

Pietas et Eruditio – The theological foundation of Philipp Melanchthon’s edu- cational reform attempts with regard to his ecclesiology

1 Introduction

Since his life time Praeceptor Germaniae was the honorary title of Melanchthon. With it one ought to focus on the work of a man who had dedicated his life a theological grounded pedagogical reform to support the Lutheran Reformation. Actually, praepceptor Germaniae, does not cover the whole Melanchthon and his work. In fact, the „graeculus“ – our little Greek as Luther used to tease him with his profession in regard to his outer appearance – reach far beyond the limitations and geographical borders of the Old Empire and impacted with his writings, reports, iudicia, letters, lectures and visits schools, teachers and finally students in overall Europe.

Another error should be noted. Even though Melanchthon identified himself as a teacher his reform attempts were deeply rooted in his theological convictions and was closely related to Luther’s Reform in Wittenberg. Reformation and educational reform became two sides of a medal and cannot be separated. Thus I opt for labeling Melanchthon as Praeceptor ecclesiae – teacher of the church; and you may add: of Europe.

I want to illustrate this idea a little further within the next three quarters of an hour. It seems to be an odd undertaking: The thesis of a close relation between reformation and educational reform attempts is reproduced in many books and articles. Nevertheless only a few researchers really started out to bring up the proofs. Many Studies in the last century focus on Melanchthon as pedagogian and his impact on schooling and university reform but from a theological perspective just a handful relevant studies been published in the last decades.

There are quite a number of publications focussing on pedagogical writings of Melanchthon. Recent results of research can be summarized in six paragraphs:

1. Even though we have editions or reprints of nearly all of the relevant texts they have with little exception never been interpreted in its historical settings and context. It cannot be overseen that many arguments and writings of the Wittenberg reformers depend from concrete questions and challenges out of recent discussions and conflict. On the contrary most of the interpretations in modern Melanchthon-Research were outlined on a specific systematic background. Questions for the structure, motives, subjects and finally the “theology” of Melanchthon dominate inquiries for the genre, language, arguments and finally the style of Melanchthon which would allow some insight in his hermeneutics and finally his theological thinking in progress.
2. Other interpretations look for Melanchthons from a fairly modern perspective. Especially in the context of pedagogical reform during the 20th and 60th of the last century his pedagogy was scanned for models and ideas with no respect to a historical distance of 450 years. Not only modern pedagogy but also theological conflict impacted the research. Melanchthon became either the fountainhead of the declining powers within the reformation movement or the liberal how never found respect by hard headed, modernity resisting Gnesio-Lutherans.
3. Of systematical design are finally those interpretations who analyse Melanchthon’s relations to humanists, other late medieval or antique precedents. Likewise Melanchthons relation to contemporary theology and piety has been treated. E.G. scholastic theology appears more or less in the light of its reformation and humanist critique if not polemical caricatures as they had been pictured by reformation polemics. This does not only distorts a true understanding of late medieval theology it also warps the intention of the Reformers. The question for motifs and keywords even darkens the differentiated argumentation and disguise the individual accentuation of parallel arguments and notes.
4. Most recent historical research focussed in the light of social history on quantitative analysis and their implicate heuristic. With that the original theological intention of the Reformers in Wittenberg seems to be put to the margins or even beyond. The theological and philosophical background and the pluriformity of late medieval theology and piety seems to fade.
5. A lack of research still stays on with regard to

- a) the development of pedagogical reform attempts through the first decades of Reformation until confessionalisation in the second half of the sixteenth century,
- b) the literary genre, language and series of arguments with a certain regard to antique rhetoric as re-invented by humanist writings,
- c) a thorough analysis of the ideological and historical roots of terms, metaphors, motifs and arguments,
- d) concrete discussions and communication networks about or even with other reform attempts and theological as much as pious alternatives (not to speak about nonconformists and dissenters,
- e) parallel developments in 'catholic' or reformed areas.

6. Within the last decades quite a number of research has been done with regard individual schools, foundations of schools by the Wittenberg theologians, surveys focusing on one particular territory. With the edition of visitation records, church- and school ordinances and other highly interesting source material some more overview could be given. Nevertheless an interpretation of Melancthon's reform attempts has not been worked out with regard to these new findings.

I am not going to fill in these gaps within the next hour. I will concentrate on one aspect. Melancthon's theologically grounded educational reform attempts and its relation to his ecclesiology.

2 Die historische Entwicklung

Reformed attempts to the reform of schools and universities happened when a certain decline of schooling and education was no longer to oversee. Erasmus ironically remarked that where reformation takes place education declines. As much Melancthon took advantage to put forward some evangelical reform ideas to reestablish an educational system which is not endangered by scholastic rigidity and/or middle class utilitarianism and hostility to anything else which does not improve their business and belongings. After the visitation of 1528 in imperial Saxony he notes: "Who will take responsibility for the stupidity and stubbornness of the people. My heart bleeds if I see this incredible misery. I often go astray to cry out my grief when we have finished another location. Who will not lament about the fact, that the good gifts of humans are wasted and turned up side down, and that

the mind, which would be able to learn and to acknowledge, not even knows about its Lord and Creator.” Melanchthon saw clearly that behind a certain religious enthusiasm a clear and distinctive education would be covered and finally drowned. The Wittenberg Reforms showed inevitable success: Luther’s 1524 published tract „To the majors and elders in all German cities to erect schools ... found several editions and acceptance. Some schools were founded by Melanchthon. His Wittenberg students took over administrative responsibility and/or became directors: Magdeburg 1524 [since 1527 Georg Major], Eisleben 1525 [Johann Agricola], Nürnberg 1525 [Joachim Camerarius]. Melanchthon’s reform attempts can be found in the 1527 visitation ordinances. The last paragraph “about schools” takes up the urgent admonition for educational engagement: »The preacher may admonish the folk to send children to school that we educate people who are able to teach in church or to help ruling the country. There are still some out who think it is enough for a minister if he is able to read German. That is a dangerous delusion. Those who want to teach needs a certain training and a special ability to do so. If one really wants to get this one has to learn from the early beginnings on.

Parallel to some initiatives for the education in elementary and grammar schools Melanchthon developed some plans who to teach and what to teach, sketched out a scheme of three classes (Haufen) and their time tables. Much more, however, Melanchthon was interested in higher education and university curricula. »Schola« in his terminology means “Higher school” if not “University”. It was not coincidental that Melanchthon arrived in Wittenberg with an almost formulated program for a reform of studies in Wittenberg. August 28th of 1518, more or less three days after his arrival in Wittenberg, he lectured about the improvement of education in universities. Since he became lecturer in Tuebingen Melanchthon tried to reform the traditional canon of disciplines within the liberal arts. To the »Trivium« with grammar, dialectics and rhetoric and the following »Quadrivium« including arithmetic, geometrics, astronomy and music he added some humanist models following poetry and history. For Wittenberg he accentuated the languages, especially Greek and the need for mathematics and history.

Melanchthon focused in his reform attempts on academic introduction (Propaedeutik), the “artes liberales”. All students attended classes at the philosophi-

cal faculty before continuing in one of the three higher faculties as medicine, law and theology. For many students the examination at the lowest faculty was sufficient to find a job and start a carrier with in city administration or at court. After a long time of distressing negotiations Melanchthon was able to hire 10 professors for the liberal arts department, who taught Hebrew, Greek, Latin, poetry, mathematics (two professors) dialectics, rhetoric, physics and moral philosophy (Ethics). Accentuating the studium trilingue put previous teaching about cognition theory and epistemology to the margins and finally extinguished the flames of a long time burning conflict between Via Antiqua and Via Moderna.

Even though Melanchthon was not the only responsible professor for the continuing reform he was certainly the one who launched the strongest initiatives. His reform of the artes pushed other faculties forward. Already before he entered the Leucorea the scholastic traditions had been weakened by a stronger focus on biblical studies and a thorough reading of the fathers, especially Augustine. Four professors for exegetical studies lectured on the Old and the New Testament and added seminars on selected sources of the authors of the Early Church like »De spiritu et littera« of Augustine or the Nicene Creed. Doctrinal questions were treated within the exegetical lectures. Even though Melanchthon identified himself not only with the disciplines of philology and theology. His interest had no boundaries. He read – and taught – nearly every discipline in philosophy and got engaged in natural science. His comprehensive knowledge was institutionalized when in 1525 the elctor of Saxony Johann der Beständige reformed the University. Melanchthon was allowed to teach – like Luther – what he wants to and he became professor of both faculties: theology and philosophy. His chair was filled anew. With the winter semester of 1523/24 Melanchthon became rector of the Leucorea. He was able to use his time to put two issues forward: the education in languages and a certain curriculum (program) which respects individual potentials of the students. He invented preceptors, some kind of a tutor, which had the responsibility to guide and admonish younger students.

Nevertheless the main problem of universities in these times – and not only in these times – were finances. Most of the chairs were endowed by the church and needed to be established or institutionalized. The close linkage to the Catholic

Church had to be loosened and secularized. Ecclesiastical income had to be transferred in to secular budgets and used for education and the establishment of schools. That's why the highly ambitious reform of 1525 came in 1536 to an end. The statutes of 1546 finally legalized this long ongoing process. With that Wittenberg became the model of several reform attempts and new foundations within the growing number of protestant territories, cities and estates.

Melanchthon's impact to the educational system in Germany is, however, not limited to organizational or administrative ideas. Long-lasting and extremely broad was the influence of his handbooks and writings even in catholic schools and seminars. They just cut out his name or blacked it with ink. The broad variety is hardly to overview and Wilhelm Dilthey certainly does not exaggerate labeling Melanchthon the greatest didactical Genius of the century. Melanchthon published a large amount of grammar books which were used long time up to the 18th century. He wrote books in dogmatic and ethics, on rhetoric and dialectics, about physics and medicine (psychology), tracts on law, geometry, mathematics, even astrology. He formulated speeches, orations, declamations, poetry, and history books; he edited Latin and Greek authors. Probably his greatest impact Melanchthon had through his students to which he stayed in close contact his whole life. His letters of which Heinz Scheible collected 9500 pieces spread a large communication network all over Europe. Facing this incredible work which certainly is not completely represented by his writings and written leftovers we have to ask for the motive of his engagement. What was is what made Melanchthon the *praeceptor Germaniae*?

3 Where has pedagogy its place in Melanchthon's doctrine?

3.1 *Die Kirche als »coetus scholasticus«*

Melanchthon at no time had a fixed elaborated ecclesiology. As most of his doctrinal convictions his understanding of the church develops under the influence of certain dialogs, conflicts, and discussions. As long as he lived and that means of

course as long as he was able to work, he corrected, worked out, reviewed and accentuated his ecclesiology. None of his sentences cover the whole field and none of his sentences can be taken for the whole. It is part of his academic creed to revise the results of his reflections continuously. Experiences and results of dialogs merge with his previous understandings and statements.

When we attempt to sketch Melanchthon's ecclesiology we probably cannot do more than a very rough draft. A full overview cannot be given. Thus I will concentrate on one main topic, Melanchthon's understanding of the church as „coetus scholasticus”.

1. As part of his creational duties man has to learn and teach. That is part of his *imago Dei* in the understanding of Melanchthon. Within the larger context of Luther's distinction between law and gospel what Melanchthon takes over the pedagogical acting of man is treated in the realm of the law, more specifically as part of its „*usus civilis*”. Melanchthon is deeply convinced that Universities and schools had been established by God through his word/law. God himself directs and protects studies. Education following his demand can be judged by its function toward future service for God. This is the main goal of Melanchthon's educational reform: To know about the will of God and to develop a certain obedience which follows the call and devotes life and energy/power for the service of God – within his church. That is what doctrine and education are for. Doctrinal education is part of ecclesiastical preaching. Even though Melanchthon does not limit the ecclesiastical preaching to that, the communication of evangelical doctrine is understood as a major part of *ministerium verbi divini*. Consequently Melanchthon understands church as school and faith as a lifelong ongoing learning process.

2. In the centre of this analogy of School and Church Melanchthon sees the transmission of faith and its practical consequences for the life of the believer – both actually from Generation to Generation. His phrase of the church as „coetus scholasticus” became famous, even though it was published the first time a year before Melanchthon died. In the „*tertia aetas*” of his „*loci communes*” Melanchthon discusses Roman ecclesiology and rejects the hierarchy of ministries, papacy and succession as essential issues of the church. These institutions were established by human law (*humana auctoritas*). This is not forbidden but clearly subordinated

to the divine law and the authority of the Apostles. Church depends on the word of God alone and is bound to his command. Thus human sentences and laws cannot force the Church. On the contrary: A church which follows human law will loosen its connection to the word of God and will merge with secular power. This is Melanchthon central complaint against the roman church, which followed led by the papacy more human rationality and became a picture of secular opinions. This false and misleading analogy Melanchthon contradicts with a more appropriate analogy of church and school. School is dedicated to the common search for truth. It does neither follow a formal authority nor a democratic poll. "Sola scriptura" – the word alone can judge answers to the question for truth. In other words: God himself is the one who judges the church. Nevertheless Melanchthon knows about tradition and its function within the search for truth. The confession of faith as formulated by the fathers of the ancient/early church as summary and abbreviated form matching the word of God has nearly the same authority as the word of God admittedly without any addition or cut of the original truth.

With regard to his understanding of the doctrine of church Melanchthon's analogy between church and school has three consequences:

Church is visible, where the true faith is taught and communicated from generation to generation. Without doubt this is one of Melanchthon's most important convictions. That's where his heart beats. For church its function as teaching church (*ecclesia doctrix*) is essential: "This teaching church we love and connect our invocation and confession with its oration and confession. This „ecclesia doctrix“ has not only authority to preach the gospel and to break the force of habit, but also to hinder that reckless spirits do not overcome the assembly of God and by defining new doctrines do not respect the faithful preaching. Thus the majority of Melanchthon's sayings about church deal with questions of doctrine and preaching. This conviction may have provoked Melanchthon's harsh polemics against Anabaptists and other dissenters; probably also his support of the secular and ecclesiastical forces who fought the Anabaptists in Muenster or his support of Calvin and the Magistrate of Geneva executing Michael Servetus in 1553.

„Ecclesia doctrix“ can be found where the Spirit gave his gift to interpret Scriptures (*donum interpretationis*). This gift of spiritual authority has to be distinguished

completely from any other authority as been given in political or social surroundings/environments. The authority to interpret the gospel with power to guide the auditors through their individual afflictions and temptations grounds in the authority of God as he had given it to the Son and the Spirit and through these to the Apostles. Staying as close as possible to this „doctrina per Apostolos tradita“ founds historically the lively continuity of the church and blocks any intruding heresy or betraying heterodoxy. Nothing can be added to the original doctrine. Likewise no sentence can be approved which is in contradiction to the apostolic doctrine.

For Melanchthon's understanding of the doctrinal authority of church it is of essential importance, that the gift of interpreting Scripture cannot be reached, awarded, bought, or merited. It is a gift and not available following particular procedures. To interpret Scripture is a potential which can be given by the Spirit of God and thus a consequence of his free and unprecedented power.

This continuity in preaching and teaching is furthermore grounded in the complete and undoubted agreement of the individual faith with the testimony as given in Scripture. For Melanchthon the faith has to match word by word, literally the confession of the Early Church. Here alone the true community of the elected children of God can be found. As Melanchthon wrote on Himmelfahrtstag 1554 in an invitation for a public disputation: "It might happen that people laugh about us, for we repeat from time to time in lectures and disputations the same issues. Nevertheless this is highly appreciated that we repeat consequently similar items for the church has to give from one Generation to the other the same things with the same words in the same manor." Melanchthon's understanding of doctrinal continuity includes explicitly the verbal agreement of biblical sentences and formulations of the creed. The institution which guaranties this agreement of matching formulations is doctrine. Doctrine watches, guards and protects evangelical truth performed as continued teaching and preaching of verbally matching sentences of truth/faith.

Neither the elementary catechism nor theological studies search for a differentiated knowledge of individual positions within the wide range of theological opinions. Melanchthon looks for a thorough consensus as it is represented by the ten commandments, the sermon on the mount, passages about sacraments and church,

creeds of the Early Church (symbola) and finally in the Augsburg Confession. It can hardly be denied that Melanchthon looked for able and potential future ministers. Although his pedagogical reform is led by a more general intention: to establish a broad, wide ranging, knowledge of passages in Scripture which enable humans to orient their lives toward God.

Finally the analogy of church and schools points to a certain agreement of their institutional structures and with it to the merger of their predetermined patterns. After its large reform process came to an end the faculty for theology invited for its first formal celebration of promoting a doctor of theology. For this occasion Melanchthon wrote an oration which was performed on October 10th, 1543 by Bernhard Ziegler, Professor for Hebrew, entitled „About the necessary conjunction of schools and the ministry to preach.“ Obviously there is a close linkage between Melanchthon's first lecture in Wittenberg, his manifold reform attempts, and this programmatic lecture. It has to be understood within the context of an ongoing reform process in Albertine Saxony since 1539. Melanchthon puts academic theological studies in the wider horizon in society and its sake. Schools, Universities, and Churches can be developed only in their close connection and linkage:

»I want to talk about humanist schools. I hope to show that schools have accompanied churches by God's own request and are linked to them regularly. Mankind is created as social being. In their community the light of the knowledge of God will glow, to venerate God and to worship him. Also man is created to teach each other in the doctrine of God which opens the Gates to eternal joy and everlasting community with God. You know already that such an assembly of man is comparable to a school, in which its attendants mainly have to think about God and virtues ... Likewise in Church all capable people have to look for the ultimate goal – to develop society, to establish and protect it - , do spread the knowledge of God from its center to the margins and beyond.”

God revealed himself in Scripture. Simultaneously nature functions as an open book to reveal God's essence and his most merciful will. Christ only may overcome these revelations. That is the reason for the church has to proclaim God's word and with it his merciful will, for God wants „ that all humans may be comforted by this doctrine. ... Because God wants that the prophetic and the apostolic books to

be preserved in Church to guide our sense and mind through Holy Scriptures and to inflame our knowledge of God, it is necessary to add schools to the Churches. They may communicate science and transmit the word of God in an understandable and reasonable, at least appropriate manor.”

In the following Melanchthon goes through world history to proof that God at any time had called teachers into his service which mediated his doctrine to the people.

Thus the relation between God and man always had its roots within the church:

„From this survey you can see evidently that on the one hand schools had been closely linked to the church at any time. On the other hand it became obvious that when studies declined the light of the Gospel was extinguished. Because it is so secular authorities have to protect churches and universities by their power. Without any doubt it is one of the most essential duties of a secular authority to preserve and keep the knowledge of God within its subordinates.” Melanchthon continues to show how philological studies and humanist education ideally may help to reach this goal of Christian-humanist education and to establish schools following this ideal. Melanchthon ends with a strong admonition of secular authorities to take over responsibility for education and schooling: »Schools are indispensable for the protection and preservation of faith, religion, civil, domestic, and public order. How can, I plead, the future design of empires and cities be worked out if no education and teaching of academically trained people has enabled the authorities for? ...

That’s why nobles and city magistrate have to defend public schooling, to improve education, and to endow graciously. If so universities will enrich, embellish and praise the authorities. Not at least universities will provide courts, magistrates, administration and churches with able and competent servants.”

It is thus not God’s commandment alone but also the reported history of his Church and God’s gracious acting in and through it which Melanchthon takes as proof and example for his reform attempts. Consequently he demands a thorough study of Church History: What is more pleasant than to think about the Early Church, to get confirmed by its witnesses and encouraged to administer and lead the parishes of today in manor and morals by its example. Both together, God’s commandment and the history of obedient heirs in the learning and teaching assembly of the faith-

ful give the most essential argument for Melanchthon's theological religious foundation of reform attempts for schools and universities.

4 Consequences

4.1 *The Goal of theological Education*

The care of science in general as much as of theology in particular has three main interests: First of all it improves the knowledge of Scripture as God's revelation and with that the announcement of his will, and finally the practical transformation of his commandments. Secondly theological education forms a new generation of able and capable ministers, teachers, civil servants etc. who will continue to proclaim the Gospel and to administer the church. With that these young people will help to put forward Christian doctrine and the establishment of Christ's eternal kingdom. Thirdly this education provides not only church but also secular authorities and institutions with highly loyal and most effective servants who will help to establish, improve and develop an evangelical society and community.

4.2 *Melanchthon and Tradition*

These attempts allow Melanchthon to develop his understanding of education critically distancing himself from late medieval tradition as much as to contemporary positions of protestant opponents. They at least force him to reflect and accentuate anew his propositions. Although this continuously changes some of the aspects and concrete arguments we may sketch out fairly rough a draft of Melanchthon's convictions: His reform ideas are grounded within a certain framework of reformation theology. Melanchthon understands that teaching and learning of Christians within the Church belong systematically to the dogmatic topos of "usus legis civilis". To those who see Melanchthon weaken the Lutheran understanding of justification by faith alone which has no place for a responsible action of man and accuse him of putting forward synergetic tendencies, he might answer: Pedagogical actions does not force salvation or even guarantee redemption and justification.

Melanchthon stresses the three sola - »particula exclusiva« - but education widens and establishes knowledge about God's mercy and grace and enforces awareness of God's plan of salvation in Christ. Melanchthon develops in the context of his anthropology a doctrine which stresses responsibility of man for his actions, his full capability of guilt, and finally his opportunity to distinguish voluntarily and free between good and evil. These ideas finally lead him to develop his highly disputed understanding of the three causes for a good action. Within the glaring contrast of Sin and Grace pedagogical action is hardly to proof and unfold. Melanchthon looks for a via media which on the one hand includes some breaks and tensions which is on the other hand able to transform Luther's insights into a handy theory of practicable orientation and pastoral care. Within that we might see Melanchthon's lasting importance and heritage.

Even though Melanchthon criticizes sharply traditional and contemporary attempts he still stays open to take over their good elements. E.g. his language shows a clear linkage to the erasmian understanding of education (fingere, formare, educare). He also refers to some renaissance writers by taking over their ideas of exercise and imitation (exercitare, imitare) especially in his understanding and performance of the classical ideal of eloquence. The term erudition (eruditio) relates Melanchthon to some particular tradition of late medieval theology and its implementation of Aristotelian ideas. Most recent research could show that Melanchthon also was open to receipt Neoplatonist cognition theory and its methods. However, it is not clear yet how these were transmitted and communicated to Melanchthon.

4.3 The ethical focus of Melanchthon's educational reform attempts

Even though Melanchthon started out from his university experience his reform ideas are not limited to that field. He pushes forward an idea of general education which enables nearly everyone to read Scripture and understand the will of God. With this in mind Melanchthon designs education as training for any dimension of human life. Education should provide with competence to face the manifold temptations and afflictions of daily life and to orient even though distorted by many issues human life toward God. Education enforces moral judgment and improves

ethical competence. Very much abbreviated Melanchthon's understanding of education can be labeled "ethical".

This ethical focus has roots within an evangelical consensus which matches the doctrine of the Early Church. For Melanchthon it is essential to proof his concrete ecclesiastical or political advice by its agreement with the "consensus verae doctrinae evangelii". Academic Theology finds its main duty in a handy formulation of this continuous doctrine in its time and context. Nevertheless it is not allowed to change doctrine or to cut or add anything to or from it. Next to the knowledge of languages historical studies are of essential importance. Following this scheme Melanchthon re-organizes the canon of sciences (*orbis literarum*) of which theology is the coronation/crown and the goal of academic training.

The exchange of academic theology (*doctrina*) and its practical transformation (*fides et caritas – pietas*) characterizes probably Melanchthon's theoretical formation of education most profoundly. Melanchthon understand theological science as trinity of reading, teaching and comfort/consolation. In a first attempt students have to unfold the foundations of faith, i.e. to read Scripture. This should happen in a daily exercise of translation, interpretation and meditation. In a second step students should reconnect their insights in the whole of God's revelation in Scripture and its formation of evangelical doctrine in the Church. With that the readings steps out of the vernacular of individual knowledge into a clear and perspicuous horizon of ecumenical, i.e. in the original meaning "catholic" understanding of Scripture in Christianity. The individual acceptance of single insights does not constitute a strong connection to the church and membership within the assembly of Christian. That needs a lively faith which covers any part of human existence and its connection to the creation of God. That does not exclude challenges, doubts, temptations and afflictions. That is one of the major duties of theology, to destroy doubt and to comfort the afflicted. Consolation is the final goal (*finis ultimus*), the greatest work (*ultimum opus*) and the most general destination (*summus gradus*) of theology. Now it becomes clear why the reformers got so much engaged in educational reform. Impacted by reformation theology the biblical goal which without too much tension was accepted together with humanist reform attempts is turned into the general orientation of life: Neither has Melanchthon some kind of ascetic perspec-

tive focusing on an reclusive meditation of the godly truth, nor does he follow a model of pedagogical approach to improve human nature and cognition. On the background of the Pauline-augustinian, clearly anti-pelagian understanding of grace and justification both positions are impossible for him. The work of God, who alone infuses faith which allows man to recognize God, can be accompanied by schooling, but certainly is not supported, aided, guarded, or initiated through human teaching. Education allows improving human ability to read Scripture, which as the word of God reveals his will and gives through this orientation to understand creation and orientate personal life. Thus education may explain the relation of God and man in recognizing the great gap between both partners of this by the Latin phrase »homo peccator et deus iustificans«.

4.4 *Pietas et eruditio*

The close linkage between piety and erudition was at all times subject of Melanchthon's reflections. In 1538 he wrote in his dedicatory preface to the catechism of Ambrosius Moibanus, that both are the columns on which Christian life is built. For obedience to the word of God allows viewing God loyalty to God's commandments include joy for the pious. As piety looks inward or beyond objects of the outer space, erudition mediates insights and knowledge about the world, in which we live and its inhabitants. The uneducated turns necessarily everything in unjust or inappropriate understanding for he lacks the benchmarks for a just judgment. Melanchthon, however, is even more concerned about the semidocti – the half educated –, which empowered by their vain self-esteem cause a lot of chaos and riots. Because of that the pious should watch out, that he for himself but also with regard to his relatives takes care for a thorough and wide ranging education. (ut solidam sibi absolutamque eruditionem paret).

Education/knowledge on the one side piety/faith on the other are no alternatives which compete. Neither requires pious life a sacrificium intellectus, nor forces secular service to give up Christian convictions. Church is asked to recognize education as one of the manifold gifts of God. Vice versa it has a certain charm if po-

litical authorities and high ranked representatives of society develop certain theological knowledge and perform pious reflection.

Since his early time Melanchthon had looked intensively for this relation: "Uneducated lifestyle causes public agnosticism." Faith/piety and Education/erudition are combined in a extremely successful and fruitful relation, which at no time comes to identity, but which is related much deeper and substantial as post-enlightenment separation wants us to understand.