

MELANCHTHON, HERO OF LUTHERAN PHILOSOPHY?

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I would have preferred to punctuate the title of this essay with an exclamation mark: “Melanchthon: Hero of Lutheran Philosophy!” But I expected there might be objections to this. In the first place, some Lutherans contend that the *Praeceptor Germaniae* was not really “Lutheran enough” to serve as our philosophical hero. Others ask whether he was a philosopher at all. And I suppose most would agree that there is not much that’s “heroic” in our usual image of Melanchthon.

In this essay I wish only to point to a few features of Melanchthon’s approach to and account of philosophy, with the hope that it might be useful to Lutherans seeking to relate *fides et ratio* in the twenty-first century. But first it is necessary justify this project at all, considering the aforementioned objections.

A Lutheran Philosopher?

As Timothy Wengert and others have pointed out, from the sixteenth century through the twentieth Melanchthon has been accused of somehow betraying Luther’s thought through a late-career turn toward scholasticism, humanism, or through pusillanimity.¹ Whether or not such charges have any merit, I will here simply reject the notion that Melanchthon was not “Lutheran enough” to help contemporary Lutherans with the task at hand. Walter Bouman’s claim that Melanchthon is “without question the second most important figure in the Lutheran reform movement of the sixteenth century”² is, after all, not hard to support, given that at least half of the confessional material that Lutheran pastors and church bodies in North America swear to uphold came from his pen—including the Augsburg Confession itself.

But was Melanchthon even a philosopher? While he was primarily dedicated to the evangelical reform of the church, Melanchthon’s scholarly work was by no means limited to theology. Sachiko Kusukawa’s edited volume *Philip Melanchthon: Orations on Education and Philosophy* now provides English translations of an interesting selection of the second reformer’s speeches and writings, revealing his wide-ranging competence throughout what we would now

call the liberal arts curriculum, including work in classical studies and ancient philosophy, medicine, law, geometry, and mathematics.³ Even more significant are the textbooks Melanchthon wrote on rhetoric, dialectic, moral philosophy, and natural philosophy—the major parts of philosophy, as he envisioned it. Unfortunately, these remain untranslated or are not widely available in English.⁴

Melanchthon wrote philosophical works, he studied and critiqued the work of philosophers past, and he praised philosophy. In other words, he did what philosophers have always done. And since Melanchthon almost literally wrote “the book” on Lutheranism, Lutheranism is in an important sense also fundamentally “Melanchthonian.” So if ever a soul was poised to be the hero of Lutheran philosophy, it was Philipp Melanchthon.

Initia Aristotelica

As Günter Frank points out, many twentieth-century critics have accused Melanchthon of rejecting Luther’s thought by way of a return to Aristotelianism.⁵ It’s true that later in his career Melanchthon spoke more highly of Aristotle than of any other philosopher. In a letter to a friend he even referred to himself as *homo peripateticus* and to his philosophy as *Aristotelica* or *Initia Aristotelica*.⁶ But Melanchthon’s relationship to the Stagirite is complex.

First, Melanchthon’s appreciation for Aristotle represented neither a residual nor a revived commitment to one or another of the scholastic *viae*. Prior to his arrival in Wittenberg, he intended to produce a new edition of Aristotle’s work so that this philosopher’s work could be read in its purity, stripped clean of so many layers of medieval commentary which had “maimed” and “mutilated” the philosopher until his true thought had “become more obscure than a sibylline oracle.”⁷ But even two years before his death (in 1558) he referred to scholasticism as “that recently begotten deception, which those barbarians teach in the name of philosophy” that had “corrupted philosophy” and “completely oppressed almost the whole philosophy of Aristotle.”⁸

Melanchthon further broke from the medieval tradition

of regarding Aristotle as “the philosopher” in that he denied that even a purified Aristotle contains the *summa* of true philosophy. In a disputation on Colossians he indeed praised Aristotle’s method as superior to that of any other philosopher, but he continued, “Nevertheless, philosophy is not contained within such narrow confines that one need assume that it is all included in the books written by Aristotle.”⁹ And so, as he elsewhere writes, a good philosopher should not rely entirely upon Aristotle but “can now and again take something from other authors, too.”¹⁰

Indeed, Melanchthon found other philosophers decidedly superior to the Stagirite in some ways. He regarded Plato’s philosophical theology as superior to Aristotle’s, and he rejected Aristotle’s claim that the human mind is at birth a *tabula rasa*, advocating rather an admittedly Platonic notion that humans have some innate ideas. But rather than choosing between the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato, he implored the reader, “Let us love them both.”¹¹

And Melanchthon treats of other philosophers almost as lovingly. In natural philosophy he shows great respect for Galen, claiming that the Hellenistic physician “has learnedly corrected some things and has shed light on many passages in Aristotle.”¹² In dialectic he loves Cicero best, basing his own rhetoric upon that of this Roman orator.¹³ And even those whom he does not treat affectionately he takes seriously. Throughout his philosophical works one can find the *Praeceptor* arguing with utmost seriousness against ideas found among the Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics.

Melanchthon’s approach to philosophy was Aristotelian in the sense that he promoted Aristotle’s syllogistic method for searching out “what is correct, true, simple, steadfast, well-ordered, and useful for life.”¹⁴ He also preferred Aristotle’s ethics—provided this discipline be regarded as treating only of civic life.¹⁵ But in other matters, Melanchthon could equally well

be identified as a Platonist, Galenist, or Ciceronian. Given his appeal to different authorities in different areas of thought, it is perhaps most accurate to characterize Melanchthon’s philosophy as eclectic.

Causa Romana

In this eclecticism, in the attendant relativization of the authority of Aristotle, and in his round rejection of scholasticism, Melanchthon’s approach to philosophy is consistent with much of Renaissance humanism.¹⁶ This should not be too surprising, given that on the strength of his work in rhetoric and the other *artes liberales* Melanchthon is widely regarded as an important figure by Renaissance historians. But what has this Renaissance humanism to do with philosophy?

The answer to such questions depends upon what is meant by “philosophy,” for the word has meant different things in different historical settings.¹⁷ As Bruce Kimball points out, many contemporary readers may take it as axiomatic that the highest ideal of philosophy is pure speculative

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theorizing. It is in accordance with this conception that the Greeks are regarded as distinctly superior to the Romans with respect to philosophy, focused as the latter were on the pragmatic concerns of statecraft, oratory, and engineering.¹⁸

As Kimball suggests then, this familiar view simply betrays a prejudice toward one understanding of philosophy and wisdom over another. Historians of philosophy have pointed

out that Cicero, Quintillian, and other Romans and Greeks of the Hellenistic era held a different view of philosophy, a view with a heritage stretching all the way back to Isocrates, the contemporary of Socrates in the fourth century BC. On this alternative account, philosophy is closely associated with *ars vivendi*, and it values the whole realm of learning to the extent it is “useful” for human life in society. Philosophy does not accordingly pursue knowledge for its own sake, but for the sake of enriching human life to the fullest extent possible.

This tradition, to which Melanchthon himself refers as “the Roman cause,”¹⁹ portrays the ideal philosopher, the truly wise person, as the good, learned, and eloquent orator. Such an orator is to be distinguished on the one hand from the contemplative theoretician who would remain in asocial self-sufficiency, and on the other hand from the sophist or the “merely eloquent” disputant-for-hire who would strive to make the worse answer seem better. The true orator will strive above all to put all knowledge and speech to use in society.

Whether or not we can appreciate this account of philosophy, Renaissance humanists did. The “Roman cause” is in any case precisely the approach to philosophy that Melanchthon promoted. As he wrote in 1558:

I call a philosopher one who, when he has learned and knows things good and useful for mankind, takes a theory (*doctrina*) out of academic obscurity and makes it practically useful in public affairs and instructs men about natural phenomena, or religions, or about government.²⁰

I believe that most contemporary Lutherans have come to identify philosophy with the speculative, abstract, “Greek way” associated with Plato and Aristotle. Because of this we are likely to have a hard time taking the “Roman Way” seriously as a respectable, valuable account of philosophy. But Melanchthon was in fact a pro-

ponent of the “Roman way.” And so our philosophical bias will accordingly either make it difficult to regard Melanchthon as philosophically interesting at all or incline us to cast Melanchthon’s philosophy mistakenly as some or another version of “Greek” thought based in speculative metaphysics. In either case, it is clear why he remains for Lutherans, in spite of his voluminous writings and importance for the Reformation, “the unknown Melanchthon.”²¹

Quid est philosophia?

Melanchthon followed the general practice of the Cicero and other Hellenistic philosophers,²² who divided philosophy into physics, ethics, and logic.²³ Among these three disciplines, logic enjoyed a certain preeminence. As historian of philosophy Jonathan Barnes has pointed out, for Hellenistic philosophers such as Cicero, dialectics and rhetoric were equally important parts of “*logikē*,”²⁴ the overall consideration of how we think and speak. Quite consistent with this Ciceronian approach, these two arts were unifying factors in Melanchthon’s thought, as some excellent and fairly recent scholarly work by Timothy Wengert and John Schneider, along with some older work by Quirinius Breen, has suggested.²⁵ Scholarship remains to be done to clarify the relationships in Melanchthon’s thought between rhetoric, dialectic, logic, and philosophy as a unity, but a few points relevant to the matter at hand can be made now.

Contemporary Lutherans who have absorbed the notion that the highest expression of philosophy is in abstract metaphysical speculation—that notion basic to the *via antiqua*—might be puzzled or even disturbed by the fundamental importance of rhetoric for Melanchthon’s philosophy. Dialectic is very important for Melanchthon too, but separated from the art of rhetoric he calls it “barbarous.” Philosophy is thus not to be excessively absorbed in making fine logical distinctions, as the *via moderna* was. Thus again, Melanch-

thon rejects the fundamental project of both major branches of late medieval scholasticism. Melanchthon also takes a distinct turn toward the empirical.

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He defines philosophy as “the teaching of human reason.”²⁶ But philosophy is not for him merely the product of *reine Vernunft*, à la Kant. Rather, philosophy is “knowledge of natural causes and effects.”²⁷ He writes that in warning us away from “vain philosophy” the apostle Paul “does not forbid us to count or measure bodies,” which activities are indeed required for true and useful natural philosophy.²⁸

Of course, Melanchthon’s turn toward empiricism would still probably not qualify him as an empiricist by modern standards. As I noted earlier, he denied that the human mind at birth is a *tabula rasa*. On the contrary—and again contrary to Aristotle—a

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hallmark of his psychology is his clear and repeated assertion that humans have innate ideas (*koine ennoiai*). These notions include those related to numbers, basic rules of logic, and moral

precepts.²⁹ And these are of fundamental importance for his philosophy. These ideas comprise the foundation of whatever certainty is possible with philosophy.

But with how much certainty is the human mind, unaided by divine revelation, able to provide us? If Melanchthon was no empiricist of the modern era, neither was he a rationalist. For Melanchthon insisted, in accordance with Paul, that our knowledge of *koine ennoiai* is vitiated by sin. Thus, while humans in their original state had clear and certain knowledge of these notions, in *hac tenebra*, this knowledge is obscure. As Melanchthon puts it in the *Loci communes* of 1521 in speaking of principles of morality:

For in general the judgment of human comprehension is fallacious because of innate blindness, so that even if certain patterns of morals have been engraved on our minds, they can scarcely be apprehended.³⁰

Accordingly, while there are innate ideas implanted upon our souls, we only have obscure and imperfect knowledge of them. But since no certain knowledge can come from principles “scarcely apprehended,” Melanchthon’s full account of the *koine ennoiai* actually forestalls the possibility of the sort of philosophical a priorism that characterized the rationalism of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Philosophia non est

For some readers, Melanchthon’s division of philosophy into logic, physics, and ethics may be most startling for what it leaves out, namely metaphysics. This was no accident on Melanchthon’s part. As Frank points out, throughout his life Melanchthon uniformly rejected and never commented upon Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*. What is more, as Frank explains, “In this rejection of metaphysics—or to be precise—in refusing Aristotle’s doctrine of the ‘prime mover’ and the world of substances presented in the twelve

books of *Metaphysics*, Melanchthon completely agreed with Luther.³¹

This rejection of metaphysics is consistent with Melanchthon's claim that the power of the human mind is vitiated by sin. Dogmatic metaphysics has sought to ground certainty in knowledge through either an epistemological optimism which believes that the human mind is by its own power able to attain to knowledge of the basic principles of reality (so Aristotle and Plato) or upon the assertion that we indeed already have certain knowledge (so Kant). But neither of these are available to sinners after the fall, according to Melanchthon.

And so, while Frank may be correct that certain aspects of Melanchthon's thought "belong without any doubt to the Neoplatonic legacy,"³² Platonic metaphysical realism is not to be counted among them. In fact, Melanchthon believed that such realism had been misattributed to Plato by Origen and others like him "who do not even understand Plato." These, Melanchthon wrote, were guilty of "distorting [Plato's] forms,"³³ by suggesting that they are independent or even fundamental metaphysical entities instead of "images and notions which the learned conceive in their minds."³⁴

Some accusations of a supposed retreat on Melanchthon's part from Luther stem from what Melanchthon *does* take from Plato—or rather, from a misunderstanding of what he takes—namely, an account of philosophical theology. Melanchthon explicitly states that of all the useful outcomes of the study of physics or natural philosophy, the most important is that it leads the philosopher to conclude "that nature does not exist by chance, but that it is created by an eternal mind," and that "the Maker is to be worshipped with true praises."³⁵ And he found that Plato demonstrates this most clearly:

For he discusses quite weightily the immortality of the human soul, and he everywhere establishes as the goal of philosophy

the recognition of God, as he says in a letter: 'We philosophize correctly, if we recognize God as the father, cause, and ruler of the entire nature, and obey him by living justly.' [Letters, 6, c–d]."³⁶

Thus Plato's natural theology is not only legitimate according to Melanchthon; it represents the highest achievement of philosophy. What is more, as he clearly states in the *Loci*, both of 1521 and of 1555, philosophy thus provides knowledge of the law.

Critics of Melanchthon have long concluded from this high appraisal of Plato, and of philosophy according to Plato, that Melanchthon finally abandoned Scripture-based evangelical theology in favor of a scholastic theology for which revelation is not strictly necessary. For example, in his introductory essay to Manschrek's translation of the 1555 edition of the *Loci communes*, Hans Engellund wrote:

From this naturalistic approach of Melanchthon's theology it follows that the revelation of God as attested in the Holy Scriptures can have only supplementary significance. Revelation only adds something to that which man himself can and ought to say about God.³⁷

What is more, it is on account of this supposed "fusion of reason and revelation"³⁸ that Melanchthon has been blamed for un-Lutheran or even anti-Lutheran developments in subsequent philosophical systems, in which reason alone is able to provide all necessary or possible truth about God. Thus Pelikan accused Melanchthon: "Melanchthonianism, Orthodoxy, Rationalism, and Hegelianism all sought a comprehensive rational system. To that extent they all constitute a misrepresentation of Luther."³⁹

And Bouman fired this arrow at him: "Melanchthon bears a large share of the responsibility for the fact that after two hundred years of Lutheran theology, the result was the Enlightenment and the devastating critique of

Immanuel Kant."⁴⁰

All of this represents the great tragedy and irony of Melanchthon's legacy among Lutherans. For it was in fact the central, overriding concern of his treatment of philosophy to prevent *exactly* the sort of fusion Engellund and others accuse him of promoting! As Melanchthon warned, "the most prevalent in an Iliad of ills" facing the church is "ignorant theology" which creates this sort of (con)fusion:

For it is a miscellaneous teaching, in which the great things are not explained clearly, things that should be separated are mingled together, and on the other hand those that nature claims should be pulled apart; often contradictory things are said, and things that are merely similar are seized in preference to those that are true and proper.⁴¹

The way to prevent such "ignorant theology," Melanchthon believed, is to take with utmost seriousness the distinction between law and gospel. Throughout his career he makes and clarifies this distinction, as when he

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writes in the 1555 *Loci*, "The Law proclaims to us the great wrath of God against our sin, and says nothing about the forgiveness of sin, out of grace, without our merit."⁴² That this distinction plays a prominent role

both in his baccalaureate theses of 1519⁴³ and in his oration for Luther's funeral in 1546⁴⁴ indicates its enduring importance for Melanchthon.

It is correct that Melanchthon believed philosophy could reveal (though imperfectly) the law of God—but only the part of it that is *lex moralia*. And if Melanchthon always maintained that the word of God consists of law and gospel, it follows that he believed that philosophy could reveal the word of God—or rather *a part of a part of* the word of God. To suggest that for Melanchthon the revealed gospel only “supplements” this knowledge of (*a part of a part of*) the word of God is to suggest that the gospel is of only “supplemental” importance for theology. Quite to the contrary, for Master Philipp, it is *philosophy* that is of merely supplemental value for the theologian. While the theologian should regard philosophy as “a great tool,” as he puts it in the *Loci* of 1555, unaided human reason “cannot grasp” the gospel, let alone discover it.

Perhaps it is best to let Melanchthon, for whom this is perhaps the single most important word he would communicate on philosophy, speak for himself. In his oration praising Plato, he wrote:

True philosophy, that is, one that does not stray from reason and from demonstrations, is some notion of the divine laws: it recognizes that there is a God, it judges on civic morals, it sees that this distinction between worthy and vile acts is implanted in us by divine providence, it considers that horrid crimes are punished by God, and it also has some presentiment of immortality. It nevertheless does not see or teach what is proper to the gospel, that is, the forgiveness of sins to be given without recompense, for the sake of the Son of God. This notion has not sprung from human minds, indeed, it is far beyond the range of human reason, but the Son of God, who

is in the bosom of the Father, has made it manifest, as has been said elsewhere.⁴⁵

The Lutheran Prometheus

According to Philipp Melanchthon, the goal of philosophy is to improve human life through reason and speech. Philosophy should study and yet be critical of all philosophical authorities. It should learn from Aristotle to be perfectly methodical, yet it should steer clear of metaphysics and avoid becoming preoccupied with logic. It should be empirically oriented, pragmatic, search for reliable common notions of reason but—respecting the power of sin—it should remain non-dogmatic. It can provide tremendously helpful insights into causes and effects in the natural world, and it can guide us in finding laws that human society must follow if it is to flourish. It can even reveal that there is a creator who is to be worshipped. But it cannot provide abstract knowledge about the fundamental natures of objects, let alone about the nature of human beings. Above all for Melanchthon, philosophy is capable of revealing neither the essential nature and goodness of God, nor the benefits of Christ.

To have established this “Roman cause” in philosophy as “the Lutheran way” would have been a heroic feat. Perhaps it could not have been done. Or maybe Melanchthon was simply not equal to the task. Or perhaps he thought he had made his case for it so clearly, forcefully, and persuasively that it must win the day. In any case, Melanchthon has failed to be the hero of Lutheran philosophy—at least so far.

The *Praeceptor Germaniae* turns out rather to be the tragic figure of the genesis of Lutheranism. Perhaps Melanchthon could be seen as the Lutheran Prometheus. He brought erudition and accomplishment in many of the arts to Wittenberg. (Chorus: “All good arts came through Philipp!”) But in punishment for bring-

ing this light to Lutherans, he suffers perpetually. Hermean fideists have bound him to the dark mountainside of the forgetting past, while age to age of rapacious historians ride the winds of his evil reputation to feast upon his liver. (Chorus: “How he suffers! How unjustly!”) We Lutherans are still waiting for some Hercules to come set our Titan free and rekindle the torch of our own proper philosophy. LF

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Notes

1. A particularly concise treatment of this history is in Timothy Wengert, “Beyond Stereotypes: The Real Philipp Melanchthon,” in *Philipp Melanchthon Then and Now (1497–1997): Essays Celebrating the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of Philipp Melanchthon, Theologian, Teacher, and Reformer*, eds. Scott H. Hendrix and Timothy J. Wengert (Columbia: Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, 1999), 9–32. For Wengert's treatment of the history of scholarship on Melanchthon's relationship to Erasmus and Renaissance humanism, see his *Human Freedom, Christian Righteousness: Philipp Melanchthon's Exegetical Dispute with Erasmus of Rotterdam* (New York: Oxford, 1998), especially pp. 5–14. For the history of scholarship on Melanchthon's relationship to Luther, see Wengert, *Philipp Melanchthon's Annotations in Ioanem in Relation to Its Predecessors and Contemporaries* (Geneva: Librairie Droz S. A., 1987), 143–165. See also Walter Bouman, “Melanchthon's Significance for the Church Today,” in *Philipp Melanchthon Then and Now*, 33–56.

2. Bouman, 34.

3. *Philip Melanchthon: Orations on Philosophy and Education*, ed. Sachiko Kusukawa, trans. Christine Salazar (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1999). Kusukawa has also produced the fullest account of Melanchthon's natural philosophy available in English, *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy: The Case of Philipp Melanchthon* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1995).

4. The standard edition of Melanchthon's works is the *Corpus Reformatorum Philippi Melanchthonis Operae quae Supersunt Omnia*, 28 vols., ed. C. D. Bretschneider and H. E. Bindseil (Halis Saxonum: C. A. Schwetschke, 1834–1860; repr. New York: Johnson, 1963) [hereafter cited as CR]. Ralph Keen's *A Melanchthon Reader* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988) contains English translations of Melanchthon's “Commentary

on Aristotle's *Ethics*, Book 1," 179–202, and "Summary of Ethics," 203–238. For Melancthon's early critiques of scholasticism, see his essays "Paul and the Scholastics, 1520," 31–38, and "Luther and the Parish Theologians, 1521," 69–88, in *Melancthon: Selected Writings*, trans. Charles Leander Hill (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1962).

5. Gunter Frank, "Melancthon and the Tradition of Neoplatonism," in *Religious Confessions and the Sciences in the Sixteenth Century*, eds. Jürgen Helm and Annette Winkelmann (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 4. The fullest recent account of Melancthon's philosophy as a whole is Frank's *Die Theologische Philosophie Philipp Melancthons (1497–1560)*, Erfurter Theologische Studien, Band 67 (Leipzig: Benno, 1995).

6. CR VII, col. 475; CR XIII, cols. 183ff. Cf. Frank, "Melancthon and the Tradition of Neoplatonism," 6.

7. Quoted in Clyde Manschreck, *Melancthon: The Quiet Reformer* (New York: Abingdon, 1958), 37. Cf. for example Heinz Scheible, *Melancthon* (München: C. H. Beck, 1997), 20, 25.

8. "Melancthon's Reply to G. Pico Della Mirandola," trans. Quirinius Breen, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13/3 (1952): 414. Cf. CR IX, 687–703.

9. "On the Distinction between the Gospel and philosophy," *Orations*, 25. Cf. CR XII, 689–91.

10. "On Philosophy (1536)," *Orations*, 130–1. Cf. CR XI, 278–84.

11. "On Plato (1538)," *Orations*, 202. Cf. CR XI, 413–425.

12. "On Galen (1540)," *Orations*, 218. Cf. CR XI, 495–503.

13. Cf. Wengert, *In Ioannum*, 174, 178, 192.

14. "Dedicatory Letter to Melancthon's *Epitome of Moral Philosophy*," *Orations*, 141. Cf. CR III, 359–361.

15. Cf. "On the Distinction between the

Gospel and Philosophy," *Orations*, 25. Cf. CR XII, 689–91.

16. For a good introduction to general trends in Renaissance approaches to philosophy, see Cesare Vasoli, "The Renaissance Concept of Philosophy," in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, eds. C. Schmidt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1988), 57–74.

17. See the prefatory essay by Kiempke Algra et al. in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1999), xix–xix.

18. Bruce Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of a Liberal Education* (New York: Teacher's College, 1986), 12–42; also Ernest Grassi, *Rhetoric as Philosophy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1980), 1–18.

19. "Melancthon's Reply," 414.

20. *Ibid.*, 418.

21. Cf. Robert Stupperich, *Der Unbekannte Melancthon* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1961).

22. Algra et al., xiii–xiv.

23. Kusakawa, "Introduction," in *Orations*, xviii.

24. Jonathan Barnes, "Logic and Language: Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, 65–67.

25. Wengert demonstrates the importance of rhetorical theory for Melancthon's biblical interpretation in *In Ioannum*, 167–212. John Schneider claims that rhetoric is fundamental to Melancthon's theology generally in *Philipp Melancthon's Rhetorical Construal of Biblical Authority: Oratio Sacra* (Lewiston: Mellon, 1990). See also his "The Hermeneutics of Commentary: The Origins of Philipp Melancthon's Integration of Dialectic into Rhetoric," in *Philipp Melancthon (1497–1560) and the Commentary*, eds. Timothy Wengert and Patrick Graham (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 20–47. See also Quirinius Breen, "The Subordination of Philosophy to Rhetoric in Melancthon: A

Study of His Reply to G. Pico della Mirandola," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 43/1 (1952): 13–28.

26. In "On the Distinction between the Gospel and Philosophy," *Orations*, 23.

27. *Ibid.*, 24.

28. CR XII, 692, quoted in Kusakawa, *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy*, 66.

29. Readers may be most familiar with Melancthon's presentation of these from his 1521 edition of *Loci Communes Theologici* in *Melancthon and Bucer*, ed. Wilhelm Pauk (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 50.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Frank, "Melancthon and the Tradition of Neoplatonism," 5. See also Frank, *Die Theologische Philosophie*, 15–30.

32. Frank, *Neoplatonism*, 4.

33. In "On Plato," *Orations*, 203.

34. *Ibid.*, 201.

35. "On the Life of Avicenna (1549)," *Orations*, 220. Cf. CR XI, 826–832.

36. "On Plato," *Orations*, 202.

37. Hans Engelland, "Introduction," in *Melancthon on Christian Doctrine: Loci Communes 1555*, trans. and ed. Clyde L. Manschreck (New York: Oxford, 1965), xxx.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Jaroslav Pelikan, *From Luther to Kierkegaard: A Study in the History of Theology* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1950), 115.

40. Bouman, 39.

41. "On Philosophy," *Orations*, 127–128. Cf. Heinz Scheible, "Philip Melancthon," in *The Reformation Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Early Modern Period* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 73.

42. In Manschreck, 141.

43. In Hill, 17–18. Cf. Wengert, *Beyond Stereotypes*, 19.

44. In "At Luther's Funeral," *Orations*, 258. Cf. CR XI, 726–734.

45. "On Plato," *Orations*, 203.