The Sack of Rome and Cultural Memory
A German Humanist's Response
(the Case of Philip Melanchthon)

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Introduction

For Germany, the day of the Reformation was a time of global transformation, when ideas about ordinary things changed, old doctrines were mercilessly criticized, and new ones formed. For a long time, the cultural processes initiated by Dante and Petrarch had little concern for the Germans. However, in the mid-15th century, something, that Jean Delumeau called "cultural expansion" had begun: humanist ideas, fused in the cultural space of the intellectuals of Florence, have been invading Germany since the 1430s.

In fact, Italy has since become a signpost for Germany for the development of culture, art and science. The cultural community of Germany begins to read tracts of Italian humanists, and humanistic centres – Florence, Venice, Rome, become a place of pilgrimage of the German scientific elite. These cities became sites for cultural communication, where people could deepen their knowledge of ancient languages, attend lectures of famous teachers, and exchange views.

The fascination with antiquity for German humanists was accompanied by the integration into the pan-European Republic of scholars (*Republica litteraria*) and the annexation not only of pan-European but also of ancient Greco-Roman culture, which in the 16th century became an organic part of the "cultural memory" of German intellectuals. However, the Reformation (1517) divided the German humanists into different sides of the ideological barricade. Accordingly, the attitude of Luther's followers to Italy and towards the Italian humanist centres was changed. Rome, which was associated with the papacy, Catholicism, debauchery and delusion, was particularly obstructed. But such a radical change in attitudes towards memory sites, under certain conditions, would inevitably have to conflict with the individual's cultural memory. The focus of our attention will be the narratives of the German humanist and reformer Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), who,

as one of Martin Luther's closest associates, after the events of 1527 (Sacco di Roma), changed his rhetoric about the city of Rome.

Therefore, *the relevance of the study* is that we will attempt to explain how the memory of the past depended on contemporary Melanchthon events and influenced its self-identification. This problem is also relevant because until 1518 Melanchthon was a typical representative of "northern humanism", but his move to Wittenberg (1518) and communication with Luther, made already known in the European scientific community humanist one of the main leaders of the Reformation. At the same time, *the purpose* of the paper is to identify those factors that have prompted Melanchthon to identify himself as a humanist in certain situations.

Historiography and sources

The problem of self-identification and the humanistic work of Melanchthon during the Reformation is not new in historical science. These stories were addressed by Wilhelm Maurer *(Maurer, 1967)*, who, in the framework of a monographic study, paid much attention to the humanistic upbringing of Melanchthon and how the humanistic worldview manifested itself in the Reformation. In researching Melanchthon's biography, Heinz Scheible also focused on the features of Upper Rhine humanism, emphasizing its connection with Italy *(Scheible, 2001: 46-64)*. We can also call the work of Marion Bechtold, where the author appealed to the problems of functioning of the pan-European "republic of scientists" *(Bechtold, 2011: 291-301)*. In one of our publications, we also discussed Melanchthon's humanistic work in strengthening and building a "republic of scholars" by establishing epistolary communication *(Kotliarov, 2014: 15-19)*, emphasizing that the humanist paid particular attention to this type of communication because growing from an ancient tradition it became an important element that combined German humanists with the culture of Italy.

As a source, we take some documents that are represented in the sense that, depending on the changing historical context, Melanchthon's view of the role and place of individual Italian cities in pan-European and Christian history has changed, and which shows what was the case for Melanchthon-humanist "place of remembrance" and a "sacred landscape of memories" during the Reformation. These are documents such as: "A Speech in Honor of the Opening of the New Nuremberg School" *(Melanchthon, 1997: 96-105)* of 1526; a speech on Improving Youth Education (1518) *(Melanchthon, 1981:*

499-514); letter to the Italian humanist Johann Baptist Ignatius in 1543 *(Melanchthon, 2010: 249-251)*; a speech on the occasion of the plundering of Rome (1527) *(Melanchthon, 2010: 227-239)*.

Methodology

Regarding *the methodological approaches* of the study, we note that the problem of Philip Melanchthon's self-identification will be considered in the plane of the concept of "places of memory" by the French researcher Pierre Nora and in line with the theory of "cultural memory" developed by German scientist Jan Assman based on the ideas of Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945). The choice of these methodological approaches is explained by the fact that from the 15th century, German humanists, admiring antiquity, integrated into the pan-European Republic of scientists, and at the same time joined what Pierre Nora called *places of memory (Nora, 1999: 26)*.

We use the term "memory locations" ("commemorative places") (French *lieux de mémoire*, German *Erinnerungsort*) in the sense proposed by Nora to designate important places that form a special area of collective memory. These are not only tangible objects but also everything related to a deep intellectual tradition. However, if Nora speaks of memory sites only in the context of national history, we tend to treat them in a global sense, in European relations and those that can be considered as distinctive for different national communities. This is the way the authors of the three-volume study of German memory sites, edited by Etienne François and Hagen Schulze *(Deutsche, 2001)*, have refused to view the German nation as a closed entity, and their "understanding of memory sites is more dynamic" *(Vasylev, 2015)*.

Concerning the concept of "cultural memory", its author, the modern German scholar Jan Assman, believed that cultural memory is a specific form of transmission and modernization of cultural meanings that has every culture. It is a generic concept for all knowledge that governs actions and experiences within specific frameworks *(Vasylev, 2014: 369)*. Also, Assman, speaking about the phenomenon of the cultural memory, introduced the concept of "mnemotopes", which he defined as certain topographic "texts" of cultural memory, "culture that remembers" *(Assman, 2004: 63)*. These topographic "texts" represent a natural space that is not so much "marked by" monuments "as it rises to the status of signs" *(Assman, 2004: 63)*. Therefore, even entire areas, according to Assman, can serve as cultural memory. In this sense, the scientist mentions Rome, noting that this city already in antiquity represented a "sacred landscape" *(Assman, 2004: 63-64)*.

Results

Our appeal to the views of Pierre Nora and Jan Assman aims to show that, for the German humanist community, the individual territories of Italy became topographic "texts" of the cultural memory, since humanists, including Philipp Melanchthon, identified themselves, as part of the European Republic of Scientists, began to perceive the Italian sites of memory (the "sacred landscape") as their own, proud of belonging to a great culture. In this connection, it is appropriate to mention Nora, who stated that "glorifying the past, we glorify ourselves". And "the greater the origin, the more it magnified us" *(Nora, 1999: 36)*. In this connection we can mention, for example, the German humanist Conrad Celtis (1459-1508), who, justifying the Germans' belonging to the heritage of antiquity, popularized the idea of "broadcasting from the ancient Greeks through the Romans and to Germans of a certain universal historical and cultural mission" *(Doronyn, 2010: 126); (Muhlack, 2002: 143)* thus, put compatriots in one associative semantic series with representatives of glorious civilizations.

The logical consequence of the new cultural processes was that a significant number of Italian cities, especially those that became centres of humanism and the Renaissance, emerged in the works of German humanists as outposts of science and culture, guided by wise rulers, with an ideal political and social system, and as memory locations. But this essentially idealized image of Italy was radically changed with the beginning of the Reformation (1517). The intensification of the denominational struggle led to a rethinking of the cultural significance of Italian cities, especially Rome. For the German Reformers, from the first days of the religious struggle, Rome and the Roman Church became synonymous with the embodiment of debauchery, abuse, vanity, and the embodiment of apocalyptic Babylon. This can be traced back to the first September edition of the Bible (1522), where Lucas Cranach illustrates Rome's engraving of the easily recognizable Castle of Sant'Angelo that housed the Pope's residence. But did Philip Melanchthon, the Reformer and the leading Reformation theologian, always hold that view? And if not, what were the reasons for it and how is it linked to "cultural memory" and "mnemotopes"?

To begin with, let's take Melanchthon's speech, which he delivered in Nuremberg in honour of the opening of the new school on May 22, 1526. As an example, Melanchthon referred to ancient Greece (Messalia), and from modern cities focused on Florence. The humanist drew attention to the existence of cultural continuity and the fact that Florence became an important

link in the relaying of ancient values (including Christian ones), which made it a great boon for Christian civilization: it gave refuge to expelled Greek scholars *(Melanchthon, 1997: 101-102)*. When Melanchthon glorified Florence as an exemplary city of humanism, he followed a vulgate of Italian origin (studied by Clémence Revest), adding his personal and Protestant anti-Roman pun *(Millet, 2019: 15-26)*.

Using Assman's terminology, Greek scholars appear in speech as carriers of "cultural memory", since "cultural memory always has its own special media. These include shamans, bards, griots, as well as priests, *teachers, artists, writers, scientists* [highlighted by us – PK] tangerines and others, no matter how they are called in different cultures of this empowered knowledge" *(Assman, 2004: 56)*. It is no coincidence that Melanchthon recounts the events of the late 14th century, when a significant number of Greek scientists emigrated to Florence, among them the famous Manuel Chrysoloras (b. 1355-1415). He arrived in 1397 at the invitation of the Chancellor of the Republic of Coluccio Salutati and humanist Niccolo Niccoli to teach Greek at the Florentine *Studium*. Thus, Melanchthon stated: "The city did not only support the fugitives with its hospitality, but also provided an opportunity for scientific activity, promoted science, and provided money for life" *(Melanchthon, 1997: 101)*. At the same time, other cities in Italy did not show hospitality and wise prudence and did not support the fugitives. If Florence were also left alone, with the loss of Greece, humanity could have lost the Greek language and science *(Melanchthon, 1997: 101)*.

The idea of the relationship between the loss of Greek and the decline of religion is also red-hot because of a speech "Improving Youth Education" *(Melanchthon, 1981)*, in which he stressed that the decline of the Church, science, culture and art was caused by the fact that Greek was forgotten and neglect led to a distorted understanding of Christian antiquity, a distortion of truth and the loss of the holiness by the Church. Therefore, the revival of the Greek-speaking Florentines is also the revival of the Church.

Thus, Melanchthon, constructing in the imagination of listeners an idealized image of Florence, appeals to things that Assman calls "exciting elements of cultural memory", the focus of which is aimed at "unique, special, new, advanced" *(Assman, 2004: 74)*. To reinforce the "unique, advanced and special", as the exclusive virtues of the Florentines, at the other pole, the humanist reveals the image of papal Rome. Rome, in the eyes of Melanchthon, a city of barbarians where Greek fugitive scientists "were forced to endure poverty and famine, although, in fairness, says the humanist, the papal

means would have to be used predominantly on needy people as well as those involved in the sciences, related to religion" *(Melanchthon, 1997: 103)*.

In this connection, Melanchthon recalls an example from Theodor Gaza (Greek Theodore Gaza) of the Greek humanist 1370-1475, when he presented to the Pope a lavishly decorated translation of Aristotle and Theophrastus. Melanchthon notes that the Pope only asked how much the salary was. And I paid only for the salary. "And no remuneration for the great work the author took on translating such complex texts" *(Melanchthon, 1977: 103)*. We should recall that known for his humanistic views, the creator of the Vatican Library, Nicholas V, invited Theodorus Gaza and the incident occurred with Pope Sixtus IV, the founder of the first public museum, which was called the Capitol and named after him Sistine Chapel.

Sixtus too, actively rebuilt Rome: he restored the old basilicas (S. Maria del Popolo, S. Maria della Pace) and the ancient aqueduct Aqua-Virgo, erected the *Capella Magna* (now the Sistine Chapel) and the *Ponte Sisto* (*Lee*, 1978: 144, 142, 136), increased the Vatican's library fund, and attempted at reforming the Julian calendar (*Lee*, 1978: 121). It is only a small fraction of those grandiose transformations initiated by Sixtus IV. Therefore, it is difficult to believe in the candour of Melanchthon that the dignitary philan-thropist and patron of the sciences did not appreciate the importance of the work done. However, in the speech of Melanchthon the Reformer, the Pope was no one but a barbarian, who can only appreciate the glitter of gold and not understand the value of the text.

Was Melanchthon alone in such estimates? One may mention the invec-tive towards Rome by Erasmus of Rotterdam and the criticism of Rome by the authorial collective Letters of Obscure Men *(Epistolae, 1924)*. The anti-Roman rhetoric intensified during the Reformation and became widespread. Melanchthon agreed with this assessment. Although often in separate trea-tises and speeches, he repeatedly mentioned the names of Greek thinkers who found a second homeland and patrons in the papal capital. The same Johann Argyropoulos, who at one time studied Johann Reuchlin, lived in Rome and had his own school there (*Melanchthon, 1856: 14-15*).

Melanchthon could not have known that the famous Manuel Chrysoloras having worked in Florence and Milan since 1408, entered the service of the papal curia, which kept him and valued the scientist for his knowledge. Ignoring the known facts can only be explained by the fact that his percep-tion of Rome and the Popes occurred in the context of ideological reform and social struggle, which changed and distorted the view of the historical past, "mnemotopes" and "sacred landscape of memories". How not to mention

the fair remark of Lorina Repina that "Memory is always driven by interest", and changes in perception "concerning to the historical past are related to social phenomena" *(Repyna, 2003: 12-13)*.

Nora has his own say even more sharply, calling such distortions amnesia: "Memory is life… it is in the process of constant evolution, *it is open to the dialectic of memory and amnesia*, not conscious in its successive deformities, subject to all uses and manipulations." *(Nora, 1999: 20)*. Against this background, we can assume that historical amnesia severed cultural ties, nullified cultural memory, and destroyed the idea of "broadcasting from the ancient Greeks through the Romans and the Germans of a certain universal historical and cultural mission" *(Doronyn, 2010: 126)*.

However, Melanchthon's rhetoric was dramatically changed after the events of 1527. Then, on May 6, Charles V's landsknechts, led by Charles de Bourbon, seized Rome, and subjected it to a merciless slander, dubbed the Sacco di Roma. The destruction of Rome lasted for several weeks and in its aftermath exceeded the early medieval barbarian robberies. When the news of Sacco di Roma reached Wittenberg, Protestants met it with different emotions. This event, for the most part, was regarded as the natural punishment of Rome and the Pope for sins and abuse. Luther publicly condemned the capture of Rome but could not resist the poisonous pin: Christ made it so that the emperor who persecuted Luther for the Pope destroyed the Pope for Luther. He also defined the event as the fulfilment of God's judgment on the papacy *(Luther, 1933. WA Br. 4, 222 9-12. Nr.l 122.)*.

But for Melanchthon, it was a tragedy. Immediately upon receiving the news, the humanist wrote a small treatise, "Deploratio captae Romae" ("A speech about the conquest and plundering of Rome") *(Melanchthon, 2010: 227-239)*. Obviously, the speech was created extremely quickly and under the influence of emotions that overwhelmed the humanist. This is evident from the expressive appeals, emotional evaluations, sharp epithets, and because of the fact that Melanchthon sometimes repeats several times the previously expressed opinion that brings an element of chaos to the text. Let us try to analyze the document by pre-structuring it into several key sub-topics, which are probably the most upsetting for Melanchthon.

So, the first thesis articulated by Melanchthon concerns the importance of the city of Rome as the civilization centre of Western Europe, the destruction of which should make everyone worry, regardless of denomination. He argues that Rome is a city that is right higher than other cities, because "it is a city that for all cities is a queen and mistress" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 228)*. While developing the thesis about the cultural and historical significance of Rome,

he convinces himself that it is the capital of "all of Italy and even of the whole world" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 237)* and that it is the city that "… has acquired more examples of virtues than all other cities combined. It conveyed to us the laws, the sciences, the religion, *Humanitas* the high arts and, finally, the basis of noble life" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 237)*. It is interesting that half a century later, in very similar words, will mourn the "capital" of the Northern Renaissance – Antwerp – its former inhabitant, and now the German, Franz Hogenberg *(Demchuk, 2018: 178)*. This observation may give reason to speak of a vein of rhetorical formula inherent in these, at first glance, direct reactions to events.

Therefore, according to Melanchthon, to plunder the glorious city "is worse than to plunge your hometown that has raised you". And he concludes this first thesis by saying: "We must suffer from the destruction and decline of the city of Rome because it is one and a great homeland for all the nations of the earth" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 228)*. Melanchthon is a reformer, but from the very beginning it is the voice of a humanist, for whom Rome is, above all, the epitome of civilization history, ancient culture and a place of memory of the Western European elite.

The second thought Melanchthon dwells on is the libraries, the repositories of a narrative. Assman emphasized that texts are a very important factor in which cultural memory is based *(Assman, 2004: 62)*. Perhaps that is why the destruction of libraries causes Melanchthon the greatest despair. The synthesized feelings of the humanist and the pious person compel him to liken the value of the library to the temples, assessing them in the categories of religion and culture. This idea is followed in many passages of speech and is associated with the fact that libraries, as well as temples, are filled with the sacred. Only in the temples are objects that receive sacralization by being used in worship, and in libraries are books that he regards as a special gift given by God. "And can we not see the books of God transmitted to the human race that contain the prophecies of heaven, the doctrine of religion, and *other respectable works of art*?" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 233)*. He does not hide that he does not know for sure whether the libraries were completely destroyed: "these monuments […] were as it was said partially destroyed by the fury of the soldiers" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 233)*.

However the statement of the possible even partial destruction of books does not give in his eyes any relief to the robbers as "to plunder the libraries is no less sacrilege than to plunder the temples" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 233)*. For him, libraries, like ancient temples, were important civilization centres, the destruction of which is a clear testimony to the death of the state. Strengthening the charge, he recalls the ancient history of the barbaric

conquests: "Augustine writes that even the Goths spared temples and even gave lives to those who hid there", but the Christians did not want to do so *(Melanchthon, 2010: 232).* Melanchthon wondered that it was the Gentiles, those who did not know the heavenly truth and had barely heard anything about Christ *(Melanchthon, 2010: 232).* Melanchthon was obviously surprised by the difference between the unjustified fury of Christians and the nobility of the Gentiles. He repeatedly refers to antiquity and sets an example of Gauls, then prepared, noting that now the city has suffered much more. The Gauls, Melanchthon says, raged in abandoned parts of the city and the citizens fled to the Capitol *(Melanchthon, 2010: 235-236).* Then there was no such terrible devastation, the city did not lose its shrines or other decorations *(Melanchthon, 2010: 236).* Although the Goths, were angry because of the prolonged siege, they decided to spare those who had taken refuge in Christian shrines and to plunder the city without bloodshed *(Melanchthon, 2010: 236).* But the winners in our day, for the sake of looting, did not save the shrine, "the better part of the city was destroyed by fire" and "the unfortunate citizens were destroyed throughout the city" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 236).* The result was that "the study of all the good arts that flourished there was paralyzed by the power of arms" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 236).*

Thirdly, we shall clarify how the reformer understood the role of the papacy in the cultural and civilizational development of society, we shall also try to relate it to the phenomenon of cultural memory inherent in the humanistic European society of which Melanchthon was a part. Thus, Melanchthon points out that "there were nowhere richer libraries than in Rome", and the credit goes to the Pope. He draws attention to the fact that the educated popes have carefully received "all writers from all over the world" ("Schriftsteller aller Art aus der ganzen Welt" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 233).* With the efforts of the popes to preserve all that was saved, the remnants of "treasures of literature brought from Greece", that the city "sheltered the noble sciences that fled from Greece" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 233)* and here "seemed to have resurrected all the good arts" that "were like seeds from there distributed to the whole world" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 237).*

The not peculiar rhetoric of Melanchthon, which resonates with the words of his patron and, in general, representatives of the Lutheran camp, attract our attention. Moreover, these words are perceived as strange in the context of the events of 1526-1527. It is known that in 1526 was formed the League of Cognac, which included France, Venice, Milan, Florence, and later England (1527). The initiator of the league was the Pope, whose main task was to fight the emperor on the Apennine Peninsula. The creation of

the League of Cognac pushed the emperor to peace with the Lutherans and, eventually, led to the adoption of the First Diet of Speyer (1626) by the formula *cujus regio, ejus religio* – "whose power, that and religion".

This formula abolished the Diet of Worms rulings on the persecution of Lutherans on the territory of the empire and, at the same time, confirmed the defeat of papal politics in Germany and outlined new lines of confrontation with the papacy. At the same time, when the emperor and Lutherans viewed the papacy as a common enemy, Melanchthon said things that could have put him in political opposition to the opponents of the papacy.

Pointing to the merits of the Pope and, in fact, of the papal Rome, Melanchthon angrily says that there are fools who "hate all the evils and all the bad things of this city". But it is like a wily man who remembers only what hurts him and remembers nothing good *(Melanchthon, 2010: 238)*. However, "it would be much more humane with so many positive actions to acknowledge the good and forgive the bad" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 238)*.

Finally, let us look at one more passage. Trying to arouse the robbers and sympathy for Rome, Melanchthon addresses the image of the father-murderer and states – no one doubts the guilt of the murderer of his father. Equally horrifying is the fact that someone beats their father's eye or cuts off his or her hand for minor infractions. Melanchthon rhetorically asks if is it not equate to homicide, when they raise their hand to their hometown *(Melanchthon, 2010: 238)*, which is one great homeland for all peoples on earth" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 228)*.

Conclusions

To sum up, thanks to cultural contacts within the borders of the republic of scientists, German humanists have developed a steady image of Italy as an outpost of science and culture, and individual territories are transformed into a "sacred landscape", places of memory. However, this image has been transformed in the years of the Reformation, and recent memory has become a relic. Philip Melanchthon, whose work during the early Reformation saw criticism of the papal Rome, also experienced part of this evolution.

However, as subsequent events have shown, Melanchthon's criticism of Rome was driven not by his inner convictions, but by events of a religious and social nature, which changed his perspective and attitude toward the "sacred landscape of memories". Analysis of the document "Speech on the Conquest and Plundering of Rome" gives every reason to argue that for

Melanchthon and Rome during the Reformation remained an important civilization centre, "topographic text", which is "marked by monuments" and "sacred landscape" without which Western civilization, preservation and progress of science and culture are thought. Therefore, throughout his speech, he appeals to the antiquity, to the importance of safeguarding and broadcasting the cultural knowledge and heritage preserved by Rome.

We are far from believing that Melanchthon is no longer a reformer. He does not justify the abuse of the Pope, but at the same time categorically rejects the widespread belief that the city suffered the Pope's sins" *(Melanchthon, 2010: 237).* But the abuses of the Pope dim the background of their merit in collecting and storing books, works of art and the very carriers of "cultural memory" – Greek scholars.

The latter conclusion concerns libraries. We mentioned that Jan Assman believed that texts were a very important factor in which cultural memory relied upon. Melanchthon thinks in a similar way, which is why the destruction of libraries causes him the greatest condemnation. The library for the thinker is a temple, a sacred and untouched building. But what is important is that he does not challenge Christian books and books about "other respectable arts" in his speech.

Thus, the speech under scrutiny is an important document for understanding Melanchthon the humanist, his humanistic conceptions of the importance for the civilization of memory sites, and, in general, enriches our understanding of the history of the intellectuals of the 16th century. At the same time, the material reviewed indicates the ambiguity of Melanchthon's position with respect to memory sites during the various years of the Reformation. And while in the early years of the Reformation Melanchthon criticized Rome entirely in the spirit of Luther, in 1527 he showed that for Melanchthon, as a member of the great Republic of Scientists, the conviction of the importance of Rome and Italy as "sites of memory" for European civilization remained unchanged.

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RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude se penche sur les récits de Philip Mélanchthon, théologien luthérien majeur. Il s'agit de repérer comment ses souvenirs du passé, qui dépendent du contexte historique, ont influencé sa conception du rôle et de la place des cités italiennes dans l'histoire européenne et chrétienne. Usant des paradigmes des lieux de mémoire (Pierre Nora) et de la mémoire culturelle (Jan Assman), nous accordons une attention particulière à la ville de Rome qui occupe, au début du XVIᵉ siècle,

une place centrale dans la mémoire culturelle des humanistes germanophones. L'importance de cette place s'explique par l'intégration de ceux-ci dans la République des Lettres européenne et elle doit beaucoup à l'intérêt ambiant pour l'Antiquité gréco-romaine. Dès le début de la Réforme allemande en 1517, on voit comment Mélanchthon modifie ses convictions humanistes antérieures. Sous l'influence majeure de Luther, il se met a écrire sur – et à parler de – Rome comme centre du péché et du mensonge, le lieu où sciences et arts reçoivent un traitement barbare. Toutefois, son propos prend un nouveau tournant radical après le Sac de Rome de 1527. Comprendre les causes qui ont amené Mélanchthon à passer outre les fondements de la rhétorique réformée et à se comporter, dans certaines circonstances, comme un humaniste, a été une de nos principales préoccupations. Mélanchthon, qui avait été formé comme un humaniste, l'est demeuré, à travers ses insatiables échanges avec d'autres membres de la République des Savants. Tant en Italie qu'en Allemagne, l'Italie dans son ensemble et ses villes en particulier demeuraient, dans l'esprit des humanistes, un ensemble de paysages sacrés et de lieux de mémoire. Comme nous le montrons par une analyse scrupuleuse de ses récits, bien que Mélanchthon ait été le principal théologien de la Réforme luthérienne, sa conception de la capitale pontificale est restée inscrite dans la vision mondiale des humanistes qui reconnaissait une importance pan-européenne à Rome et à l'Italie.

SUMMARY

This study examines the narratives of the leading Lutheran theologian Philip Melanchthon, in order to trace out how his memory of the past, depending on the specific historical context, influenced his assessment of the role and place of Italian cities in pan-European and Christian history. Drawing on the theoretical paradigms of places of memory (Pierre Nora) and cultural memory (Jan Assman), we pay particular attention to the city of Rome, which became an essential part of the German humanists' cultural memory at the beginning of the sixteenth century. This was largely a result of the integration of German humanists into the European Republic of Letters and their interest for Greco-Roman antiquity. From the beginning of the German Reformation in 1517, one can see Melanchthon changing his former humanist views. Under the powerful influence of Luther, he began to write and speak of Rome as the centre of sin and falsehood, where science and art received barbaric treatment. However, his rhetoric once again underwent significant change after the Sack of Rome in 1527. One of the major tasks we set ourselves was to outline the factors that motivated Melanchthon to move beyond Reformation rhetoric and, in certain situations, to act as the humanist he was. Above all, Melanchthon was trained as a humanist, and he remained active within that group through his insatiable thirst for communication with other members of Republic of Scholars. For both Italian and German humanists, Italy as a whole and its cities in particular remained sacred landscapes and places of memory. Our analysis of Melanchthon's narratives reveals that, despite his place as the leading theologian of the Lutheran Reformation, his position on the papal capital remained within the framework of the humanist worldview on the pan-European importance of Rome and Italy as a sacred landscape of memory.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Studie befasst sich mit den Schriften des wichtigen lutherischen Theologen Philipp Melanchton unter der Fragestellung, wie seine im historischen Kontext einzuordnenden Erinnerungen seine Auffassung zur Rolle und dem Platz der italienischen Städte in der europäischen und

besonders der Geschichte des Christentums beeinflusst haben. Unter Anwendung der Paradigmen der Erinnerungsorte (Pierre Nora) und des kulturellen Gedächtnis' (Jan Assmann) wird ein besonderes Augenmerk auf die Stadt Rom gelegt, die zu Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts eine zentrale Stellung im kulturellen Gedächtnis der deutschsprachigen Humanisten einnimmt. Dies erklärt sich einerseits durch deren Teilhabe an der „europäischen literarischen Republik" als auch durch das allgemeine Interesse an der griechisch-römischen Antike. Mit dem Beginn der Reformation in Deutschland 1517 wird erkennbar, wie Melanchtons frühere humanistische Überzeugung sich verändert; unter dem großen Einfluß Luthers schreibt – und spicht – auch Melanchton über Rom als Zentrum der Sünde und der Lüge, wo Wissenschaft und Kunst barbarisch behandelt werden. Nach der Plünderung Rom im Jahr 1527 ändert sich seine Aussagerichtung erneut radikal. Das Ziel der Studie ist hauptsächlich gewesen, die Gründe zu verstehen, die Melanchtom dazu gebracht haben, über die allgemeine reformatorischen Ansichten hinauszugehen und unter bestimmten Umständen sich als ein Humanist zu verhalten. Melanchton, der eine humanistische Grundbildung erhalten hatte, blieb es auch insbesondere durch seinen reichhaltigen Austausch mit anderen Mitgliedern der Wissenschaftsgesellschaft. Sowohl in Italien als auch in Deutschland blieb Italien als Ganzes und besonders seine Städte im Geist der Humanisten ein Ensemble aus heiligen Landschaften und Gedenk-Orten. In der detaillierten Analyse seiner Texte zeigt sich, dass Melanchtons Verständnis der Papst-Stadt, obwohl er einer der Haupt-Theologen der lutherischen Reformation war, weiterhin in die globale Sicht der Humanisten eingefügt blieb, die Rom und Italien ein paneuropäisches Gewicht zuerkannte.