteles

umgeht und seine Begriffe vor dem Forum der Theologie neu interpretiert, erörterten Tuomo Mannermaa und Theodor Dieter. Mannermaa erläutert an der 28. These der »Heidelberger Disputation« von 1518 die Gegenläufigkeit des aristotelischen Liebesbegriffes und des christlichen Verständnisses von Gottesliebe. Ist jene das Sichselbstrealisieren einer Form auf ihr geliebtes Objekt hin, so schafft die Liebe Gottes allererst ihr Objekt aus dem Nichts. Sie sucht nicht den homo sanctus, sondern den homo peccator. Dieter erläutert an Luthers Umgang mit den Begriffen Wirklichkeit und Möglichkeit das Problem, wie sich ein der Theologie angemessener Seinsbegriff erarbeiten läßt.

Im Zusammenhang mit der »Heidelberger Disputation« wies Konrad von Rabenau auf einen neu aufgefundenen niederländischen Druck der theologischen Thesen der »Heidelberger Disputation« hin, der sich ursprünglich im Besitz des aus Höxter stammenden, in den 30er Jahren des 16. Jahrhunderts in Wittenberg studierenden Pfarrers Johannes Seifried befand.

Luther and Humanism

Seminar leader: Lewis W. Spitz

Reporter: John Tonkin

The seminar had been provided with a structure designed to explore the many sides of the relationship of Luther and humanism in a systematic way. Each day a major theme was pursued in two aspects, with a formal paper introducing general discussion.

Day 1 focussed on Luther's knowledge of antiquity and his attitude towards it. The first session dealt with »Luthers Kenntnis der klassischen Antike« introduced by a paper from Reinhard Schwarz which concentrated on the poets and historians rather than the

philosophers. Some basic difficulties were identified: how much was Luther's knowledge firsthand, how much picked up through conversation with others, how much interpolated in his dictated writings by original scribes, how much was simply characteristic of the Middle Ages? An additional problem was that the very concept of »classical antiquity« was a modern notion which meant nothing to Luther. Luther could be said to have had a considerable, but not profound, knowledge of the classical poets and historians; his horizons remained largely those

of pre-humanistic instruction inherited from the medieval tradition. He was critical in the early years of epic poetry for its tendency to arouse cruelty and glorify war, and considered love poetry unsuitable for schools. Yet, in an intellectual milieu in which »classical studies« might well have been under threat, Luther insisted on the humanities as a proper background to the study of theology, indeed the best kind of preparation. Poetry not only provided linguistic training but added a dimension of reality which guarded against abstraction. The classics, moreover, provided a fund of moral instruction and practical wisdom: in this the historians were of particular value.

In the second session, Cornelis Augustijn introduced the subject of »Luther's knowledge of Christian antiquity« by a case-study, employing a close textual analysis of Luther's attitude to a particular Church Father (Jerome) in »De servo arbitrio«. Already in the »Heidelberg disputation« (1518) Luther had treated the Fathers as derivative authorities to be judged according to Scripture: here too the general context of discussion was Biblical exegesis, and Luther's attitude to Jerome was wholly negative. He addressed himself not only to particular points of Biblical exegesis (especially God, Man and the Law) but also the exegetical method itself. Jerome (and Origen) he saw as playing with the Scriptures as a book of aphorisms of which anything could be made. Luther's concern was the unity of the Scriptures, expressing the one Gospel, and his criticism of Jerome was instrumental to his criticism of Erasmus, whom he found guilty of the same errors of substance and method.

Day 2 was given over to the exploration of Luther's connections with the humanist traditions of the Renaissance. Morimichi Watanabe presented a paper on »Luther's knowledge of Italian humanism«, which highlighted the complex nature of Italian influences. Though

Germany had been subjected to profound Italian influences from the twelfth century through the large numbers of law students who had been active in the foundation of humanist circles in the German cities, Luther's Saxony had preserved an intellectual tradition »almost medieval« in character. On the other hand, the University of Wittenberg was from the start open to new ideas and by no means hostile to humanist influences. From 1512, Luther became a »Biblical humanist« without being aware of it, though he never acquired an extensive knowledge of Italian humanism. Major humanists like Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola he knew very little, and then only second hand. More significant to him were the poet Baptista Mantuanus, and Laurentius Valla, who interested him primarily on theological grounds. Luther, therefore, could be said to have used humanist tools without being a humanist as such.

In a brief presentation Jan Lindhardt approached the subject from a different angle, drawing positive connections between the rhetorical tradition of the Renaissance and Luther's doctrine of the Word of God, in particular his notion that Scripture speaks clearly and directly. Luther's rejection of symbolic interpretation and his concern for context and intention were to be understood as the result of rhetorical text theory.

Wide ranging discussion of the issues raised in these two papers left no time for a formal presentation of a paper in the second session, on the theme of »Luther's debt to German humanism«. Instead, Lewis W. Spitz, whose extensive writings on German humanism were already well-known to the participants, highlighted a few points of discussion raised by recent scholarship: Luther's playing with the notion of man as a mid-point, his contrasts between dialectic and rhetoric, the impossibility of simply equating Erasmus and humanism. There was no

doubt that the humanistic exegetical method made all the difference in the world to Luther, and in particular dominated his sermons. The recovery of the Hebrew Old Testament was crucial to the explanation of the New Testament, while the rhetorical tradition was instrumental in his view that the Gospel changed not just minds but feelings and dispositions. Other factors highlighted by recent scholarship included differences between Stoic and Epicurean views of man, and the factor of patriotism.

Most of the ground covered in these first two days could be described as background, though no less essential on that account.

Day 3 brought us to the heart of the matter – Luther's theology. Helmar Junghans presented a paper on »Die Bedeutung des Humanismus für Luthers Theologie«. Rejecting attempts to forge strong positive links with the scholastic tradition, he saw Luther's thought as essentially destructive of scholastic method. When humanism was properly distinguished from particular doctrines and anthropological ideas, there was no difficulty in placing Luther in the »Biblical humanist« tradition. Humanism was a diverse phenomenon and Luther's opposition to Erasmus had loomed too large in the picture. Far more important was the influence on Luther of the Erfurt humanists such as Nikolaus Marschalk, who mediated to Luther not only philological method and concern for the original languages, but a mistrust of scholastic Scriptural exegesis. From them Luther gained both the impetus to replace Aristotle with the Scriptures, and the necessary tools for the new theology. Luther learned from the humanists that theology must be grounded in the philological study of Scripture, and he was deeply influenced by the rhetorical traditions, which saw humanity as manifested in speech, and God as »Deus dicens«.

The second session of the day took up the other side of the picture, Luther's continuing

relationship with scholasticism. Egil Grislis spoke on »The rejection of scholasticism and its vestigial remains« with special reference to nominalism. Grislis traced several stages of Luther's development: his thoroughly nominalist upbringing, his conscious departure from this earlier commitment, and the persistence, despite this, of several key nominalist perspectives in his thought. Aspects of the doctrines of justification, of God, of predestination and the eucharist, had been interpreted in this light though not without controversy; while the question of theological dependence clearly went much deeper than point by point comparisons, and required a good deal of further study.

Given the centrality of the themes of this third day, it was not surprising that it witnessed also perhaps the most significant general discussion, which when far beyond the individual points made by the papers, and raised wider questions. Some speakers elaborated on the vexed problems of the relationship of humanism and scholasticism: apparently clear distinctions and oppositions did not hold up on close inspection, the reality being far more complex. Leif Grane initiated a spirited discussion on the need for a historical rather than a speculative approach to understanding Luther. Geoffrey R. Elton enthusiastically endorsed this approach, professing a historian's willingness to welcome all »repentant sinners« from among the ranks of the theologians, whose obsession with investigating Luther's insides seemed more accessible to the methods of the »oui-ja-board« than to historical analysis.

Day 4 highlighted the central theme by sketching in a wider historical context. In the first session Walter Sparr traced »Die Fortdauer des Humanismus im 18. Jahrhundert« within German Protestantism while Heinz Bluhm analysed the impact of German classicism on this tradition.

In the second session Geoffrey R. Elton pre-

sented a brief yet amazingly comprehensive account of »Luther, humanism and Protestantism in sixteenth century England«, emphasizing the coexistence of humanism and reform and suggesting reasons for the predominance of non-Lutheran traditions in the English Reformation.

The proceedings of the seminar evidenced not only a growing interest in the question of Luther's relationship to humanism but, compared with older studies, an encouraging expansion of available sources, now more thoroughly explored. It would be hard to identify any shared conclusions, however, if only because there is no universally accepted definition of humanism. For some scholars, humanism is still essentially defined by Erasmus, which limits

Luther's involvement to his use of humanistic tools and methods. Others were seeking a more flexible definition which recognized humanism as multi-faceted and therefore permitted Luther to be more positively identified with humanist goals. There seemed little sympathy, however, for a definition so narrowly restricted to method that it might have enrolled Luther among the humanists at the cost of saying anything significant about him. In the end, most of us seemed anxious to preserve a sense of ambiguity about Luther's role in the complex intellectual environment of the early sixteenth century, wherein humanism and scholasticism were not always deadly enemies or mutually exclusive options.

Luther und der Anfang der Reformation in den Städten

Seminarleiter: Gottfried Seeß

Berichterstatter: Gottfried Seeß

Obwohl das Verhältnis von Stadt und Reformation in den vergangenen drei Lustren im Mittelpunkt des Interesses der Reformationshistoriker stand, hat es eine Verbindung zur eigentlichen Lutherforschung kaum gegeben. Dafür ist einerseits das hermeneutisch-theologische Interesse an der Entstehung und Entwicklung der reformatorischen Theologie und das Zurücktreten der Frage nach der kulturgeschichtlichen Bedeutung Luthers sowie andererseits die oft lokalhistorische Begrenzung der Arbeiten zur Reformation in den Städten verantwortlich, die den Zusammenhang städtischer Reformation mit Luther zu wenig berücksichtigt. Außerdem aber richtet sich der Blick oft zu schnell auf die tatsächlich schon früh zu beobachtenden Unterschiede von lutherischer und oberdeutsch-schweizerischer Reformation, ohne deren gerade anfangs beste-

hende umfassendere Gemeinsamkeiten herauszuarbeiten. So steht die Aufgabe, die Bedeutung Luthers für die Städte und deren Bedeutung für ihn und seine Entwicklung zu erfassen, weithin noch vor uns.

Angesichts fehlender Untersuchungen über das jeweils unterschiedliche Verhältnis Luthers zu einzelnen Städten konnte das Seminar die auf diesem Feld zu erwartenden Phasen – die der reformatorischen Bewegung, die der institutionellen Durchsetzung der Reformation und damit verbunden die des Abendmahlsstreites, schließlich die einer zunehmenden Kritik an den »evangelischen« Städten und deren Bürgern nach 1530 – nicht umfassend thematisieren. Vielmehr richtete sich der Blick der von den Teilnehmern gemeldeten Beiträge hauptsächlich auf den Beginn der »lutherischen« Bewegung in den Städten.