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Article abstract

In 1583, David Chytraeus (1530–1600), one of the key figures of north German Protestant humanism, published his Latin biographical oration *De Carolo Quinto Caesare Augusto Oratio* on Emperor Charles V (Holy Roman emperor from 1520 to 1556). Despite the numerous confessional conflicts between the German Protestants and the former Catholic monarch, Chytraeus presented the emperor in a strikingly favourable light. To which degree and in which respects Chytraeus was thereby driven both as a theologian and as a historian to promote the overcoming of the confessional split—which renders the oration on Charles an intriguing document of sixteenth-century religious discourse—will be investigated in this article.

Towards Confessional Reconciliation: The “Protestantization” of Charles V in David Chytraeus’s *De Carolo Quinto Caesare Augusto Oratio* (1583)

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In 1583, David Chytraeus (1530–1600), one of the key figures of north German Protestant humanism, published his Latin biographical oration De Carolo Quinto Caesare Augusto Oratio on Emperor Charles V (Holy Roman emperor from 1520 to 1556). Despite the numerous confessional conflicts between the German Protestants and the former Catholic monarch, Chytraeus presented the emperor in a strikingly favourable light. To which degree and in which respects Chytraeus was thereby driven both as a theologian and as a historian to promote the overcoming of the confessional split—which renders the oration on Charles an intriguing document of sixteenth-century religious discourse—will be investigated in this article.

En 1583, David Chytraeus (1530–1600), l’une des figures majeures de l’humanisme protestant en Allemagne du nord, fit paraître une oraison biographique latine, De Carolo Quinto Caesare Augusto Oratio, sur l’empereur Charles Quint (souverain du Saint Empire romain de 1520 à 1556). En dépit des nombreux conflits confessionnels entre les protestants allemands et l’ancien monarque catholique, Chytraeus présente l’empereur sous un jour nettement favorable – ce qui fait de cette oraison sur Charles Quint un captivant document sur le discours religieux du XVI^e siècle. Dans quelle mesure et de quelle façon Chytraeus fut-il amené, comme théologien et comme historien, à prôner le dépassement de la division confessionnelle ? Telles sont les questions qui seront examinées dans cet article.

Chytraeus’s significance as a Protestant historian

David Chytraeus (1530–1600) played a leading role in sixteenth-century north German humanism. Due to his copious efforts regarding the enforcement of Protestantism and his political and educational engagement in the German-speaking lands, his service to the University of Rostock, and his scholarly contributions to theology and history (almost exclusively in Latin),¹

1. Latin was the common language of communication (*lingua franca*) in Europe from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. Especially in the sphere of the early modern university, it was the exclusive language of exchange. The sheer quantity of texts from all fields and genres produced during these centuries is known today as “Neo-Latin literature.” For a comprehensive overview of the status, development, influence, and importance of Neo-Latin literature—which is only just beginning to be systematically uncovered—see Demmy Verbeke, “History of Neo-Latin Studies,” in *Brill’s Encyclopaedia of the*

he was a well-known figure among his contemporaries. His impact reached far beyond his immediate field of activity already during his lifetime.

Born in Ingelfingen and raised in Menzingen im Kraichgau, he took up his studies in Tübingen in 1539 at the age of eight.² In 1544, he moved to the University of Wittenberg, where he attended some of Martin Luther's (1483–1546) last sermons and was engaged in private teachings by Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560). Melanchthon eventually became such an influential figure for Chytraeus that one of Chytraeus's later biographers, Otto Friedrich Schütz, in the early eighteenth century called Chytraeus an "alterum Philippum" (a second Melanchthon).³ On the recommendation of Melanchthon, Chytraeus

Neo-Latin World: Vol. 1: Macropaedia, ed. Philip Ford, Jan Bloemendal, and Charles Fantazzi (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 907–19; Sarah Knight and Stefan Tilg, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin*, ed. Sarah Knight and Stefan Tilg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1–10, doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199948178.001.0001; Martin Korenjak, *Geschichte der neulateinischen Literatur: Vom Humanismus bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 2016).

2. The most accurate and extensive biographies of Chytraeus are still found in early modern Latin works: Christoph Sturtz, *D. Davidis Chytraei, theologi et historici [...] vita [...]* (Rostock: Reusner, 1601); Otto Friedrich Schütz, *De vita Davidis Chytraei [...] libri quatuor* (Hamburg: Fickweiler, 1720–28). On these and other contemporary biographies of Chytraeus in the form of funerary orations (for example, by Johannes Goldstein, Valentin Schacht, and Lucas Bacmeister), see Rudolf Keller, "David Chytraeus im Spiegel der Reden zu seinem Tod und Begräbnis," in *David Chytraeus (1530–1600): Norddeutscher Humanismus in Europa: Beiträge zum Wirken des Kraichgauer Gelehrten*, ed. Karl-Heinz Glaser and Steffen Stuth (Ubstadt-Weiher: Verl. Regionalkultur, 2000), 163–77. Among the most comprehensive modern biographical overviews rank Detloff Klatt, *David Chytraeus als Geschichtslehrer und Geschichtschreiber* (Diss. Rostock 1908), 4–27; Rudolf Keller, "David Chytraeus," in *Biographisches Lexikon für Mecklenburg*, Bd. 3, ed. Sabine Pettke (Rostock: Schmidt-Römhild, 2001), 36–42; Harald Bollbuck, *Geschichts- und Raummodelle bei Albert Krantz (um 1448–1517) und David Chytraeus (1530–1600): Transformationen des historischen Diskurses im 16. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt a.M.: Lang, 2006), 153–68; Otfried Czaika, "Chytraeus, David," in *Frühe Neuzeit in Deutschland 1520–1620: Literaturwissenschaftliches Verfasserlexikon*, Bd. 1, ed. Wilhelm Kühlmann et al. (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2011), 511–21. A list of Chytraeus's works can be retrieved from Thomas Kaufmann, *Universität und lutherische Konfessionalisierung: Die Rostocker Theologieprofessoren und ihr Beitrag zur theologischen Bildung und kirchlichen Gestaltung im Herzogtum Mecklenburg zwischen 1550 und 1674* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1997), 621–40, Bollbuck, 169–89, and in the digital bibliography VD 16 ([Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts](http://www.sbs-muenchen.de/sammlungen/historische-drucke/recherche/vd-16/), sbs-muenchen.de/sammlungen/historische-drucke/recherche/vd-16/). The biographical information in this chapter is—unless cited differently—collectedly taken from these sources.

3. Schütz, ch. 1, pp. 30 and 31. Melanchthon's impact on Chytraeus is discussed in greater detail in Rudolf Keller, "David Chytraeus (1530–1600): Melanchthons Geist im Luthertum," in *Melanchthon in*

was appointed an instructor of philosophy, classical languages, history, and theology at the *Pädagogium* in Rostock in 1551. Shortly afterwards, Chytraeus was promoted to the position of lecturer of history and theology at the University of Rostock and eventually received a chair of theology in 1563. In sum, Chytraeus served as a rector of the University of Rostock five times until 1597, turning Rostock University into the centre of Lutheran orthodoxy in the empire, besides Wittenberg. For not only did he refurbish the university in financial, infrastructural, and legal terms, he also reorganized the university’s statutes and curriculum to fit its new Protestant entitlement.⁴ Chytraeus remained at Rostock University until his death in 1600, whence he had also participated multiple times in religious colloquies and princely councils as an advisor to the dukes of Mecklenburg.

Due to Chytraeus’s strong presence as a churchman, his service to the German Reformation, and his vast theological writing, he is rightly perceived by modern scholarship as a theologian in the first place. However, given the strong connection between religion and history—which according to the Wittenberg school of the Melanchthonian circle was directed by God’s will—it is astonishing that modern scholarship has mostly overlooked his contributions to history. This is manifest in the fact that the most crucial studies on the subject still date back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁵ Spurred by the

seinen Schülern: Vorträge, gehalten anlässlich eines Arbeitsgespräches vom 21. bis 23. Juni 1995 in der Herzog-August-Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, ed. Heinz Scheible (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 361–72. All translations in this article are mine unless otherwise noted.

4. The Reformation had been introduced in Mecklenburg during the 1530s and 1540s; Rostock in particular had turned Protestant in 1531. See Thomas Kaufmann, “Die Brüder David und Nathan Chytraeus in Rostock,” in *David und Nathan Chytraeus: Humanismus im Konfessionellen Zeitalter*, ed. Karl-Heinz Glaser, Hanno Lietz, and Stefan Rhein (Ubstadt-Weiher: Verl. Regionalkultur, 1993), 103–16, 103–04.

5. Georg C. F. Lisch, “Beiträge zu der Geschichte der evangelischen Kirchen-Reformation in Österreich durch die Herzöge von Mecklenburg und die Universität Rostock, namentlich durch Dr. David Chyträus,” *Jahrbücher des Vereins für Mecklenburgische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 24 (1859): 70–139; Otto Krabbe, *David Chytraeus* (Rostock: Stiller’sche Hofbuchhandlung, 1870); Peter Paulsen, *David Chyträus als Historiker: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der deutschen Historiographie im Reformationsjahrhundert* (Diss. Rostock 1897); Gustav Kohfeldt, “Der akademische Geschichtsunterricht im Reformationszeitalter, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Dav. Chytraeus in Rostock,” *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für deutsche Erziehungs- und Schulgeschichte* 12.3 (1902): 201–28; Klatt, *David Chytraeus*. Modern investigations into Chytraeus as a historian are rare: a short study is provided by Markus Völkel, “Theologische Heilsanstalt

historical interest of his teacher Melanchthon, Chytraeus had been dedicated to both ancient and contemporary history already as a student in Wittenberg. When he became a teacher himself, Chytraeus for the first time invigorated history as a discipline of its own in Rostock.⁶ His commitment to historical studies widely complied with the developments in the Protestant educational system. While at Catholic universities, dominated by the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum*, history was treated as a mere historical exercise until the eighteenth century, the reformed curriculum has considered historical studies since the middle of the sixteenth century.⁷

Chytraeus had started to give lectures on history in 1551 at the *Pädagogium* and in 1559 at the university. After 1575, he almost exclusively focused on history despite occupying a chair of theology.⁸ Melanchthon's *Chronicon Carionis* (1532), a reworking of Johann Carion's (1499–1537) unpublished universal history from the beginning of the world to the reign of Charles V, and one of the first early modern textbooks of history, functioned as his go-to textbook. The *Chronicon* comprised the most important elements of reformed historiography in general and the Wittenberg school of historical thought in particular, which eventually left an impact on Chytraeus's historical endeavours.⁹ Hence, these endeavours were exemplary of the new reformed historiographical methods and the way narratives unfolded historical matter (including, for instance, the critical evaluation of sources and ancient and medieval authorities, the rejection of myths and legends, an objective approach to the past, the recognition of causal relations of human action, and promises of

und Erfahrungswissen: David Chytraeus' Auslegung der Universalhistorie zwischen Prophetie und Modernisierung (UB Rostock, MSS. hist. 5),” in *David Chytraeus (1530–1600)*, 121–41; Bollbuck, in *Geschichts- und Raummodelle bei Albert Krantz*, fills significant gaps regarding Chytraeus's historical efforts and achievements.

6. Insights into the design of Chytraeus's teaching is provided by a surviving manuscript notebook from the early 1590s, belonging to the Rostock student Elias Justus Evander. The notebook is examined in detail in Kohfeldt, 213–29.

7. Kohfeldt, 205–08.

8. Klatt, 28–45; Helge Bei der Wieden, “Die Darstellung Islands in der *Saxonia* des David Chytraeus,” in *David und Nathan Chytraeus*, 83–94, 83.

9. The most recent study of the *Chronicon Carionis* provides new insights into the way it set the standards for reformed historiography in the German empire: Mark A. Lotito, *The Reformation of Historical Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

a direct benefit of history for politics).¹⁰ Moreover, they were also impressive in terms of the spectrum of topics covered, and, most importantly, they were often tied to issues surrounding the Reformation: take, for example, Chytraeus’s most famous and influential works, the *Chronicon Saxoniae* (first published in 1586, but constantly expanded and revised by Chytraeus until his death) and the *Historia der Augspurgischen Confession* (1576; one of his few German works).¹¹ While the former—devised as a continuation of Albert Krantz’s *Wandalia* (1519) and *Saxonia* (1520)—deals with the history of northern Germany, northern Europe, and the Reformation in these regions as of 1500, the latter provides an account of the formation of the Lutheran confession in 1530—effectively making him the “father of Reformation historiography” next to scholars like Melanchthon, Johannes Sleidanus (1506–56), or Matthias Flacius (1520–75).¹² Take, in addition, Chytraeus’s theological exegeses of redemptive historical dimension, like the *Explicatio Apocalypsis Ioannis* (1564) or some of his biographical orations on historically exemplary figures—usually contemporary princes (Habsburg emperors, Swedish kings, and German dukes and their families)—which are fuelled by Protestant views and ideals. Chytraeus’s oration on Charles V falls into this category.

A definitive judgment on Chytraeus as a historian is not yet feasible since not only is the actual extent of his historical writings (in prints and manuscripts) still unclear, but modern scholarship also lacks historical and genre-specific analyses of Chytraeus’s historiographical works as well as a deeper insight into the reception of Chytraeus within the field of history.¹³ However, I shall make an attempt with this article to disclose at least one specific text and genre

10. Kohfeldt, 203; Patrick Baker, “Historiography,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin*, 151–66, 152; Lotito, 142–206. On some of the novel concepts of sixteenth-century history as used by Chytraeus, see also the still relevant study of Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Arnold, 1969).

11. Both a classification and an overview of Chytraeus’s historical works are provided in Bollbuck, 12 and 177–82 (comprising recommendations for further reading). The *Historia* in particular received attention in Rudolf Keller’s monumental study *Die Confessio Augustana im theologischen Wirken des Rostocker Professors David Chyträus (1530–1600)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).

12. The role of Melanchthon and his circle of pupils and fellow historians in Wittenberg (among them Chytraeus and Flacius) is expounded in the various articles of Heinz Scheible, ed., *Melanchthon in seinen Schülern*; in particular, Johannes Sleidan’s Protestant approach to historiography is explored in Alexandra Kess, *Johann Sleidan and the Protestant Vision of History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

13. The problems are listed and described in Völkel, 121.

of Chytraeus's historical undertakings: that is, his biographical orations, and among those in particular the oration on Charles V.

De Carolo Quinto and its Protestant claim

Most of Chytraeus's orations (all of them written in Latin) remain unexploited by Neo-Latin and historical scholarship. Some of them are available in single print;¹⁴ others are part of collective prints of different orators;¹⁵ others again are added to volumes containing Chytraeus's orations only;¹⁶ some of them can even be found in several of the formats mentioned (like the oration on Charles V, whose publication background will be discussed later). This only goes to show their popularity during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In any case, Chytraeus's orations ought to be taken as substantial sources for his theological and historical thinking as they programmatically and pointedly unfold his respective ideas. Hence, even though they are usually pushed to the background when it comes to the quality and importance of his historiographical writings¹⁷—especially his more affirmative biographical and funerary orations, as these forms in general have the reputation of being historically useless flattery¹⁸—they bear an inherent historical value. The

14. For example: *Oratio de studio theologiae recte inchoando* (1560), an oration on the right way to study theology; *Oratio de statu ecclesiae in Graecia, Asia, Africa, Bohemia etc.* (1575), an oration on the eastern orthodox churches.

15. Chytraeus's oration on Melancthon's *Loci communes* (*Oratio Davidis Cythraei in repetitionem locorum communium Domini Philippi, habita Vuitebergae Anno Christi 1549*) is, for instance, published in *Selectarum Declamationum Professorum Academiae Ienensis: Tomus primus*, ed. Johannes Gonjaeus (1554), a collected volume of declamations by professors and guest orators of Jena University.

16. Most prominently, the collection of Chytraeus's orations edited and published posthumously by his son, the young David Chytraeus, must be mentioned: *Davidis Chytraei theologi ac historici eminentissimi [...] orationes* (1614); see note 52.

17. Paulsen literally denounces Chytraeus's orations as "specimens of historical content, [...] which seek to render the individuals described personally tangible, yet generally lack any historical perspicacity and value in comparison to his main historical works" (Paulson, 27; "Specimina historischen Inhalts, [...] die uns die in ihnen geschilderten Personen menschlich näher zu bringen suchen, jedoch öfter von wenig historischem Scharfblick zeugen und in ihrem Wert weit hinter dem Hauptwerk zurückstehen").

18. Hermann Wiegand, "Das Bild Kaiser Karls V. in der neulateinischen Dichtung Deutschlands," in *Acta conventus Neo-Latini Bonnensis: Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies* (Bonn 2003), ed. Rhoda Schnur (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance

oration on Charles in particular was not a product of chance within the range of Chytraeus’s historical writings. Throughout his entire career as a historian, Chytraeus was dealing with the family history, biography, and genealogy of various European princes and their relatives.¹⁹ Many of his findings were brought together in Latin orations held at festive occasions, thus contributing to the public representation of different dynasties within Protestant circles.²⁰

Chytraeus’s oration on Charles stands in the tradition of the increased posthumous interest in the emperor and his life. While during the emperor’s lifetime no biography—official or unofficial—made it to publication, accounts of his life started to flourish immediately after his death.²¹ The first publication in this regard constituted Guillaume Snouckaert van Schouwenburg’s Latin work *De republica, vita, moribus, gestis, fama, religione, sanctitate Imperatoris* [...] (1559), followed by the Italian accounts of the *poligrafì* placed in Venice, Alfonso de Ulloa (*Vita di Carlo V*, 1560), Ludovico Dolce (*Vita di Carlo V*, 1561), and Francesco Sansovino (*Simolacro di Carlo V*, 1567), as well as the Spanish *La Carolea* (1585) by Juan Ochoa.²² One of the most interesting aspects of Chytraeus’s biographical oration on Charles is that it was written by a Protestant. In this, however, it is by no means unique. Many of Chytraeus’s Protestant contemporaries had done so (like the prominent Lutheran preacher Johann Mathesius [1504–65] in various sermons on Luther),²³ as well as Protestant scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (as exemplified by Protestant dissertations on Charles at Protestant universities in which the

Studies, 2006), 121–43, 122. Wiegand is at this point even talking about the representation of Charles V in Germany during his reign.

19. Klatt, 50; Carsten Neumann, “David Chytraeus und die Kunst am Hofe Herzog Ulrichs zu Mecklenburg,” in *David Chytraeus (1530–1600)*, 45–72, 47–49.

20. Steffen Stuth, “David Chytraeus und die mecklenburgischen Landesfürsten: Am Beispiel der Korrespondenz mit Herzog Ulrich,” in *David Chytraeus (1530–1600)*, 73–94, 74–75 and 79–83.

21. Peter Burke, “Presenting and Re-Presenting Charles V,” in *Charles V 1500–1558 and His Time*, ed. Hugo Soly (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1999), 393–475, 450 and 454. Because of the complete absence of any historiographical works on Charles during his lifetime, he is often referred to by modern historians as the “emperor without any chroniclers.” Richard L. Kagan, *Clio and the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 91.

22. For more detail, see Burke, “Presenting and Re-Presenting,” 421 and 454; Kagan, 91–92.

23. For instance, Johann Mathesius, *Predigten [...] über die Historien von des ehrwürdigen [...] Doktor Martin Luthers Anfang, Lehre, Leben und Sterben [...]*, ed. Ludwig Achim von Arnim (Berlin: Maurer, 1817).

chaotic German estate policies are declared as the enemy of the Reformation and not the emperor).²⁴ In most cases of Protestant authors and poets writing about the Catholic emperor Charles V in Germany, they were torn between the Lutheran command of obedience towards authority on the one hand and their commitment to confessional self-assertion on the other; the tension was usually solved by supporting the former.²⁵ Chytraeus finds his own way of tackling this problem: he “Protestantizes” the account of the emperor’s life by endowing it with the ideals of a Lutheran world view. To that end, the oration is pervaded by both an irenic tone and the two main themes of Christian humanism that became elementary for sixteenth-century Protestant life-writing: *eruditio* (erudition) and *pietas* (piety).²⁶ In other words, Chytraeus depicts Charles in a way to which Protestants can respond. This was a necessary measure not only to render himself credible as a Protestant historian, but also to reach the Protestant audience he was aiming at. By highlighting the conciliatory traits of Charles’s policies and thus equipping the biography with Lutheran ideals and irenic themes, Chytraeus—himself an ardent believer in the overcoming of the confessional split throughout his life—utters a heartfelt claim to his fellow Protestants to make peace with the Catholics. We could, in this respect, also speak of Chytraeus’s effort to create a collective identity among the social group of Protestants.

To offer collective orientation patterns by turning an individual into an identity figure was common practice among early modern biographers. While sixteenth-century biographies of Protestants tended to be particularly characterized by this feature to mark the Protestants’ group validation,²⁷ early modern biographies in general used to project the details of the person

24. See, for example, Johann Friedrich Mayer, *De morte Caroli V evangelica dissertatio* (Leipzig: Starck, 1682), based on a disputation given in Greifswald (year unknown); Christoph Beyer and Christian Friedrich Fleckeisen, *Augustanae confessionis Carolo V Caesari exhibitae historia* (Leipzig: Langenheim, 1731), based on a disputation given in Leipzig in the same year.

25. Wiegand, 122.

26. Robert Kolb, “Burying the Brethren: Lutheran Funeral Sermons as Life-Writing,” in *The Rhetorics of Life-Writing in Early Modern Europe: Forms of Biography from Cassandra Fedele to Louis XIV*, ed. Thomas F. Mayer and Daniel R. Woolf (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 97–113, 97.

27. James M. Weiss, “Friendship and Rhetoric: An Introduction to Biography in Renaissance Italy and Reformation Germany,” in *Humanist Biography in Renaissance Italy and Reformation Germany*, ed. James M. Weiss (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), 1–68, 21–22.

described onto the author and the readership. Katherine MacDonald has shown on the basis of seventeenth-century biographies of French men of letters by French humanists how an erudite sense of group membership was generated through the way the biographies were designed content-wise and rhetorically.²⁸ As James Weiss puts it, "early modern biographies were seldom about their biographical subjects alone. True, the biographers strove to celebrate their notable subjects. Yet [...] those of early modern Europe served wider purposes of moral instruction, political counsel, and argument for a wider agenda."²⁹ Furthermore, biographies were "a negotiation between the author and his milieu, each prompting the other to accept certain values, each often trying to re-direct or re-define the other's values."³⁰ Biographies were ideal for that undertaking as the subject portrayed became the living sample of issues discussed which other literary forms like dialogues or treatises could only cover in an abstract manner.³¹

Given these considerations and given the circumstance that representations of Charles V in art and literature (including the most factual contemporary historiography) have at no point in early modern times been free from manipulation,³² this article will in the following enquire into Chytraeus's oration on Charles as an instrument of confessionalized messaging. The emperor's exemplarity will not simply be emphasized, as is typically done

28. Katherine MacDonald, *Biography in Early Modern France 1540–1630: Forms and Functions* (London: Legenda, 2007). Similar insights can be gained from the selective examinations of humanists', artists', and scientists' biographies assembled in *Die Vita als Vermittlerin von Wissenschaft und Werk: Form- und funktionsanalytische Untersuchungen zu frühneuzeitlichen Biographien von Gelehrten, Wissenschaftlern, Schriftstellern und Künstlern*, ed. Karl A. E. Enekel and Claus Zittel (Berlin and Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2013). Irena Backus, in *Life-Writing in Reformation Europe: "Lives" of Reformers by Friends, Disciples and Foes* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), outlines the way the lives of reformers have served as influential tools of confessionalization for decades. See also Judith Anderson, *Biographical Truth: The Representation of Historical Persons in Tudor-Stuart Writing* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt211qz4d, and Andreas Schüle, "Einleitung: Biographie als religiöser und kultureller Text," in *Biographie als religiöser Text: Biography as a Religious and Cultural Text*, ed. Andreas Schüle (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2002), 1–20.

29. Weiss, "Friendship and Rhetoric," 17.

30. Weiss, "Friendship and Rhetoric," 48.

31. James M. Weiss, "The Six Lives of Rudolph Agricola: Forms and Functions of the Humanist Biography," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 30 (1981): 19–39, 37.

32. Burke, "Presenting and Re-Presenting," 393.

in biographies; here, Chytraeus's association of Charles's biography with his superordinate religious proclamation will be highlighted. The main focus of the investigation will thus be on the treatment of those Protestant values that were of special significance for the German Protestants in relation to crucial political events rather than on the biographical details of Charles's life and their politico-historical background. Moreover, the article does not seek to examine the history of the German Reformation per se, as the respective information can be gained from the extensive existing research literature on the topic, but tries to present a hitherto overlooked document of sixteenth-century religious and historical discourse.

Oratio historica: particularities of De Carolo Quinto

Biography was a flourishing form of literature from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Written in the vernaculars or in Latin by learned men of all professions and backgrounds, who turned humanists, artists, scholars, popes, or princes, both contemporary and historical, into literary subjects, biographies could show up in various genres.³³ Despite this lack of a uniform genre and despite its often laudatory drive, the early modern biography was usually perceived as historiographical writing—or at least as in some way historically charged.³⁴ Chytraeus's own teacher, Melancthon, rejected the

33. An overview of the ancient foundations of the biography is offered by Albrecht Dihle, "Antike Grundlagen," in *Biographie zwischen Renaissance und Barock: Zwölf Studien*, ed. Walter Berschin (Heidelberg: Mattes, 1993), 1–22, and Christopher B. R. Pelling, "Biography, Greek and Roman," in *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization*, ed. Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 116–18. Basic ideas on the development of the late medieval and early modern biography and its main representatives can be retrieved from Jozef IJsewijn, "Die humanistische Biographie," in *Biographie und Autobiographie in der Renaissance: Arbeitsgespräch in der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel vom 1. bis 3. November 1982*, ed. August Buck (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), 1–19; *The Rhetorics of Life-Writing in Early Modern Europe: Forms of Biography from Cassandra Fedele to Louis XIV*, ed. Thomas F. Mayer and Daniel R. Woolf (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Johannes Bartuschat, *Les vies de Dante, Petrarque, et Boccacce en Italie (XIVe–XVe siècles): contribution à l'histoire du genre biographique* (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 2007); Backus, *Life-Writing in Reformation Europe*.

34. IJsewijn, 4. See also Kagan, 5; Eckhard Kessler, "Das rhetorische Modell der Historiographie," in *Formen der Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Reinhart Koselleck, Heinrich Lutz, and Jörn Rüsen (Munich: DTV, 1982), 37–85, 71; Stefan Zablocki, "Die Biographie in der neulateinischen Prosa Polens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," in *Biographie und Autobiographie in der Renaissance*, 57–72, 57–59.

ancient division between *historia* and *vita*—as, for instance, voiced by the life-writers Plutarch or Cornelius Nepos—labelling most of his own fifty historico-biographical orations as *historiae* and hardly ever *vitae*.³⁵ In her recent study on early modern historical orations, Katharina Graupe has come to designate biographical orations along with all sorts of orations on past events or people (ancient, medieval, or early modern) as *orationes historicae*.³⁶

Even though the term *oratio historica* was only occasionally used by early modern authors, its concept was widely discussed from the beginning of humanism onwards.³⁷ Given that the *oratio historica* was not represented in the classical Aristotelian canon of oratorical genres (*genus demonstrativum*, *genus deliberativum*, *genus iudicale*) and did not actually exist in Antiquity, early modern theorists tried to figure out its place within the oratorical scheme. In a prominent and influential way, both Melanchthon and Chytraeus contributed to the debate. Melanchthon solved the issue by expanding the epideictic genre and adding to it all sorts of historical and biographical orations (historical narrations, eulogies, funerary orations, polemic orations) in his *De rhetorica libri tres* (1519). As, however, he came to deem the instructive side of these orations to be more and more important, he later in his *Elementa rhetorices* (1531) introduced a fourth oratorical genre, the *genus didascalicum* or “didactic genre,” which could house any literary form of instructive entitlement like historical and biographical orations, historiography, sermons, exegeses, and commentaries.³⁸ As in many instances of his work, Chytraeus essentially followed his admired teacher in that respect. He dealt with the *oratio historica* in his *Praecepta rhetoricae inventionis* (1556), a textbook supplement to Melanchthon’s *Elementa rhetorices*. While he adopted Melanchthon’s four-genre system, he ranked all orations on historical topics and people between the *genus didascalicum* and *demonstrativum*.³⁹

35. Heinz Scheible, “Melanchthons biographische Reden: Literarische Form und akademischer Unterricht,” in *Biographie zwischen Renaissance und Barock*, 73–96, 81–82; Weiss, “Friendship and Rhetoric,” 16.

36. Katharina Graupe, *Oratio historica – Reden über Geschichte: Untersuchungen zur praktischen Rhetorik während des spanisch-niederländischen Konfliktes im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2012), 47 and 50, doi.org/10.1515/9783110260144.

37. Graupe, 47.

38. Scheible, “Melanchthons biographische Reden,” 80–81 and Graupe, 53–54.

39. Bollbuck, 176–77 and 181.

Most of Melanchthon's and Chytraeus's historical orations are about the lives of outstanding historical figures (mostly of princely background or of political influence).⁴⁰ Hence, not surprisingly, their orations (including Chytraeus's oration on Charles V) often combine elements of historiographical narration with encomiastic elements of the traditional *laus personae* (praise of people). This practice was typical of reformatory life-writing, as the confessional conflicts raised the awareness of what was particularly virtuous (or reprehensible) for the respective community addressed.⁴¹ In their approach, however, Melanchthon and Chytraeus set unique examples of historico-biographical orations in the sixteenth century. Melanchthon, who "excelled in this genre,"⁴² introduced new features to render his orations more authoritative in terms of current political and confessional affairs—an approach his pupil Chytraeus would follow. The idea was to have the praise of a person not explicitly uttered by the use of encomiastic topoi known since Antiquity (which would make the biographies less historically credible and thus politically or confessionally less effective), but to have it emerge implicitly by a focused historical depiction of the individual's career and actions.⁴³ While ancient models of life-writing on military commanders and rulers like Xenophon, Cornelius Nepos, Plutarch, and particularly Suetonius often organized their biographies into a two-part-structure (part 1 containing the biographical details, part 2 entailing an account of deeds and habits in the form of a catalogue of virtues structured

40. To mention just the most important ones: Melanchthon wrote historico-biographical orations on the medieval emperors Otto I, Henry III, or Frederick I; further on the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus, Emperor Maximilian I, Frederick III, elector of Saxony, or Martin Luther. Chytraeus composed *orationes historicae* on the emperors Charles V, Maximilian II, and Ferdinand I; further on Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, Wolfgang, Count Palatine of Zweibrücken, or Johann VII, Duke of Mecklenburg.

41. Weiss accordingly argues that the standards of eulogies strongly influenced early modern biographical writing ("Friendship and Rhetoric," 15). For general works on literature of praise and blame in the early modern period, see John W. O'Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450–1521* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979) and Marc Laureys, "Praise and Blame," in *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World: Vol. 2: Micropaedia*, ed. Philip Ford, Jan Bloemendal, and Charles Fantazzi (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1148–50.

42. James M. Weiss, "Melanchthon and the Heritage of Erasmus: *Oratio de puritate doctrinae* (1536) and *Oratio de Erasmo Roterodamo* (1557)," in *Actes du colloque international Érasme (Tours, 1986)*, ed. Jacques Chomarat, André Godin, and Jean-Claude Margolin (Geneva: Droz, 1990), 293–306, 300.

43. Graupe, 91–92.

along the four cardinal virtues, prudence, courage, temperance, and justice),⁴⁴ Melanchthon either got completely rid of the second part or substituted it with a refined set of biographical information.⁴⁵ Behind that typological change of the biographical form stood—for the first time in its history—the realization that ancient biographers had been anything but keen historians. While authors like Cornelius Nepos or Plutarch had tried to imitate the anti-historiographical attitude of the Greek biographers of the fourth century BCE, others like Suetonius had not had any didactical intentions whatsoever, writing for non-political elites in favour of ahistorical perspectives.⁴⁶ In contrast to many of his fellow early modern biographers, Melanchthon understood that the ancient biographers could not serve as authoritative models for contemporary literary and historiographical understanding of the biographical form on the one hand and contemporary political needs on the other.

Chytraeus not only warmly recommended his teacher’s historico-biographical orations for imitation in his above-mentioned *Praecepta*,⁴⁷ but he also imitated them himself. His historical interest, often paired with a superordinate political message, is manifest in the fact that some of his orations conspicuously concentrate on historical details from a particular political perspective and dismiss the customary encomiastic flavour. One such example is his oration on Charles V. Here, Chytraeus does indeed maintain the two-part structure of a historico-biographical part on the one hand and a virtue part on the other (thus ignoring the five- or six-part-pattern typical of orations), yet he applies a special trick. Apparently on the assumption that the princely virtues of Charles are evident enough from the biographical sketch given in

44. Karl A. E. Enekel, “Modelling the Humanist: Petrarch’s Letter to Posterity and Boccaccio’s Biography of the Poet Laureate,” in *Modelling the Individual: Biography and Portrait in the Renaissance; With a Critical Edition of Petrarch’s Letter to Posterity*, ed. Karl A. E. Enekel, Betsy de Jong-Crane, and Peter Liebrechts (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1998), 11–49; Bartuschat, 15; Graupe, 65 and 67.

45. Graupe, 92.

46. Eric W. Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 414, doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226111544.001.0001.

47. David Chytraeus, *Praecepta rhetoricae inventionis. Oratio in funere Henrici Ducis Megaloburgensis. Oratio de oppido Suerino. Oratio de urbe Rostochio. – Vorschriften der Rhetorik. Rede zum Begräbnis Herzog Heinrich V. Rede über die Stadt Schwerin. Rede über die Stadt Rostock. Einleitung, Text und Übersetzung*, ed. Nikolaus Thurn, Friedemann Drews, Katharina Graupe, and Anja Lieske (Rostock: University of Rostock, 2000), 136.

chronological order (1–25; parents, birth, childhood, schooling, Charles’s rule in the Netherlands, Spain, and overseas, the imperial rule, abdication and monasterial life, death), the catalogue of virtues, that is, the entire second part of the oration, does not contain the usual reflection on the emperor’s cardinal virtues in terms of his public and private actions as a prince, but instead gives an account, arranged thematically, of his life as an ordinary private individual (25–40; Charles’s character and nature, memorable sayings, studies and erudite interests, habits of his private and everyday-life from morning routine to fatherly duties, life at the monastery).⁴⁸ In this case, we are not presented with a classical ruler’s biography-praise. The traditional *topoi* of virtue are abolished, and what emerges is a truthful historical description of Charles’s life and demeanour in the service of a politico-religious statement, namely the overcoming of the confessional split (discussed in full in the next two sections). Hence, Chytraeus’s look is not so much towards the emperor as towards his own audience. Whenever ancient authors and their imitators, in contrast, included information on the princes’ private life in the second part of their biographies—usually on topics like their matrimonial behaviour, family life, diseases, eating habits, leisure activities—they were kept at a strictly princely and topical level (the prince as a private individual with unique individual traits reflective of a certain political idea was a historical impossibility) and purely applied for eulogistic reasons rather than to make a broader social or political statement directed at the audience.

Chytraeus’s inclination as a Protestant historiographer towards historicity for the purpose of his instructive goal instead of exclusive topical praise in *De Carolo Quinto* is evidenced by many aspects. Among them are the style of his narration, his demonstrable consulting of sources, and his demystification of legends.⁴⁹ To begin with the style, Chytraeus’s oration complies with the plain yet elegant style norms of contemporary Protestant historiography—the so-called *stylus concisus* (concise style)—as promoted by humanists like the Dutchman

48. Graupe, 93.

49. To clarify: historiography, no matter if official or un-official, has never been an objective science written without any ideological leaning or partiality. As Kagan rightly observed, “[...] even the most high-minded and scholarly early modern historians had a nasty habit of ‘cherry-picking’ their evidence so as to achieve a particular reading of given personage, era, or event” (Kagan, 5). Just because Chytraeus is looking at Charles’s life from a specific angle and to a superordinate end, it does not follow that the biographical details are factually wrong or made up.

Gerard Geldenhouwer (1482–1542), who stated in the prefatory letter of his biography of the humanist Rudolphus Agricola (*Vita Rodolphi Agricolae Frisi*, 1536) that biographies as instructive historical forms are to be written simply and truthfully instead of pompously.⁵⁰ Geldenhouwer maintained close contact with Melancthon and the Lutheran circles in Wittenberg, after he had joined the Protestant movement during a visit to Wittenberg in 1525.⁵¹ Chytraeus surely had been familiar with Geldenhouwer’s work and his notions of historical writing since his time as a student in Wittenberg—hence his avoidance of the typical oratorical verbosity. The transition from a chronological narrative style to a casual descriptive style, where the biographical sketch switches to the account of Charles’s private life, is noticeable.⁵²

As to the historical sources, Chytraeus seems to have known and used at least three sets:

1. Guillaume Snouckaert van Schouwenburg’s aforementioned and, within Europe, widely distributed *De republica, vita, moribus, gestis, fama, religione, sanctitate Imperatoris* [...] (1559). Some of the anecdotes Chytraeus tells about Charles (27–31) show an intriguing similarity to Snouckaert’s work, which is in essence a collection of anecdotes.
2. The diplomatic relations by Venetian ambassadors visiting Charles’s court, such as Nicolò Tiepolo, Bernardo Navagero, Marino Cavalli, or Gasparo Contarini. Even though the Venetian relations tended to focus on the republic’s political interests in international politics, and mostly discounted the imperial politics of Charles in Germany, they can be considered as credible documents in terms of the emperor’s persona, given that they came from republicans free from any dependent relationship to Charles.⁵³ While Chytraeus once even directly refers to

50. Weiss, “The Six Lives,” 29. Generally on questions of style in the *oratio historica*, see Graupe, 394–404.

51. Barbara Bauer, ed., *Melancthon und die Marburger Professoren (1527–1627): Katalog und Aufsätze*, Bd. 1 (Marburg: Völker & Ritter, 2000), 232–46.

52. *Davidis Chytraei theologi ac historici eminentissimi [...] orationes*, ed. David Chytraeus Jr. (Hanau: Wechel, 1614), 25. Graupe (in Graupe, 93) mistakenly locates the switch on page 33. All quotations from *De Carolo Quinto* in this article are taken from this edition (1614) as it constitutes the latest revised version of the text. Page numbers are given parenthetically in the main text.

53. On the interests and prejudices of the Venetian ambassadors, see William Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defence of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation* (Berkeley,

Contarini's relation of 1525 when talking about Charles's sluggishness (28; "Legatum Venetum quidam detulerat" [A certain Venetian ambassador had reported]),⁵⁴ he borrows from the other three when, for example, describing Charles as a modest emperor refusing any pomp in appearance and life (33–34).

3. Johannes Sleidan's *Commentarii de statu religionis et reipublicae Carolo quinto Caesare* (1555), a history of the German Reformation and the Schmalkaldic War. Chytraeus not only knew the work quite well, verifiably using it for his *Chronicon Saxoniae*, for example, but he even approved of its impartial presentation of Charles V, contrary to many other leading Protestants such as Melanchthon.⁵⁵ In light of these circumstances, it is highly likely that Chytraeus especially took inspiration from Sleidan's "Protestant-friendly" description of Charles for his oration, even though Charles played only a minor role in the *Commentarii* (despite his prominent mention in the title).

In addition to these sources, it can be postulated for *De Carolo Quinto* what has been underlined for the *Chronicon Saxoniae* already, namely that Chytraeus was a man of personal observation, experience, and memory.⁵⁶ Many of the things he put down were things that he had seen on his many travels through Europe, that he had heard from the various princes, ambassadors, or secretaries with whom he met in his role as an advisor to the dukes of Mecklenburg and

CA: University of California Press, 1984), 118–19; on the credibility of the relations as sources, see Burke, "Presenting and Re-Presenting," 407, and Filippo de Vivo, "How to Read Venetian *Relazioni*," *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 34 (2011): 25–59, 27.

54. Informative extracts from Contarini's relation are printed, edited, and translated into German in *Quellen zur Geschichte Karls V.*, ed. Alfred Kohler (Darmstadt: WBG, 1990), 113–15. Chytraeus knew these relations, as they had—like many of the Venetian reports for which there was even a European manuscript and print market within Europe—illegally circulated at least in extracts and summaries since their official submission (see de Vivo, 26–27 and 33–36).

55. Paulsen, 41; Baker, 159–60.

56. Paulsen, 47–48; Klatt, 8 and 53–57. As becomes evident from his *De statu ecclesiarum in Graecia, Asia et Boemia [...] oratio* (1569) on the eastern churches, Chytraeus usually reproduced uncertain or untested details alongside impersonal phrases like "referunt" / "dicitur" (it is said) or "ut audio" (as I have heard); see Klatt, 87. Since these phrases, however, are entirely absent from *De Carolo Quinto*, we can surmise Chytraeus's thorough processing of the sources.

as an imperial commissioner, or that he had read in his correspondences with learned and influential men from all over the continent.

In terms of the demystification of legends, Chytraeus’s focus on historical facts is revealed, for instance, in the plain description of Charles’s family descent. By refusing to trace the history of the House of Habsburg to the Scipios, Noah, or Aeneas, as many influential historiographers like Albrecht von Bonstetten (1442/43–1504) or Johannes Stabius (1468–1522) had done and as many more would do until the eighteenth century—a concept about which Chytraeus explicitly makes fun in his *Chronicon Saxoniae* (1.75)⁵⁷—he committed to a correct genealogy that is historically more telling of the author than of the emperor. In accordance with these aspects, Chytraeus’s son (also named David Chytraeus) could confidently refer to *De Carolo Quinto* and other biographical orations in his preface to the 1614 edition of his father’s collected orations as the “histories of some great princes and of others” (4v):⁵⁸ “aliquot magnorum Principum et aliorum historias.”

Charles V in Lutheran light: delivery and publication of *De Carolo Quinto*

The “Protestantization” of Charles V is already visible in parts of the publication history of *De Carolo Quinto*. Despite its modern dismissal, the oration was met with some acclamation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was published under the title *De Carolo Quinto, Caesare Augusto, Davidis Chytraei oratio* (David Chytraeus’s oration on the venerable emperor Charles V) as a single print of sixty-two octavo-sized pages for the first time in 1583 in Wittenberg.⁵⁹ Left without any preface or introductory passage, the title additive only reveals that it has been “cuidam studioso praescripta” (written for a certain student to be given). All we know from the sources is that the oration was indeed held by a Belgian student at the Protestant University of

57. Paulsen, 90n130a.

58. Graupe, 93n123.

59. David Chytraeus, *De Carolo Quinto Caesare Augusto* [...] (Wittenberg: Krafft, 1583). The place of publication is incidental, as many of Chytraeus’s works have been published in different places (particularly in Wittenberg and Rostock, but usually depending on where friends of Chytraeus advocated for the print).

Rostock, Chytraeus's home institution,⁶⁰ in front of a customary audience—as the oration itself suggests—comprising university representatives and students, potentially even local dignitaries: “Reverenter itaque a vobis, viri clarissimi et adolescentes studiosissimi peto, ut me summa delibantem historiae vitae ac virtutum Caroli fastigia benigne attenteque audiatis” (4; Reverentially I beg you, men of greatest honour, and you, most eager students, to listen well-disposedly and closely to me elaborating on the most important details of the history of Charles's life and the pinnacles of his virtues). The reasons for the oration's composition remain obscure. However, there are two possible explanations: On the one hand, the city of Rostock and its surroundings were commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of having turned Protestant in the 1530s during Charles's reign,⁶¹ which offered a fresh impetus to celebrate the successful installation of Protestantism in accordance with the imperial policies. On the other hand, the context of the worsening of the political scene for the Protestant estates in the 1580s might have played a major role in Chytraeus's attempt, first to press for the end of confessional conflicts in the empire and, second, to demonstrate that previous emperors like Charles V had been much more kindly disposed towards the Reformation. The year 1583 in particular, the publication year of the first edition of *De Carolo Quinto*, saw the dawning of numerous tough disputes between the Protestants and the Catholics. In the Electorate of Cologne, for example, the Cologne War (1583–88) started to take its toll after Gebhard Truchsess von Waldburg, the prince-elect of Cologne, had converted to Protestantism and thus was forced to resign;⁶² at the same time, the Strasbourg Bishops' War (1583–1604) broke out as both Protestants

60. Lisch, 93n3. In the 1614 edition of Chytraeus's collected orations, a note between the oration's title and the oration's beginning runs “[oratio] a Belga quodam recitata” ([an oration] given by a certain Belgian).

61. See note 4, above.

62. Robert W. Scribner, “Why Was There No Reformation in Cologne?,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 49 (1976): 217–41, doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2281.1976.tb01686.x; Hannsgeorg Molitor, “Gebhard Truchseß von Waldburg als Studiosus,” in *Ortskirche und Weltkirche in der Geschichte: Kölnische Kirchengeschichte zwischen Mittelalter und Zweitem Vatikanum*, ed. Heinz Finger, Reimund Haas, and Hermann-Josef Scheidgen (Cologne: Böhlau, 2011), 107–24, 123, doi.org/10.7788/boehlau.9783412214128.107.

and Catholics failed to reach an agreement regarding the succession of the deceased Bishop Johann IV of Manderscheid-Blankenheim.⁶³

The second edition of *De Carolo Quinto* is likewise tied to a Protestant background. It was published later in 1583 together with two other imperial orations by Chytraeus—one on Emperor Ferdinand I, one on Emperor Maximilian II—in a collection entitled *De tribus nostrae aetatis Caesaribus Augustis [...] orationes*.⁶⁴ The subtitle reveals that the orations were “datae adolescentibus in schola recitandae” (held to be recited by pupils at school), which implicitly labels them as exercises for use at school. The particular school Chytraeus meant was the Protestant Latin school (*Landschaftsschule*) in Graz, for which Chytraeus had been commissioned by command of Emperor Maximilian II in 1574 to set up a reformed curriculum and regulations following the example of the Protestant schools in the German empire.⁶⁵ Hence, in the dedicatory epistle addressed to the sons—namely Balthasar and Georg Wagen, Johann von Stybich, Adam and Georg von Lengheim, and Georg, Heinrich, and Paul von Bibeswald—of some of the Protestant Styrian estates’ noblemen, Chytraeus stylizes himself as a “teacher of the (Protestant) youth” (4; “hortator sum iuventuti”), who wishes to instruct those to whom he felt gratefully indebted⁶⁶ and to provide them with three prime examples of wisdom, virtue, and clemency to imitate (5–6). Probably also in order to render the oration more entertaining for pupils, Chytraeus added not only some

63. James Kittelson, “Successes and Failures in the German Reformation: A Report from Strasbourg,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 73 (1982): 153–75, doi.org/10.14315/arg-1982-jg07; Gerhard Taddey, “Straßburger Kapitelstreit,” in *Lexikon der deutschen Geschichte: Personen, Ereignisse, Institutionen. Von der Zeitwende bis zum Ausgang des 2. Weltkrieges*, ed. Gerhard Taddey, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1983), 1204–05.

64. David Chytraeus, *De tribus nostrae aetatis Caesaribus Augustis Carolo V., Ferdinando I., Maximiliano II. orationes* (Wittenberg: n.p., 1583). Charles V, Ferdinand I, and Maximilian II were the three emperors under whose reign Chytraeus’s intellectual thinking and Protestant commitment were decisively shaped, hence his literary engagement with them.

65. Chytraeus’s assignment was accomplished in the course of his mission to design a new church constitution as well as a renewed church agenda for the Protestant estates in Styria and Lower Austria at the beginning of the 1570s. Lisch, 88; Ernst Wolf, “Chytraeus, David,” *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 3 (1957): 254, deutsche-biographie.de/pnd119009137.html#ndbcontent.

66. This is a reference to Chytraeus’s close relationship with the representatives of the Styrian Protestant estates, who would, in turn, express their gratitude towards Chytraeus in following decades by sending their sons and relatives to the Protestant universities of Wittenberg and Rostock; see Lisch, 93.

anecdotes and sayings by Charles to the original 1583 version to which young boys could supposedly relate (for example, the account of how much Charles loved weapons as a boy, on pp. 6–7) but also some instructive accounts typical of educational pieces of literature (for example, the mention of Erasmus’s mirror for princes, *Institutio principis christiani* [1516], dedicated to the young Charles, on p. 8). The orations on Ferdinand and Maximilian had already been composed and held in the 1570s, years before *De Carolo Quinto*. Chytraeus had devised the oration on Ferdinand on the occasion of the inauguration of the Latin school in Graz he had just reformed. It was delivered by the local pupil Sigismund of Saurau on 31 May 1574 in Graz. The oration on Maximilian had been written on the occasion of the emperor’s death (October 1576). It was held by the emperor’s godson and at the time rector of Rostock University, the Austrian baron Johannes Cyriakus of Pohlheim and Wartenberg, on 25 January 1577 in Rostock.⁶⁷

While a second edition of *De tribus Caesaribus* was published in 1587, the oration on Charles was also incorporated into the already mentioned collection of thirty-six of Chytraeus’s orations that his son published in 1614 under the title *Davidis Chytraei theologi ac historici eminentissimi [...] orationes* and dedicated to the Protestant Philip II, duke of Pomerania-Stettin (1573–1618).⁶⁸ As in the collection of letters the son edited and published in the same year (*Davidis Chytraei theologi ac historici eminentissimi [...] epistolae*),⁶⁹ there are no identifiable patterns of order. Potentially, the young Chytraeus simply wanted to offer the reader a varied mix of his father’s most important orations, starting with his most prestigious one: the oration on Charles V. In order for the Charles oration to reach a broader Protestant audience, Chytraeus’s son-in-law, the jurist Johann Georg Gödelmann (1559–1611), translated it into German in 1595 under the title *Des Großmechtigsten Keyzers CAROLI V. Leben/ Hochlöbliche Tugenden/ vnd Helden Thaten*. A comprehensive German translation of all three imperial orations (entitled *Drey Orationes [...] Von Den*

67. Lisch, 90 and 93n3.

68. One of the thirty-six orations was not by Chytraeus but on him: Johann Goldstein’s funerary oration *De vita et morte Davidis Chytraei* (746–71), held at the University of Rostock on 30 June 1600, the day after Chytraeus’s funeral.

69. Jürgen Leonhardt, “Der lateinische Stil in den Briefen des David Chytraeus,” in *Humanismus im Norden: Frühneuzeitliche Rezeption antiker Kultur und Literatur an Nord- und Ostsee*, ed. Thomas Haye (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 2000), 135–55, 140.

Dreyen Vnserer Zeite Grossmechtigen Kaisern, Nemlich, Carolo V., Ferdinando I., Maximiliano II. [...]), by the Protestant German translator and playwright Heinrich Rätel (1529–94), was published in 1607.

Charles V in Lutheran light: the actual oration

Like most of Chytraeus’s historiographical works and especially his biographies on contemporary princes, *De Carolo Quinto* is interspersed with Lutheran theology and contemporary confessionalized thinking.⁷⁰ In more concrete terms, Chytraeus formulates a message to his audience, offering a specific form of group identity within the Protestant community.⁷¹ The use of the Latin possessive pronoun *noster* (“our”) applied by the Protestant Chytraeus when referring to the Catholic emperor Charles in a text mainly directed at Protestant dignitaries, pupils, and students (see previous chapter) constitutes a telling argument in that respect—especially given the unsolved conflicts between the German Protestants and Charles in Chytraeus’s day.⁷² For instance, Chytraeus chooses to say “Carolum V. Imperatorem nostrum” (5; our emperor, Charles V) at the beginning of the biographical sketch; he makes Charles “Carolus noster” (16; our Charles) when he highlights the emperor’s prevailing against Francis I of France at the imperial election; similarly he claims Charles for himself and his Protestant audience as “noster Caesar” (31; our emperor) when dissociating him from the pagan Julius Caesar. In instances like these, Charles almost unnoticeably moves closer to the German Protestants than was really the case. And even though Chytraeus generally tries to stick to the facts and follow the rules of Protestant historiography, the emperor in the course of the oration becomes more Protestant than he was and is judged in a more positive way than he would have deserved from a purely Protestant point of view. Chytraeus achieves this effect not so much by forging the historical facts as by hiding many background details, as we will see at times in the following investigation.

70. Bollbuck, 38, 40, and 326.

71. For more information on the concept of collective memory in historiography, see Maurice Halbwachs, *Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen*, trans. Lutz Geldsetzer, 6th ed. (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2008).

72. Helpful overviews on that matter are provided by Heinz Schilling, “Charles V and Religion: The Struggle for the Integrity and Unity of Christendom,” in *Charles V 1500–1558 and His Time*, 285–364; William Maltby, *The Reign of Charles V* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 48–64, doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-62908-0.

However, the oration also strikingly adopts several elements typical of contemporary Protestant life-writing: that is, biographies on reformers, by Protestants, aimed at Protestants, which were not only about religious propaganda, and in which the idea of the preservation and restoration of faith by means of the virtues of the person depicted played a crucial role.⁷³ The main themes of these Protestant biographies involve the principles of *pietas* and *eruditio* (or *doctrina*); both find implementation in *De Carolo Quinto*.⁷⁴ At the oration's concluding point, Chytraeus even explicitly uses the terms while pointing out that Charles was a shining example of erudition and piety not only by having clung to them but also by having brought them back into the world (39).

This way of shaping the oration is owed to Chytraeus's persistent irenic effort to reconcile the interests of the Protestants with those of the Catholic Church: throughout his entire life, he fostered the ardent belief that the confessional division could be overcome.⁷⁵ To this end, he even drafted a confessional peace proposal under the instigation of Lazarus von Schwendi (1522–83), the advisor to Emperor Maximilian II, under Maximilian's rule.⁷⁶ One main archetype Chytraeus followed in "Protestantizing" his depiction of a Catholic ruler is Melanchthon's biographical oration on Otto I, Holy Roman emperor in the tenth century (*Oratio de imperatore Ottone primo*, 1540). Dedicated to Francis Otto, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg (1530–59),

73. Backus provides a representative number of examples on that behalf: Backus, vii and 95.

74. Chytraeus adopted these two principles of Christian humanism from Melanchthon, who assertively proclaimed them in his *Duo sunt, ad quae tanquam ad scopum vita omnis dirigenda est, Pietas et Eruditio* (printed in Ambrosius Moibanus, *Catechismi Christiani Capita*, 1533). Furthermore, Melanchthon's *Loci communes rerum theologicarum* (1521), which Chytraeus lectured on and thus knew very well, and his *Examen ordinandorum* (1552) likewise display the symbiosis of the two principles in exemplary fashion. See Thomas Fuchs, "David und Nathan Chytraeus: Eine biographische Annäherung," in *David und Nathan Chytraeus*, 33–48, 36; Marcel Nieden, *Die Erfindung des Theologen: Wittenberger Anweisungen zum Theologiestudium im Zeitalter von Reformation und Konfessionalisierung* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 92.

75. Ludwig Fromm, "Chytraeus, David," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 4 (1876): 254–56, 255; Bollbuck, 156. Unsurprisingly, Chytraeus's efforts owed much to Melanchthonian theology and Melanchthon's understanding of confessional bridge-building. For more on that, see Ragnar Andersen, *Concordia Ecclesiae: An Inquiry into Tension and Coherence in Philipp Melanchthon's Theology and Efforts for Ecclesiastical Unity, Especially in 1527–1530* (Vienna: Lit-Verlag, 2016), 157–324.

76. Unfortunately, the proposal was never enforced and is entirely lost today apart from some occasional notes in Chytraeus's letters. Klatt, 17.

who is stylized as an ideological successor of Otto I, the medieval emperor is turned into a “standard-bearer of reformatory ideas”⁷⁷ with the intention of strengthening the Protestant policies in the realms of Brunswick-Lüneburg.⁷⁸

Chytraeus’s oration sets off with a topical observation on the presence of God in truly virtuous men, from which then the real matter of the speech is logically deduced:

Testimonium providentiae et praesentiae Dei in genere humano eximium et singulare est [...]; etiam Heroicos Reges ac principes [...] adiuvat in rebus gerendis, ut eorum gubernatio felix sit et generi humano salutatis. Talem Heroem [...] fuisse Carolum V. Imperatorem [...] omnes cordati et prudentes viri agnoscunt. (1)

(The testimony of God’s providence and presence among the human race is exceptional and singular [...]; he also supports heroic kings and princes [...] in their actions, so that their rule may be fortunate and salutary for the entire human race. That Emperor Charles V was [...] a hero of this kind [...] is something that all reasonable and wise men admit).

Now, who of the Protestant audience and readership would refuse to be reasonable and wise? Who among them would refuse to accept a ruler sent and chosen by God? Who would dare to go against God’s will (5; “Deus aeternus et summus rex [...] imperia et regna in terris ipse constituit et transfert et cui ipse vult, tribuit” [the eternal God and highest King [...] himself designates and transfers power and empires on earth and he himself assigns them to whomever he wants])?⁷⁹ With this starting statement, Chytraeus already steals

77. Graupe, 88.

78. A comprehensive examination of the oration is offered in Graupe, 72–92; on further measures of presenting Catholic rulers in a Protestant light in Melancthon’s biographical orations, see Scheible, “Melancthons biographische Reden,” 73–96.

79. The connection between God and Charles is emphasized throughout the entire oration, thus echoing the reformed ideal of a ruler as God’s representative on earth. For example: “bonitatem et praesentiam Dei in Caroli V. gubernatione grati agnoscamus et sapientiam ac virtutem huius herois celebremus” (2; let us gratefully acknowledge God’s benevolence and presence in the rule of Charles V and praise both the wisdom and virtue of this hero); “heroica virtus et felicitas [...] a Deo bonorum omnium fonte

the (suspicious) Protestant audience's thunder; his "mission Protestantization" has only just begun.

That Charles is endowed with the four cardinal virtues of prudence, courage, temperance, and justice—the set of virtues classical biographies of rulers were determined by—is casually highlighted by Chytraeus in the course of the introductory passage cited above (1). Charles is explicitly declared a "hero" ("heroem"), characterized, among others, by prudence ("sapientia"), courage ("virtute et felicitate"), justice ("iustum"), and temperance ("moderatum"). Hence, having attended to the obvious virtues typical of a ruler's biography right at the outset of the oration, Chytraeus can fully concentrate on a different set of virtues for the rest of the text (especially in the second part), instead of dedicating the whole argument in customary manner to the exemplification of the four cardinal virtues. This different set of virtues is oriented towards the overarching religious dimension of the oration, presenting Charles's entire life in the light of *eruditio* and *pietas*. This already starts with his birth and childhood. To give two illustrative examples: Chytraeus associates the account of Charles's birth on 24 February 1500 with the seven-hundredth anniversary of Charlemagne's coronation as Roman emperor in AD 800. Yet while this association was quite common in the sixteenth century, to legitimize Charles's imperial claim and to advertise him as the "second Charlemagne,"⁸⁰ Chytraeus immediately restricts it to a religious argument by stating that Charles was born in the city of Gent "to where Charlemagne had for the first time brought the Christian religion" (5; "religionem Christianam in has gentes Saxonicas primus invexit"). This specification serves as an important measure to put Charles into the right religious frame directly from the start of his life. Of equal importance to Chytraeus in that respect is the topic of Charles's education and schooling,

praecipue donatur" (5–6; heroic virtue and bliss [...] are mainly given by God from his fount of all good things); "providentiae ac praesentiae Dei in gubernatione Caroli" (39; God's providence and presence in Charles's rule).

80. "Prophecies of a second Charlemagne had been in circulation for centuries, often linked to the hope of the coming of the Last World Emperor," in Burke, "Presenting and Re-Presenting," 418. Moreover, it is not by accident that Charles V was crowned emperor in Aachen; that two years later, in 1521, Charles V is compared to Charlemagne in the dedicatory preface of the new edition of Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*, while its title illustration renders them side by side; that Pietro Mareno amply discussed the tie between the two emperors in his *Compendio della stirpe di Carlo Magno* (1545); or that Guillaume Snouckaert alludes to both emperors in his above-mentioned history of Charles V (1559) in not less than thirty-nine instances. See Burke, "Presenting and Re-Presenting," 421.

as they take place during the decisive period in which the seeds of later life are sown. Hence, in order to polish Charles’s image as a pious and erudite prince, Chytraeus in particular highlights the influence of Charles’s tutors Adriaan Florensz Boeyens (the later Pope Adrian VI, a fact that Chytraeus cleverly omits in talking to his fellow Protestants) and Erasmus of Rotterdam (7–8). Both were known and acknowledged at the time for their countervailing views regarding the confessional split and for their eminent scholarliness in theological, moral, and political questions. Adriaan, in addition, is portrayed as the key figure responsible for Charles’s pre-confessional understanding of “disciplined piety” and the “virtuous practice of faith” (7; “disciplinae sanctitas” and “ad religionis et omnium virtutum officia”). This understanding was derived from the reform movement known as the “Modern Devotion,” which harked back to late medieval devoutness and was highly popular in the sixteenth-century Netherlands.⁸¹

From these general prerequisites of Christian values and the super-denominational trait of Charles’s nature, Chytraeus eventually proceeds to associating the emperor with concrete ideas of a Protestant way of life along the lines of *pietas* and *eruditio*. First of all, reflections on the typical reformed ideal of a ruler pervade different arguments throughout the oration. This ideal pertains to the imperial promotion of Christian faith on the one hand and the imperial defense of it on the other.⁸² The former finds expression in the way Chytraeus shows Charles’s efforts to not only Christianize the barbarians in his newly conquered overseas colonies, but also to set up proper functioning institutions to supervise the individual practice of faith (12 and 21–22); the latter is highlighted by the mention of Charles’s devoted fight against the common enemy of all Christians, the Turks (see p. 23 on the Siege of Vienna in 1529; p. 24 on Charles’s Conquest of Tunis in 1535). Charles as an emperor

81. On the Modern Devotion, see Otto Gründler, “Devotio Moderna,” in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. Jill Raitt (London: SCM, 1989), 176–93, and Jan van Herwaarden, *Between Saint James and Erasmus: Studies in Late-Medieval Religious Life; Devotion and Pilgrimage in the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2003). Charles’s pre-confessional and unconditional certainty of God’s existence, which Chytraeus refers to as “fiducia praesentiae Dei” (26), likewise stems from Adriaan’s teachings. Hugo Soly, “Introduction: Charles V and His Time,” in *Charles V 1500–1558 and His Time*, 11–25, 23.

82. Chytraeus elaborates on this concept in other historiographical works like the *Chronicon Saxoniae* or the *Explicatio Apocalypsis Ioannis* as well. Bollbuck, 11–12, 241, 271, and 324.

thus takes his rightful place in the divine plan of salvation according to the Protestant world view.⁸³ Chytraeus identifies the emperor's regular handling of the *praxis pietatis* (practice of piety) as the essential drive behind Charles's commitment to the Christian faith on a global scheme. According to Chytraeus, praying seemed to determine Charles's everyday life. Not only did he invest time in praying on a daily basis (26; "quotidianis precibus" [daily prayers]) but praying was even the first thing he did in the morning after getting up (33; "Mane priusquam vestiretur [...] genibus incumbens orabat" [In the morning, before getting dressed, [...] he would get down on his knees and pray]). As such—as Chytraeus had already emphasized in other works like his *Oratio in repetitionem locorum D. Philippi* (1554)—Charles's prayer served not only as an individual expression of piety, but also as a spiritual assistance in concrete political matters, especially those concerned with maintaining and promoting the Christian faith.⁸⁴

A further example of Chytraeus putting Charles in a Protestant light is encountered in the iterated mention of his willingness to reform. The emperor's religiousness was indeed not limited to mere traditionalism; he was driven by an active piety that bore close resemblance to Luther's doctrine *solus Christus* and the Protestant emphasis on *vera religio*.⁸⁵ These two principles are expressed pointedly in Chytraeus's description of Charles's death (37; "Inter [...] verae pietatis et fidei in Christo acquiescentis significationes illustres [...] Imperator ex hac vita discessit" [Under [...] the bright signs of true religiousness and the soothing belief in Christ [...] the emperor departed this life]). Moreover, these principles led Charles to persistently consider holding a council to reform the church (3; "Synodum [...] assidue a Pontifice flagitavit"; 37–38: "a Pontifice Synodum [...] perpetuo flagitavit" [he incessantly called upon the pope to hold a council]) to reunite the Protestants with the Catholics.⁸⁶ The fact that in reality Charles—despite his natural "Protestant disposition" in showcasing the two Lutheran principles—misunderstood Luther's aim, underestimated the political

83. Bollbuck, 285.

84. Nieden, 92–94.

85. Klatt, 7; Alfred Kohler, *Karl V. 1500–1558: Eine Biographie* (Munich: Beck, 2000), 49.

86. On Charles's claim in that respect, see Soly, 23. It is linked to a tolerance consonant with humanist ideals. See also Schilling, "Charles V and Religion," 306.

effects of the Reformation, and thus failed to react aptly to it,⁸⁷ did not keep Chytraeus from promoting the emperor as a conqueror of the confessional split on multiple occasions. He just silently ignores the real reasons for his indeed correct claims about Charles:⁸⁸ the Diet of Worms (1521), for example, at which Luther was banned, is mentioned neutrally from a distanced and uninvolved perspective (16); in terms of the religious wars in the German empire, Charles is even positively alluded to as being “eager, diligent, and assertive” (27; “industrius, laboriosus et efficax”)—which certainly no Protestant would have denied; the results of the Diet of Augsburg (1530), at which, among others, the emperor was confronted with the Augsburg Confession, are presented as efforts on the part of the emperor to safeguard the empire and its dignity (23; the negative results against the Lutheran Church are weakened by the application of the conjunction *etsi* [even though])—which essentially was also true; the Peace of Passau, putting an end to the Second Schmalkaldic War (1552–55) and forcing Charles to make concessions to the Protestant cause, is depicted as the reason why the Protestants eventually managed to strengthen their doctrines (24–25)—a likewise true statement from the Protestants’ retrospective point of view. The only reason that Charles did not succeed in reuniting the two churches after all is explained by Chytraeus by the fact that the church follows divine rules (38; “Quod vero tentata [...] conciliatio Ecclesiarum infelix fuit: cogitemus [...] Ecclesiam non regi humanis consiliis” [Yet as to the matter that his attempt at [...] conciliating the churches failed: let us assume [...] that the church is not governed by human resolutions]).

While features like the conciliatory efforts of the emperor regarding the confessional split or his association with the principle of *vera religio* can be encountered in many contemporary Neo-Latin texts on Charles by Protestant

87. Soly, 23. For more details on Charles’s religious struggle, see Schilling, “Charles V and Religion,” 285–364.

88. Charles’s real motives behind his seemingly inconspicuous political behaviour regarding the following instances, and its effects on the German Protestant community, can be followed up neatly in Hans Wolter, “Das Bekenntnis des Kaisers,” in *Der Reichstag zu Worms von 1521: Reichspolitik und Luthersache*, ed. Fritz Reuter (Worms: Stadtarchiv Worms, 1971), 222–36; Keller, *Die Confessio Augustana*; Heinz Schilling, “Veni, vidi, Deus vixit: Karl V. zwischen Religionskrieg und Religionsfrieden,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 89 (1998): 144–66; Alfred Kohler, “Kaiser Karl V. und der Passauer Vertrag,” in *Der Passauer Vertrag von 1552: Politische Entstehung, reichsrechtliche Bedeutung und konfessionsgeschichtliche Bewertung*, ed. Winfried Becker (Neustadt: Degener, 2003), 139–50.

German writers,⁸⁹ a typical theme of Protestant life-writing—though usually applied to biographies of reformers—appears in Chytraeus’s oration on Charles as well: the anti-papal attitude.⁹⁰ Like a proper Protestant or at least a proponent of Protestantism, Charles is depicted in many instances as a ruler in opposition to the pope and the papists. Chytraeus insinuates that it was only upon the intrigues of the Holy See, who wanted to see the German empire in turmoil, that the emperor had to enact regulations against the Protestant estates (3; “incitatus a Pontificiis Carolus edicta in religionem nostrum duriora aliquoties proposuit” [stirred up by the papal authorities, Charles issued rather cruel edicts against our confession]); Charles, however, Chytraeus continues, always preferred settling the confessional dispute by means of negotiations instead of armed force (4; “benevole componere dissidia Ecclesiarum studuit” [he sought to end the confessional dispute in a peaceful way]).⁹¹ Similarly, Chytraeus never considered the emperor an enemy of the Reformation in his other historical works like the *Chronicon Saxoniae*; rather, he depicted him as a victim of his loyalty to the Roman Church.⁹² And although the Reformation indeed jeopardized Charles’s notion of emperorship that was traditionally bound to Catholic values and the religious entity of the universal monarchy,⁹³ there might have been some actual truth to Chytraeus’s opinion. After all, Charles not only eventually ensured the peace and the existence of the German empire in the Peace of Augsburg (1555) but also frequently stood up, from the Protestant point of view, in irenic ways against papal authority when negotiating with the Protestant estates.⁹⁴ In *De Carolo Quinto*, the emperor’s opposition is expressed

89. Wiegand, 129.

90. Wiegand, 129; Backus, 87 (highlighted by means of Josiah Simler’s biography of Heinrich Bullinger).

91. Klatt, 49; Bollbuck, 271–74. Chytraeus gives a similar judgment on p. 27: “in Germanico adversus principes et status protestantes bello, ad quod ab initio imperii Pontificum et asseclarum furis assidue incitabatur [...]” (during the German war against the Protestant princes and estates, to which he [Charles] was constantly incited from the beginning of his rule onwards by the furies of the Holy See and the papal adherents).

92. Klatt, 24.

93. Kohler, *Karl V.*, 26.

94. A range of examples from Charles’s reign are listed in Burke, “Presenting and Re-Presenting,” 424–25; Walter Keller, “Der Reichstag von 1530: Der Versuch Karls V., die Kirchenspaltung zu verhindern,” in *Kaiser Karl V. und seine Zeit: Katalog zu den Ausstellungen der Bibliothek Otto Schäfer, Schweinfurt, des Stadtarchivs Schweinfurt sowie des Fördervereins und der Forschungsstiftung für Vergleichende*

by his sustained call for a council to undo the confessional split (alluded to above), by the explicit hint at Charles’s knowledge of the “many [...] vices and abuses [...] in the papal church” (3; “multa [...] vitia et abusus [...] in Pontificia Ecclesia”), and by the description of Charles’s sack of Rome in 1527 as a campaign against the pope (22). In the context of the latter, Chytraeus does not hold himself back in portraying Pope Clement VII (1478–1534) as the opposite of Charles in terms of pious virtue. He even paints him as the emperor’s enemy.

Next to these many instances in which Chytraeus highlights Charles’s piety and understanding of true religiousness, it is his focus on Charles’s erudition that brings *De Carolo Quinto* closely into line with Protestant life-writing. Melanchthon has infiltrated Chytraeus with the belief that lifelong learning and study are inevitable building blocks of the Reformation and Protestant ethics, as they facilitate a deeper understanding of the world, on the one hand, and moderation, one of the central virtues of religious men, on the other.⁹⁵ From this belief resulted Chytraeus’s depiction of Charles as both a disciplined and an inquisitive person. To begin with the former, Chytraeus takes great pains to show every detail of the emperor’s private life (that is, the entire second part of the oration) in the light of moderation, balance, and discipline far off the stereotypical exuberance and moral degeneration of a Catholic as seen by many contemporary Protestants. Accordingly, for instance, Charles is described as displaying a “singular love of justice, equanimity, and moderation” (25–26; “cum amore iustitiae, aequitatis et moderationis singulari”); “he kept a cool and calm countenance in favourable circumstances as well as in unfavourable” (26; “in rebus secundis et adversis vultus constantiam et tranquillitatem retinuit”); “he consequently [...] abstained from drunkenness and all excess of feast or attire or other pleasures” (33; “Ab ebrietate et omni conviviorum et vestitus luxu et voluptatibus caeteris [...] alienissimus semper fuit”); in matters of fidelity to his wife he proved to be the “adornment of chastity himself” (34; “Ipse etiam casti pudoris decus”); he sought harmony at home, “barring disputes from his

Europäische Überseegeschichte, Bamberg, ed. Stephan Diller (Bamberg: Univ.-Verlag, 2000), 52–61, 54–7; Kohler, *Karl V.*, 13, 27, 208, 211, and 296. Charles was even known for stating that his religious consciousness was not derived from the values of papacy, but exclusively from the dynastic values of the House of Habsburg; see Kohler, *Karl V.*, 155–56.

95. A pointed discussion of the benefits of humanist studies for Protestantism is found in Melanchthon’s biography of Luther. James M. Weiss, “Erasmus at Luther’s Funeral: Melanchthon’s Commemorations of Luther in 1546,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 16 (1985): 91–114, 103, and 105, doi.org/10.2307/2540935.

lodgings” (35; “foedis ex contubernio illius exclusis”). In sum, “Charles’s private life at home was full of the most genuine examples of piety, self-control, frugality, and modesty” (33; “Interior etiam et domestica Caroli vita honestissimorum exemplorum pietatis, temperantiae, frugalitatis, continentiae plena fuit”).

When it comes to the exhibition of Charles’s proper studies, Chytraeus strives to almost make a polymath out of the emperor by exemplifying his broad range of knowledge from astrological and mathematical calculations to historical, theological, and spiritual interests: “Nec vero mathemata tantum, sed omnia doctrinarum et artium honestarum studia Carolus amabat et munificentissime fovebat” (32; Charles not only loved and most generously fostered the mathematical sciences but all studies of reputable knowledge and ingenuity). His thirst for lore in the field of astronomy, for example, is depicted as having been so strong that “between battles [...] he would pursue astronomy and reflect on the laws and orbits of the celestial rotations” (31; “media inter praelia [...] siderum doctrinam colebat et revolutionum coelestium leges ac periodos considerabat”). Chytraeus even adds an anecdote in that respect, according to which Charles had the renowned cosmographer and mathematician Petrus Apianus (1495–1552) called to his imperial camp near Ingolstadt during the Schmalkaldic War, in order to have the planetary motions of an orrery explained by a nearby expert (31–32).⁹⁶ In terms of other fields of knowledge, Chytraeus particularly mentions Charles’s interest in the history of the German and Spanish empires as well as in ancient history (32). Among his favourite books, which he read “with great pleasure” (32; “magna cum voluptate”), ranked Thucydides’s *History of the Peloponnesian War*. For the emperor it supposedly offered the right amount of insight into human behaviour as well as analyses of military campaigning and governments; he forced his counselors to read selected passages from it in order to jointly discuss them afterwards (32). Finally, Chytraeus implies that the emperor’s abdication and retreat into the Monastery of Yuste in 1556 provided the ideal opportunity to combine his piety and erudition. At the monastery, he would dedicate all his time to studying the works and sentences of Bernard of Clairvaux when he

96. Apianus was, at that time, employed at the University of Ingolstadt. After he became a trusted friend of the emperor, he dedicated his *Astronomicum Caesareum* (1540) to him and eventually rose to the position of court mathematician. George Kish, “Apian, Peter,” in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, vol. 1, ed. Charles C. Gillispie (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1970), 178–79.

was not busy praying or meditating (35).⁹⁷ His sincerity in doing so was most respectable, so that “even death responded piously and placidly [...] to his life” (35; “Vitae [...] actae, exitus etiam pius et placidus respondit”).

For the purpose of presenting Charles to the Protestants and making him an example of interdenominational efforts, Chytraeus employs a special additive: his unusual historical look at Charles’s private life. As a textual feature it helps him both display the emperor’s abovementioned discipline regarding his domestic life and generate sympathy for Charles among his Protestant audience. After all, in-depth insight into Charles’s private life—and the personal knowledge such implies—increases the authoritative potential of Chytraeus’s message. The success of Chytraeus’s use of anecdotes and memorable sayings as a way to bridge the distance between an audience (Protestants) and rulers (the Catholic emperor), to yield heartfelt sympathy and change the common view, has been widely acknowledged in many different texts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (especially in historiographical texts).⁹⁸ In the case of Charles V there is even clear evidence of the success of this method, since, for example, his positive posthumous reception in the Southern Netherlands was heavily influenced by the distribution of his sayings and funny anecdotes from his life.⁹⁹

De Carolo Quinto is furnished with a veritable number of anecdotes of, and sayings by, Charles. Especially in the second part they show up in high density, taking up almost a third of the entire account (27–31). Even the otherwise prosaic biographical sketch of the first part contains a few of them, though they do not actually suit its plain scholarly tone. For example, Chytraeus illustrates Charles’s predilection for weapons with the aid of an anecdote from the emperor’s childhood (6–7): At the age of eight, Charles was to be painted on canvas upon the order of his grandfather, Emperor Maximilian I. However, the painter had a hard time getting his job done, because Charles would constantly turn his face away from the painter towards the walls, which showcased weapons. In the second part of the biography, the anecdotes (usually

97. Bernard of Clairvaux was highly esteemed by the Protestants during the sixteenth century. Luther himself praised Bernard’s theology and spirituality, which eventually rendered him an early forerunner of the Reformation in the broader Protestant perception. Adriaan H. Bredero, *Bernard of Clairvaux: Between Cult and History* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 173–75.

98. Burke, “Presenting and Re-Presenting,” 470.

99. Burke, “Presenting and Re-Presenting,” 468.

ending in dictums) are not presented as random illustrations, but they are comprehensively compiled to form a “sub-chapter” of their own. Most of them show the emperor’s dark and pointed humour, but they also present him as a good observer of human weaknesses. To give just two examples: When asked his opinion on the German diets—which he hated to attend and of whose uselessness he was convinced—he dryly stated: “Diets give birth to diets, [...] and delivery suffocates the mother” (28; “Diaeta diaetam parit, [...] et partus suffocat matrem”). Another time, while crossing the Rhine, he produced the argument that the major German fortresses had been built high up on mountains in order to offer greater safety, adding cynically: “Yet nowadays anyway [...] some people construct their fortifications underground in order to be closer to hell” (29; “Sed nunc [...] sub terra quidam munitiones aedificant, ut inferno sint propiores”).

In the end, Chytraeus is so committed to portraying Charles in a Protestant light that he applies another typical feature of Protestant life-writing: the apologetic element. Yet while biographies of reformers (for example of Martin Luther or Johannes Oecolampadius) usually exonerated their subjects from notions of heresy,¹⁰⁰ Chytraeus conversely uses this measure to exonerate Charles from conventional Catholic tendencies. The entire closing of the oration (37–40) is entitled to this confessional discharge. It contains a summary and reminder of Charles’s virtue, clemency, and moderation, his contributions to the peace of the empire, and his efforts in reconciling the two churches. For this purpose, Chytraeus first employs a reference to Charles’s conquest of Wittenberg in 1547, which put an end to the Schmalkaldic War. During this conquest, Charles is said to have rejected his generals’ prompt to show his power over the Protestants by exhuming and burning Luther’s corpse at the castle of Wittenberg with the famously grave words: “I am not at war with the dead.”¹⁰¹ From this anecdote there later emerged the formation of propitiating legends of Charles within Protestant circles, acknowledging his respect as a Christian towards other Christians.¹⁰² Chytraeus refers to this anecdote as part of his absolution of Charles by stressing that the emperor has never behaved in an unjust way towards the Protestants: “a crudelitate et suppliciis abstinuit.

100. Backus, xx.

101. Karl Goedeke, *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen: Band 2, 4. Buch: Von der Reformation bis zum dreißigjährigen Kriege*, 2nd ed. (Dresden: Ehlermann, 2011), 151.

102. Schilling, “Charles V and Religion,” 294–95.

Ipsae etiam Wittebergae in suam potestatem redactae, clementer pepercit” (38; he [Charles] refrained from any atrocity and punishment. He even benignly spared Wittenberg after he had conquered it). In addition to this anecdotal reference, Chytraeus’s discharge of Charles is pervaded by requests to the Protestant audience to be thankful to Charles and to celebrate his achievements (often put in the summoning first person plural subjunctive, for instance: “grati agnoscamus et celebremus” (37; let us gratefully acknowledge and celebrate). The discharge finally culminates in the unequivocal prompt directed at the Protestants to not only hear or read of Charles’s conciliatory demeanour, but to also imitate it: “Virtutum etiam exempla illustria non solum ad cognoscendum, sed etiam ad imitandum ex hac Caroli historia sumamus” (39; Let us take these distinguished examples of virtue from the life of Charles not only for the sake of knowledge, but for the sake of following them).

Concluding remarks

By highlighting Charles’s irenic tendencies, by putting him in a “Protestant” light, and by portraying him so personally likeable as to render him an identity figure even for Protestants, Chytraeus makes an offer to the Protestant audience to reconcile with the Catholic side that is in line with contemporary Protestant life-writing. Being an ardent believer in the overcoming of the confessional split, Chytraeus projects his Melanchthonian idea of *concordia* (concord) as a model of rule and society onto Charles V.¹⁰³ The emperor thus posthumously becomes a symbol of the balance of interests and the harmonious interplay between the estates and the confessions. The repeated emphasis and varied mention of his love of justice, self-control, and even-tempered nature on almost every single page stand, at a higher level, for confessional balance and peace in times of resurgent conflicts between the two confessions in Germany (namely the 1580s), which Chytraeus must have observed with concern.

The Protestants surely were not entirely averse to receiving Chytraeus’s plea. The fact that especially towards the end of his rule the emperor seemed to merge political power and a sense of failure fascinated both his contemporaries and posterity and appeased particularly the Protestants with respect to his policies.¹⁰⁴ Almost endearingly, Charles is thus depicted at the end of

103. Bollbuck, 344.

104. Soly, 12.

Chytraeus's oration as a broken and repentant sinner dwelling in the Monastery of Yuste, only finding peace of mind in spirituality (35–36). Nineteenth-century historiography misleadingly criticized Chytraeus for having portrayed Charles “way too benevolently”¹⁰⁵ in *De Carolo Quinto* in terms of the emperor's relationship to Protestantism. Yet Chytraeus's conviction was not owing to formulaic panegyrics. His own irenic nature, which is broadly documented through his life and works,¹⁰⁶ led him to believe in the feasibility of difficult political tasks and “to express his belief not by means of open criticism but by means of exhortation hidden in affirmation.”¹⁰⁷

105. Paulsen, 53: “mit zu viel Wohlwollen behandelt.“

106. See, for example, Schütz, ch. 4, p. 64; Paulsen, 14; Klatt, 4; Keller, *Die Confessio Augustana*, 159–86; Leonhardt, 153–54.

107. Otfried Czaika, *David Chytraeus und die Universität Rostock in ihren Beziehungen zum schwedischen Reich* (Helsinki: Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft, 2002), 303: “Sein Weg war nicht offene Kritik, sondern in Affirmation versteckte Ermahnung [...]”