

Lazarus Spengler. *Lazarus Spengler Schriften: Band 3, Schriften der Jahre Mai 1529 bis März 1530*.

Eds. Berndt Hamm, Felix Breiting, Gudrun Litz, and Andreas Zecherle. *Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte* 84. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2010. xlix + 446 pp. €69.95. ISBN: 978-3-579-05375-2.

This volume represents the third of four planned volumes making accessible in a modern edition selected writings of the Nuremberg City Council secretary Lazarus Spengler. Spengler's background as a jurist, diplomat, humanist, and theologian make him one of the most interesting and effective promoters of Luther's movement for reform within the circles of the German Imperial Cities and within the Empire. This particular volume comes from the center of his career as a spokesman for reform, and it chronicles his activities from the 1529 Diet of Speyer through the events leading up to the Diet of Augsburg in 1530. As such, it provides a valuable resource for scholars and students concerned with the events that were formalizing the lines of division between religious parties as the Reformation evolved from a movement to an institutionalized struggle for religious and political dominance in the Holy Roman Empire and Europe as a whole.

The edition is a product of work done at the University of Erlangen under the guidance of Berndt Hamm, and the results are volumes completed in conformity to exacting standards. The items included in the volume are carefully selected to avoid duplication of texts available elsewhere, but which represent significant products of Spengler's career and literary activity. This is not as easy a task as it might seem, since Spengler in these years was prolific, and was active in composing pieces both as a private citizen and as representative of the city-state. The edition gives priority to items that stem from his individual authorship, and which provide insight into the widest range of issues and events. The selections, which involve less than a year's worth of literary activity, cover fifty-five different entries, though a number are references to previously published items. The more significant entries each receive a thorough introduction, which provides the historical context, a description of the composition and authorship as well as the impact and significance, a detailed description of the contents, and a description of the manuscript and publication history, all based on extensive citations to relevant primary and secondary literature. These introductory essays function as substantial scholarly contributions to the themes of the documents, and will provide scholars numerous leads for further investigation beyond the documents themselves.

A few longer documents take up about half of the volume, and provide a good sense of the variety of themes treated by Spengler's work. The first longer entry is the *Entwurf der Instruktion für die Gesandtschaft der Protestierenden zum Kaiser*, written in late April to early May of 1529 and never published. The document highlights the complications of negotiations of the evangelical party with the Empire that surrounded the Diet of Speyer. The next entry is the even longer *Verteidigung Markgraf Georgs von Brandenburg gegen die Klagen der vier Bischöfe beim Schwäbischen*

Bund, also from early May of 1529, which highlights the ecclesiastical and legal challenges involved with reform of the territorial churches, and the arguments pursued by the Catholic Church to defend their rights. Most extensive of all is entry number 104, *Ein kurzer auszug aus dem päpstlichen Recht der Dekrete und Dekretalen*, which takes up over a quarter of the volume. This work, published anonymously, and only centuries later definitively attributed to Spengler, was one of the most influential of his works. In it, he took selections from canon law to demonstrate the legitimacy of the measures of reform being undertaken, highlighting the surprising tendency in the aftermath of Luther's dramatic rejection of the canon law of reformed-minded theologians selectively using canon law to support their cause. Beyond these longer entries are numerous shorter tracts and letters that document Spengler's engagement with the promotion of the reform movement in these years.

It would be hard to fault the editors for any aspect of the volume. Perhaps the only disappointment is the inability to publish all of the relevant texts stemming from Spengler's hands in these years, so that the edition would provide a more comprehensive selection. But given the volume of work this would involve, the choice to take a more selective, and expeditious, approach is understandable. Scholars can only be grateful that such an interesting and useful collection has been presented in such a definitive fashion, making available material of interest to almost anyone engaged in the study of the early Reformation in Germany.

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