

**Elizabeth I's Former Tutor reports on the Parliament of 1559: Johannes  
Spithovius to the Chancellor of Denmark, 27 February 1559**

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The fragmentary nature of the evidence for the proceedings of the Parliament of 1559 is one of the more obvious reasons for the running debate over the Elizabethan religious settlement. The dominant diplomatic source is the reports of Philip II's representative, the count of Feria, which have been in print for over a century.<sup>2</sup> Thanks to the war with France, there was no French diplomatic representation. However, in February 1559 three further envoys arrived, ostensibly to greet Elizabeth I on her accession, but also to assess her intentions, particularly over religion and marriage. One of the three, George, count of Helfenstein, the Emperor Ferdinand I's ambassador in Brussels, has left a reasonably well-known series of reports.<sup>3</sup> The other two are more obscure, but both were Lutherans. One was

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<sup>1</sup> The editors wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen, to their research. They also wish to express their gratitude to Professor *emeritus* Henry Ansgar Kelly of UCLA, for his assistance with particularly difficult passages in the translation and to the two readers for their useful and insightful comments.

<sup>2</sup> Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, 5th count and 1st duke of Feria (1520?-71). His awkward status after 17 November 1558 is discussed in M.J. Rodríguez-Salgado and S. Adams, eds., 'The Count of Feria's Dispatch to Philip II of 14 November 1558', *Camden Miscellany XXVIII* (Camden Soc., 4th ser., xxix, 1984), 302-44. The Mantuan II Schifanoja, whose correspondence is as valuable as Feria's, was not a diplomat, but a servant of the Master of the Knights of St. John, Sir Thomas Tresham.

<sup>3</sup> His correspondence is found in translation in V. von Klarwill, ed., *Queen Elizabeth and some Foreigners; Being a Series of hitherto unpublished Letters from the Archives of the Habsburg Family* (1928), pp. 26-66. K. Diemer, 'Die Heiratsverhandlungen zwischen Königin Elisabeth I. von England und Erzherzog Karl von Innerösterreich, 1558-1570' (Unpub. PhD diss., Tübingen, 1969), pp. 4-19 provides a superbly researched discussion of his embassy.

Ludovico Vergerio, nephew of Pier Paulo Vergerio, spiritual advisor to Christopher, duke of Württemberg.<sup>4</sup> The other was sent by Dorothea, the recently-widowed queen of Denmark.<sup>5</sup> His single surviving report is the only known commentary on the situation in England in early 1559 by a foreign Protestant observer. But he was not a stranger; he had previously been one of Elizabeth's tutors.

### **Johannes Spithovius (c.1520-1563)**

In most of his Danish correspondence the envoy signed himself Johannes Monasteriensis, though when writing to Sir William Cecil he used Johannes Spithovius Monasteriensis.<sup>6</sup> Thanks to his distinguished academic career in Denmark, a brief biography can be found in the *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*.<sup>7</sup> He was the son of Englebert Spithoff of Münster, hence the sobriquet *Monasteriensis*. His date and place of birth are unknown, but his family had some connection with the Netherlands.<sup>8</sup> His brothers lived in Amsterdam and he referred to Netherlanders as his countrymen, among them the London printer Reyner Wolfe, who came from Gelderland.<sup>9</sup> Spithovius was initially a pupil of Philip Melanchthon at Wittenberg,

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<sup>4</sup> The younger Vergerio's mission is mentioned only in passing in H. Horie, 'The Lutheran Influence on the Elizabethan Settlement, 1558-1563', *Historical Journal*, xxxiv (1991), 520-23, see p. 523.

<sup>5</sup> Dorothea of Saxe-Lauenberg (1511-1571), who married Christian III (1503-1559) in 1525.

<sup>6</sup> We employ Spithovius here, rather than Spithoff or Spithove, as it was the international form of his name.

<sup>7</sup> *D[ansk] B[iografisk] L[ex]ksikon*, 1st edn. (19 vols., Copenhagen, 1887-1905), xvi, 227-8, 3rd edn. (16 vols., Copenhagen, 1979-84), iii, 600.

<sup>8</sup> *DBL* gives Münster as his place of birth. H.F. Rørdam, *Kjøbenhavens Universitets Historie fra 1537 til 1621* (2 vols., Copenhagen, 1868-69), i, 600, refers to him simply as Hans Mønster.

<sup>9</sup> For his brothers' connection with Amsterdam, see Copenhagen, Rigsarkivet, T[yske] K[ancellis] U[denrigske] A[fdeling]/A[lmindelig] D[el]/Ausländisch Registrant, 32, fos. 315v-7r; 'Vorschrift an

but in 1542 he matriculated at the University of Copenhagen where he proceeded *Magister* in 1544 and became Professor of Eloquence in 1545. In 1549, however, he was dismissed from his chair for marrying a woman of dubious reputation.<sup>10</sup> He did not return to Copenhagen until the autumn of 1554, when he was appointed Professor of Greek and in 1557 Professor of Medicine as well. He died in early middle age on 30 December 1563, possibly from the plague.<sup>11</sup>

During the nineteenth century evidence began to emerge that Spithovius had spent the years 1549 to 1554 as one of the ‘flock of Hatfield’. The earliest published source is Princess Elizabeth’s sole surviving household disbursement book (Michaelmas 1551 to Michaelmas 1552). Spithovius is named in two entries, a payment for books on 18 May 1552 and a reward of £4 on 4 April.<sup>12</sup> Agnes Strickland quoted the first entry in the biography of Elizabeth in the later editions of her *Lives of the Queens of England*, but without further comment.<sup>13</sup> Spithovius is also mentioned in the exchange of letters between Dorothea of Denmark and Elizabeth I in 1559 calendared in the first volume of the *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, Elizabeth* (1863). The second and third volumes (1865) contain three letters from him to Cecil in 1560 in which he recalled his earlier service to the

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den Rhadt der Stadt Münster’, 18 Apr. 1561. For the reference to Wolfe, see *C[alendar of] S[tate] P[apers], F[oreign], [Elizabeth]*, iii, art. 96, Spithovius to Cecil, 15 May 1560. Wolfe’s place of birth is given in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ‘Reyner Wolfe’. See also Rørdam, i, 599.

<sup>10</sup> *DBL* (3rd edn.), iii, 600.

<sup>11</sup> Rørdam, i, 602.

<sup>12</sup> Viscount Strangford (ed.), ‘Household Expenses of the Princess Elizabeth during her residence at Hatfield October 1, 1551 to September 30, 1552’, *Camden Miscellany II* (Camden Soc., iv, 1853), 33, 39.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England* (8 vols, 1872), iii, 42.

queen.<sup>14</sup> Thanks to these references, some nineteenth-century Danish historians noted that he had been in Elizabeth's employ, but he has been completely ignored in the extensive literature on her education.<sup>15</sup>

Spithovius wrote to Melanchthon from Copenhagen on 30 November 1554. This letter is both the only item of correspondence between them to survive and the fullest account of his English years.<sup>16</sup> He informed Melanchthon that he had just been recalled to Denmark by Christian III, having served Elizabeth as tutor in Latin and Greek for five years. The princess was under great pressure from her sister to violate her conscience by participating in idolatry.<sup>17</sup> Since she was familiar with Melanchthon's works and admired him, Spithovius suggested that he send her a letter of consolation in her adversity. He concluded with his confidence that she would become the means for the restoration of the English Church.

A few further details of Spithovius' membership of Elizabeth's household can be supplied.<sup>18</sup> Thanks to his reference to his five years in her service it can be suggested that he was the unidentified tutor recommended by Martin Bucer to

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<sup>14</sup> *CSPF*, i, arts. 232, 502, ii, art. 806 and iii, arts. 96, 216.

<sup>15</sup> See Rørdam, i, 600, n. 3, ii, 753 and C. de Treschow, *Contributions to the History of Queen Elizabeth derived from documents in the Danish State Archives* (1871), p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, MS 1458, fos. 114v-6v [a copy], calendared in H. Schlieble and W. Thüringer (eds.), *Melanchthons Briefwechsel* (12 vols. published, Stuttgart, 1977- ), vii, art. 7348, noted in J. Schofield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 174-5.

<sup>17</sup> He was apparently unaware that Elizabeth had begun to receive the sacrament according to the Roman rite at Woodstock on 26 August 1554.

<sup>18</sup> The wider issues will be addressed in Simon Adams' forthcoming biography of Elizabeth I.

Elizabeth's chaplain Edmund Allen on 27 August 1549.<sup>19</sup> Bernardino Ochino had recently proposed a tutor for her who had not proved satisfactory and in his stead Bucer suggested a young man who had arrived in England 'some weeks since'.<sup>20</sup> This man had letters of recommendation to Archbishop Cranmer from Melanchthon and another 'man of great learning'.<sup>21</sup> Since Cranmer was unable to employ him and Bucer doubted whether a university post could be found, he might well suit Elizabeth's purpose. Spithovius replaced her best-known tutor, Roger Ascham, who left her service early in 1550 after trying to do so earlier. A single surviving letter from Spithovius to Ascham (25 December 1561), referring to their friendship and previous correspondence, suggests that, whatever the circumstances of his departure, Ascham did not regard Spithovius as a rival.<sup>22</sup> In May 1560 Spithovius asked Cecil to remember him to his old friend 'the Treasurer' [of the Household], Sir Thomas Parry, who had been Elizabeth's cofferer during the decade before her accession.<sup>23</sup>

Apart from his statement to Melanchthon that he had only recently arrived in Denmark and that it was at Christian III's request, we know nothing of the circumstances of his departure from Elizabeth's service. The proclamation of 17

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<sup>19</sup> H. Robinson (ed.), *Original Letters relative the English Reformation . . . Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich* (2nd ed., Parker Society, 1847), pp. 541-2, noted in *ODNB* 'Edward Allen'.

<sup>20</sup> Ochino assumed the post of preacher to the Italian Church in London in January 1548, his candidate has still be identified.

<sup>21</sup> Assuming the young man was Spithovius, the second man could be Jacob Bording, whom Spithovius mentions in the text. Bording (1511-60) was a close correspondent of Melanchthon, professor at Copenhagen and eventual chancellor to the duke of Mecklenburg. Spithovius memorialised Bording upon the latter's death in the *Oratio in Fvneri Viri Doctrina et Virtutibus Clarissimi, Doctoris Iacobi Bordingi . . .* (Wittenberg, 1562).

<sup>22</sup> *Rogeri Aschami epistolarum, libri quatuor* (Oxford, 1703), pp. 411-13.

<sup>23</sup> *CSPF*, iii, art. 96.

February 1554 ordered all alien heretics to leave the realm and any immunity Elizabeth's household might have conferred would have been annulled by her imprisonment following Wyatt's Rebellion. In April Christian III appealed to Mary to release Miles Coverdale and he may have recalled Spithovius at the same time.<sup>24</sup>

### **Spithovius and England 1559-1563**

Spithovius undertook two diplomatic missions to England in 1559. The second (July 1559 to January 1560) generated an extensive correspondence now filed in the Rigsarkivet in Copenhagen and it is reasonably well-known in Danish scholarship.<sup>25</sup> The letter published here is the sole survival from the first mission, but, although it is in the same file as that from the second, it has hitherto escaped notice.<sup>26</sup> So too has the mission itself, despite references to Spithovius as the bearer in both Dorothea's letter to Elizabeth of 15 January 1559 and Elizabeth's reply of 6 April.<sup>27</sup>

The two royal letters provide *termini* for the mission, and Spithovius implies in this letter that he arrived in London on 12 February. The letter covers the period

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<sup>24</sup> She eventually allowed Coverdale to leave for Denmark in 1555. See *ODNB*, 'Miles Coverdale' and G. Donaldson, "'The Example of Denmark' in the Scottish Reformation', in *Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 64.

<sup>25</sup> See TKUA/SD/England A.II.9 [Politiske Forhold til England 1559-1588]. The Danish crown employed two chancelleries in the sixteenth century. The Danish Chancellery was responsible for the kingdom itself and relations with Sweden; the German Chancellery (Tyske Kancellis/TK) relations with the Holy Roman Empire and by extension the rest of Europe. The second mission is discussed in Treschow, *Contributions*, pp. 1-26, and P. Colding, *Studier i Danmarks politiske Historie i Slutningen af Christian III.s og Begyndelsen af Frederik II.s Tid* (Copenhagen, 1939), pp. 62-3, 135-6.

<sup>26</sup> In his survey of the Danish archives for the Public Record Office W.D. Macray noted only the correspondence from the second mission and a few other 'letters of no importance', *Forty-Fifth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records* (1885), appendix ii, p. 46.

<sup>27</sup> *CSPF*, i, arts. 232, 502. Neither Treschow nor Colding mention the first mission.

from the 12th to the 27th, his first reception by Elizabeth on the 16th and the second frustrated by the reception for Helfenstein on the 25th. He makes no reference to Ludovico Vergerio, but Vergerio's mission is of major importance in understanding the significance of his own.<sup>28</sup> On 5 December 1558, after learning of Mary's death, Christopher, duke of Württemberg informed the Elector Palatine OttHeinrich that he hoped the returning English exiles (to whom he had been a generous benefactor) would persuade Elizabeth and her council to ally in Germany, adopt the Confession of Augsburg and marry the orthodox Lutheran John William, duke of Saxe-Weimar.<sup>29</sup> Doing so would afford her protection against Henry II and Philip II.<sup>30</sup> At the end of January 1559, however, he revealed an ulterior motive to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse. If she adopted the Confession, Elizabeth could not permit any 'strange opinions or sects', which undoubtedly included the Swiss Reformed.<sup>31</sup>

In mid-December an agent from Elizabeth, Henry Killigrew, had made contact with Pier Paulo Vergerio at Heidelberg.<sup>32</sup> Precisely what Killigrew was to obtain is not entirely clear, but it appears to have been some form of military alliance with the Lutheran princes, possibly in case the peace negotiations failed and war with France

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<sup>28</sup> There is a limited survey of the background to the Vergerio mission in Horie, 'Lutheran Influence', 520-23.

<sup>29</sup> John William (1530-73) was the second son of the deposed Elector of Saxony, John Frederick. Ironically, he was a French pensioner in 1559. Although the subject of wide speculation as a Lutheran candidate for Elizabeth's hand, he does not himself appear to have shown much interest and married the Elector Palatine Frederick III's daughter Dorothea Susanna on 10 Dec. 1560.

<sup>30</sup> V. Ernst (ed.), *Briefwechsel des Herzogs Christoph von Württemberg* (4 vols. published, Stuttgart, 1899-1907), iv, art. 490.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, art. 514, 28 Jan.

<sup>32</sup> Vergerio noted his presence on 14 Dec., there is no evidence that Killigrew had any influence on Württemberg's initial proposal.

resumed.<sup>33</sup> However, neither Württemberg nor Ottheinrich wanted a formal military alliance, though Württemberg still hoped to persuade Elizabeth to adopt the Confession and ban both popery and strange opinions.<sup>34</sup> At the end of January Wurttemberg and Vergerio decided to send Vergerio's nephew Ludovico to see her. Ludovico Vergerio arrived in England during February and returned to Tübingen early in April simultaneously with the conclusion of the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis. No instructions have survived, only a letter from his uncle to Elizabeth dated 30 January, in which Vergerio rehearsed the Württemberg's preference for an informal understanding based on shared religious allegiance rather than a military one and his opinion that neither Ferdinand I or Philip II would object if Elizabeth adopted the Confession of Augsburg, only another doctrine.<sup>35</sup> He returned with two letters for his uncle, a long one written by Cecil in the queen's name and a briefer one from Cecil's father-in-law Sir Anthony Cooke, who had been one of the leading exiles and played an important role in the House of Commons in 1559.<sup>36</sup>

Cecil's letter is the only surviving expression of Elizabeth's views on the Confession of Augsburg during the initial months of the Parliament of 1559.<sup>37</sup> It is

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<sup>33</sup> See A.C. Miller, *Sir Henry Killigrew: Elizabethan Soldier and Diplomat* (Leicester, 1963), pp. 30-7.

<sup>34</sup> *Briefwechsel*, iv, art. 511 and n. iv, Wurttemberg to Ottheinrich, 23 Jan. 1559 and Ottheinrich's reply, 31 Jan. Alliances with foreign powers were technically a violation of the Imperial constitution.

<sup>35</sup> Draft in *Briefwechsel Christoph-Vergerio*, art. 73b, the original has not survived. Vergerio outlined the letter in two to Henry Killigrew on 1 Feb., *CSPF 1558-9*, arts. 297-8, as well as duke's worry about rumours Elizabeth was intending to invite Peter Martyr to England and his own doubts about Wurttemberg's confidence in the attitude of Ferdinand and Philip towards the Confession of Augsburg.

<sup>36</sup> *Briefwechsel* C-V, 73c-d.

<sup>37</sup> Elizabeth's much-quoted statement to Feria that she intended to follow the Confession or something like it was made on 28 April at the last stage of the passage of the Uniformity Act, *CSPSp.1558-67*, art. 29. Whether she was seeking to exploit Wurttemberg's opinion is an interesting question.



also a complicated document: the letter now in Stuttgart is dated 2 March, but a draft survives at Kew with the endorsement 6 February.<sup>38</sup> The overall content is the same, but there are some significant differences. Both note that Cecil is replying to Vergerio's of 30 January, but while the letter refers to it as being brought by his nephew, the draft does not, which is one reason why his presence in England has been overlooked. More significant is Elizabeth's elusive response to 'those persons' who advised her to adopt the Confession of Augsburg. She did not intend to depart from the mutual agreement of Christian churches, in which the draft describes the Confession as the most weighty (*videtur propondere*). In the letter the description was revised to the nearest (*proxime videtur accedere*).<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth seems to have been pleased with the latter form of words, because she used it or variants in a series of letters to four Lutheran princes in July of 1559.<sup>40</sup>

The news of Elizabeth's accession reached Denmark at roughly the same time as it reached Württemberg. At the accession there was a proposal to send Sir Thomas Chaloner to inform Christian III, but Chaloner was sent to Ferdinand I instead and no

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<sup>38</sup> Württembergische Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Bestand A 114, Bü 4, fos. 5-6v, printed in Briefwechsel C-V, art. 73c. The draft is TNA/PRO, SP 70/2/99-100, calendared in CSPF, i, art. 304. Horie (p. 522) thought they were two different letters. Since it is very doubtful that Ludovico Vergerio could have reached London by 6 Feb., the best explanation for the date of the endorsement is that it is an error by Cecil or his clerks in filing his correspondence later. There are a number of other significant examples discussed by Simon Adams in his forthcoming Elizabeth I.

<sup>39</sup> The difference is noted in D.S. Gehring, 'International Protestantism Unties "the Catholique Knotte": Anglo-German Relations under Elizabeth I' (Unpub. PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010), p. 71, n. 105.

<sup>40</sup> CSPF, 1558-9, arts. 912, 916, 918, 920, although here she compared the Confession to the church of the Apostles.

one to Denmark.<sup>41</sup> However, Christian III's half-brother Adolph, duke of Holstein-Gottorp (1526-1586) had sent his chancellor to England to conduct trade negotiations during the autumn of 1558 and he returned in December with a request from Elizabeth for Holstein to continue the military alliance he had made with Philip II. Holstein replied with his willingness personally to come to England to formalise it.<sup>42</sup> Christian III's response is more difficult to establish because he died on New Year's Day 1559 and his physical state in December is unclear.

In 1558 relations between Christian III and Dorothea and their heir, the future Frederick II, were distant and the prince-elect did not reach the court until 7 January 1559.<sup>43</sup> Since neither Christian III nor Frederick II is mentioned in any of the three letters surviving from Spithovius' mission, the mission would appear to have been an initiative of the queen-mother's. Yet Spithovius reported to the German Chancellor, Andreas von Barby, bishop of Lübeck, rather than directly to Dorothea, which suggests that Barby, who presided over Denmark's wider foreign relations, may have played a role in his nomination.<sup>44</sup> The references to Spithovius as Elizabeth's 'faithful minister' in Dorothea's letter and as her own servant in Elizabeth's reply together with the informality of his reception by Elizabeth leave little doubt that he

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<sup>41</sup> Gehring, pp. 68-9.

<sup>42</sup> CSPF, i, arts. 90-1, Adolph to Elizabeth and Cecil, 17 Dec. 1558.

<sup>43</sup> P.D. Lockhart, *Frederik II and the Protestant Cause: Denmark's Role in the Wars of Religion, 1559-1596* (Leiden, 2004), p. 30.

<sup>44</sup> Spithovius referred to Barby as his 'Patrone' in this letter and as his 'Maecenati' in one of 25 Aug. 1559. Barby died on 3 August during Spithovius's second embassy.

was chosen because his previous employment would enable him to see her unofficially.<sup>45</sup>

In the absence of any instructions the purpose of the mission has to be deduced from the two royal letters. Dorothea's letter began by congratulating Elizabeth on her accession. She then expressed her confidence that Elizabeth would follow Edward VI's example over religion and concluded by proposing an alliance. She made no reference to Elizabeth's request to Holstein, but claimed that her confidence was founded on Elizabeth's earlier expressions to her of her commitment to true religion – though no trace of a correspondence between them has been found in either England or Denmark. In her reply Elizabeth stated that Spithovius was returning with her verbal answer to Dorothea's verbal instructions and she concluded with an expression of goodwill towards an alliance with Dorothea and her children based on true religion.

Thanks to these vague statements the terms of the proposed Danish alliance are not clear. Christian III had followed a very cautious foreign policy during the 1550s, thanks not least to the Lorraine claim to the Danish throne which made him unwilling to antagonise Charles V.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, and despite his cultivation of

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<sup>45</sup> Compare his reception with Helfenstein's.

<sup>46</sup> Both the Oldenburg dynasty in Denmark and Norway and the Vasa dynasty in Sweden were products of the deposition of Christian II and the dissolution of the League of Kalmar in 1523. Christian II had married Charles V's Isabella and his heir was their daughter Christina who married the duke of Lorraine in 153X. Christina was a woman of considerable influence (she was at this point president of the Cateau-Cambresis negotiations) and the fear she might orchestrate a restoration was a major concern of Scandinavian politics.

Melanchthon, he shared the duke of Württemberg's worries about the growth of Swiss and Anabaptist influence.<sup>47</sup> In 1553 he had forbidden foreigners to settle in Denmark unless they could prove their Lutheran orthodoxy, a prohibition he re-issued in 1555 after the former London Dutch congregation took refuge in Denmark.<sup>48</sup> However, there is no evidence the Danes were aware of Württemberg's negotiations with Elizabeth.

The obvious question is whether the alliance was to include a marriage between Frederick and Elizabeth. A Danish match had been under consideration for some time. Henry VIII had suggested one with Adolph of Holstein in 1545 and the duke of Somerset proposed one with Frederick several years later, but the negotiations had petered out in 1551.<sup>49</sup> Ferdinand I took seriously the possible revival of an Anglo-Danish marital alliance at the beginning of 1559, because it might pose a threat to the Empire, and worried that if Philip II did not move quickly with his own suit the Danes might pre-empt him.<sup>50</sup> Feria had reported gossip about Holstein at the end of December 1558 (possibly inspired by the correspondence with him), though he dismissed it.<sup>51</sup> Marriage to Elizabeth would in fact have been a reversal of Christian III's recent policy, for in 1557-8 he was seeking a Habsburg or Lorraine marriage for Frederick to counter the Lorraine claim. But there was also new issue,

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<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, Christian's extensive correspondence with Melanchthon contains no reference to Spithovius.

<sup>48</sup> O.P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 118-9.

<sup>49</sup> For the proposed Holstein match, see *Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, xx, pt. 1, art. 90. For the subsequent Danish negotiations, S. Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth* (1996), p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> Diemer, pp. 8, 16.

<sup>51</sup> *CSPSpan*, 58-67, p. 19, 29 Dec. 1558

Frederick's open interest in Anna Hardenberg, a noblewoman of his mother's household. It was an equally open secret that Dorothea was opposed to her son marrying beneath his rank, and this would give her an obvious motive for discreetly probing Elizabeth's intentions.<sup>52</sup> Spithovius states in the letter that to date he had not raised a marriage to Frederick, which suggests - at the minimum - that he was aware it was under consideration in Denmark. A cursory statement in the letter leaves it unclear whether he knew of Elizabeth's response to the parliamentary petition on marriage on the 10th.<sup>53</sup> Nor is it clear from Elizabeth's general expression of good will in her letter to Dorothea whether Spithovius raised the match after 27 February.

Spithovius presumably left London soon after the date of Elizabeth's letter (6 April). He returned to England on his second mission in July, specifically to propose Frederick if he found the situation amenable to counter a Swedish proposal for Prince Eric.<sup>54</sup> On 10 November Elizabeth presented him to the prebend of Gillingham Magna in Salisbury Cathedral, presumably in reward for his former services.<sup>55</sup> He appears to have reciprocated with a copy of the 1552 edition of *De Nobilitate Christiana Libri III* by the well-known Portuguese humanist Jerónimo Osório da

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<sup>52</sup> Lockhart, *Frederik II*, pp. 32-3, 88-93, 101-03.

<sup>53</sup> See below.

<sup>54</sup> Treschow, *Contributions*, supplies a good narrative. On p. 4 he cites a letter from Frederick II dated 1 July that was never delivered due to circumstances Spithovius encountered in London, now in TKUA/SD/England A.I.1. See also TKUA/SD/England A.II.9, art. 2, Spithovius to Frederick, 8 Aug. 1559, and Gehring, 'International Protestantism', pp. 62-3.

<sup>55</sup> J.M. Horn (ed.), *John Le Neve: Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857, VI: Salisbury Diocese* (1986), p. 41.

Fonseca, bishop of Sylva.<sup>56</sup> According to his letter of presentation, the book was both a gesture of gratitude and a commemoration of the second year of her reign.<sup>57</sup>

He returned to Denmark with letters from Elizabeth dated 16 January 1560 and delivered them to Frederick II and his mother at Nyborg on 22 February.<sup>58</sup> The second mission marks the end of his direct involvement in English affairs. The final reference to him in English records concerned his prebend. Since the remoteness of Salisbury made it difficult for him to collect his income, he requested in 1561 that it be exchanged for one at Westminster or Canterbury. Frederick II supported his appeal, but nothing was done before he died.<sup>59</sup>

### **Spithovius, the ‘Smith Committee’ and the Religious Settlement**

The most important passage in the letter is the visit of ‘Dr. Smith’ and their conversation about orders of worship. Dr. Smith can only be the former principal secretary Sir Thomas Smith, who was both a DCL and an LLD. Their meeting resolves the running debate over the ‘Smith committee’, and with it some of the problems of the religious settlement of 1559.

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<sup>56</sup> BL, pressmark 521.d.2 (Florence 1552).

<sup>57</sup> The BL catalogue states that the book was presented to Mary, but it is undated, there are no internal references either way and no evidence exists that Spithovius had any connection to her. See L. Bourdon, ‘Jerónimo Osório et les Humanistes Anglais’, *L’humanisme portugais et l’Europe: Actes du XXI<sup>e</sup> Colloque international d’études humanistes, Tours, 3-13 juillet 1978* (Paris, 1984), p. 269, and S. Anglo, *Machiavelli: The First Century* (Oxford, 2005), p. 155.

<sup>58</sup> *CSPF*, ii, art. 806, Spithovius to Cecil, 1 Mar. 1560. The calendar entry erroneously dates Elizabeth’s letter to 22 Feb., see *CSPF*, iii, art. 96, Spithovius to Cecil, 15 May 1560.

<sup>59</sup> *CSPF*, iv, art. 123, Frederick to Elizabeth, 20 Apr. 1561.

The anonymous memorandum ‘The Device for Alteration of Religion’ (dated by general agreement to mid-December 1558) included quite detailed proposals for the establishment of a committee of seven prominent protestant clergymen under Smith’s chairmanship: William Bill, Matthew Parker, William May, Richard Cox, David Whitehead, Edmund Grindal and James Pilkington. The committee’s purpose is not entirely clear because it was described in two different ways. Initially it was to prepare ‘a plat or book’ on the alteration of religion to be submitted to Elizabeth and then with her approval to Parliament. Later it is stated the committee was ‘to review the book of common prayer and order of ceremonies and service in the church’.<sup>60</sup> The procedure itself was not a novel one. A similar committee had met in 1548 to draft the ‘Order of Communion’ and the 1549 prayer-book. Though evidence of a committee to prepare the 1552 prayer-book is lacking, drafts of both prayer-books were presented to Parliament before the two Acts of Uniformity were passed.<sup>61</sup> Smith had been involved in the preparation of 1549 prayer-book and two members of the proposed committee (May and Cox) may have been members of the 1548 committee.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Printed in H. Gee, *The Elizabethan Prayer-Book and Ornaments* (1902), appendix i, pp. 202-3.

<sup>61</sup> D. MacCulloch notes the limited sources for these committees, particularly that of 1552, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (1996), pp. 396-7, 504-5.

<sup>62</sup> M. Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Politics* (1964), p. 39. For May and Cox, see the list of the 1548 committee discussed in G. Constant, *The Reformation in England* (2 vols., 1941), ii, 61-2.

William Camden, who possessed a mid-sixteenth century copy of ‘The Device’, claimed it was a formal advice by the privy council and attributed to the Smith committee the revision of the 1552 prayer-book into that of 1559.<sup>63</sup> However, by 1902 when Henry Gee published *The Elizabethan Prayer-Book*, no evidence of the committee’s proceedings had been discovered and doubts were expressed as to whether it had ever met at all.<sup>64</sup> There was one exception - the ‘Guest letter’ - an anonymous and undated commentary on services attributed to Edmund Ghest or Guest. Gee argued that the Guest letter was not relevant to 1559 and probably belonged to the preparation of the 1552 book.

Nevertheless and despite admitting there was no direct evidence of its proceedings, Gee still considered that the committee had met in January and February 1559. He also made three important observations about its members. Cox, Grindal, Whitehead and Pilkington were in exile at the accession and some of them did not return until late January - thus the committee could not have met in advance of the Parliament. Secondly, Cox, Whitehead, Grindal and Parker were among the seven identified preachers of the famous series of nine Lenten sermons in the Sermon Court at Whitehall beginning on 8 February 1559.<sup>65</sup> Lastly, given their histories and later careers, it is difficult to believe they would have agreed to anything other than the 1552 prayer book.

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<sup>63</sup> W. Camden, *The History of ... Princess Elizabeth* (ed. Wallace T. MacCaffrey, Chicago, 1970), pp. 14-5. BL, Cotton MS Julius F VI, where the text printed by Gee is found, belonged to Camden.

<sup>64</sup> Gee, *Elizabethan Prayer-Book*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>65</sup> It is quite possible that the two unidentified preachers may have been drawn from the other three members.



In his famous re-interpretation of the settlement in 1950, Sir John Neale reversed Gee by arguing that the Device as a whole had been rejected, in favour of an interim settlement in which publication of a liturgy was not necessary. But having argued that Elizabeth subsequently changed course following events in parliament, he speculated that a committee of unknown composition met between 3 and 18 April 1559 to prepare the new prayer-book, for which he cited the Guest letter in evidence.<sup>66</sup> In revising Neale, Norman Jones restored the Device to a central position in the planning of the settlement. Given the nature of the evidence he was unsure about the Smith committee, but concluded ‘there is no good reason for thinking that the committee did not meet’. But he also decided to eliminate the Guest letter from the discussion.<sup>67</sup> Roger Bowers, in the most recent interpretation of the settlement, did not discuss the Device at all, because he considered he had ‘nothing germane to add’ on the subject. On the other hand, he saw the Guest letter as evidence of some process of prayer-book revision at the beginning of 1559.<sup>68</sup>

Spithovius’ letter is the first clear evidence that the committee existed. In view of the sequence of events in February 1559 it is unfortunate that the precise date of Smith’s visit to him cannot be established from the internal chronology of the

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<sup>66</sup> J.E. Neale, ‘The Elizabethan Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity’, *ante*, lxx (1950), 326. Dewar followed Neale in dismissing the committee, *Smith*, p. 81, as effectively did W.P. Haugaard, who did not mention it in *Elizabeth and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1970).

<sup>67</sup> *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion 1559* (1982), pp. 24-5, 46-8.

<sup>68</sup> ‘The Chapel Royal, the First Edwardian Prayer Book, and Elizabeth’s Settlement of Religion, 1559’, *Historical Journal*, xliii (2000), 320, n. 6, 331-2.

letter. But at the least we can establish that when Spithovius arrived on 12 February Smith and ‘others’ were engaged in some form of review of the order of worship and Smith was interested in Lutheran church orders. The proposed membership cannot of course be confirmed, but the evidence for the committee itself transforms the historiography of the settlement.

The implication of the Device was that the committee would have completed its work before Parliament met, yet, presumably owing to the late return of the exiles, it was still meeting in February. This may be the explanation for one mystery of the Parliament. Having opened on 25 January, it did nothing of substance on the new settlement until 9 February when a supremacy bill was introduced. A uniformity bill was introduced on the 15th before and a new service book tabled on the 16th. The identity of the service book of 16 February has become a central issue. Gee, Neale and Jones have agreed it was the 1552 prayer-book or something similar, but for different reasons. For Gee and Jones it was part of the crown’s legislative programme, Neale, assuming that Elizabeth intended an interim settlement, attributed it to radicals in the House.<sup>69</sup> Bowers has argued a slightly different case: it was part of the crown’s programme, but it was the 1549 book, which Elizabeth abandoned later in the session for the 1552 book. They have also agreed that the revisions to the

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<sup>69</sup> This follows Jones’ dismissal of Neale’s argument that a different service book had been introduced on the 15th.

book took place by 16 February, except for Neale, who was forced by his general argument to invent the April revision committee.<sup>70</sup>

Sir Anthony Cooke complained about the slow progress made on 12 February, but the explanation for the delay may simply be that it was not until the 15th that the committee had completed its work. Gee noted that the small number of changes made to the 1552 prayer book in the Uniformity Act cannot be termed a full-scale revision. This brings us back to what the committee was supposed to do, which is not helped by the ambiguous statements in the Device. Had the crown's intention been simply to restore either one of the Edwardian prayer books, a committee would not have been necessary. The second statement 'to review the book of common prayer' suggests that the 1552 book was the starting place for something wider. Gee also pointed out that further amendments were made to the printed version of the new prayer book after the conclusion of the parliament. These subsequent changes together with articles in the Injunctions of the summer of 1559 that reversed the status quo of 1552 have been interpreted as Elizabeth's attempt to claw back concessions she had been forced to make to pressure from Parliament.<sup>71</sup> However, if it was the 1552 prayer-book that was being revised from the start, it may simply be that the committee was working in haste in early February and settled on limited modifications to the 1552 with further details still to be worked out.

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<sup>70</sup> Bowers also needs some form of later revision committee to explain the modifications to 1552 prayer-book outlined in the Uniformity Act, but does not mention one.

<sup>71</sup> Particularly by Bowers, 339-40, though here he follows Haugaard, pp. 109-10.

Smith's discussion on the Danish and Saxon church orders with Spithovius was authorised by the Device which empowered him to consult 'other men of learning and gravity' as well as the committee. It is tempting to see Spithovius as the source for Cecil's advice to the Lords of the Congregation on 28 July 1559 that he knew of 'no better example in any reformed state than I have hard to be in Denmark'.<sup>72</sup> His advice to avoid contentious disputes over the sacrament does appear to be reflected in the famous compromise liturgical formula, but how influential he was in following the Saxon order on ceremonies is more difficult. He does not appear to have brought with him a copy of the Danish Church Ordinances of 1537 and had to search for what Lutheran literature he could find in London, which in the aftermath of Mary's reign could not have been plentiful. The two works he mentions were survivors of Archbishop Cranmer's extensive sponsorship of translations of continental religious works during Edward VI's and the *Consultation* had already been embodied in the 1548 Communion Order. Ironically, the Edwardian translations included the Danish Church Order, which was appended to an edition of Calvin's *Treatise on the Sacrament*.<sup>73</sup>

The claim that Elizabeth was a Lutheran surrounded by Calvinists emerged during her reign, but it was given a new significance by Neale. Based on her conversations with Feria in April, the draft of the letter to Vergerio and two letters by Richard Hilles, one in 1549 in which he claimed the 1549 prayer book had brought

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<sup>72</sup> The National Archives/Public Record Office, S[tate] P[apers] 52/1/147v.

<sup>73</sup> STC 4411, attributed to Coverdale? Younger.

England into line with Saxony, and one in February 1559 in which he stated the settlement would be based either on the 1552 prayer book or the Confession of Augsburg, Neale famously claimed Elizabeth's preference was the 1549 prayer-book, which she was forced to abandon by parliamentary pressure. The subsequent revival of the Lutheran thesis has been based on the residual influence of Catherine Parr and her chaplain Edmund Allen.<sup>74</sup> Thanks to Spithovius' presence in her Edwardian household Elizabeth's direct exposure to Germanic Lutheranism was – at the minimum – far more extensive than heretofore thought. Since she presumably employed the 1549 prayer-book until late 1552 she was equally familiar with it. But members of her household, among them Cecil and John Ashley, were also supporters of the 1552 revision.

Both internal compromise and foreign relations have cited in support of arguments that Elizabeth intended a Lutheran settlement. These however demand a careful examination of the situation in mid-February. The Lenten sermons delivered before Elizabeth and a large public audience was the crown's most public statement on religion at this point. Spithovius was not alone in commenting on the prominence of the exiles among the preachers. Their uncompromising protestantism was a statement that no compromise was intended.<sup>75</sup> On the 14th the English commissioners at Cateau-Cambresis relayed a proposal by the cardinal of Lorraine for effective French occupation of Calais for a period of years modelled on the

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<sup>74</sup> Bowers in particular has emphasised Allen's influence.

<sup>75</sup> Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court*.

settlement of Henry VIII's occupation of Boulogne in 1546. On the 19th the council informed the commissioners that the queen though reluctant was prepared to accept it. There has been much debate over the impact of the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis on the settlement, but this was the vital concession that prevented the negotiations breaking down over Calais and war resumed.<sup>76</sup> This may have been kept very secret for Spithovius had no inkling of it. Lastly, there is the response to Ludovico Vergerio, who presumably arrived in mid to late February. This diplomatic if evasive answer is Elizabeth's only statement at this point of her attitude towards the Confession of Augsburg. It is probable the latter two were related. Elizabeth's search for a military alliance with the Lutheran princes through Killigrew can be explained as an insurance in case war resumed. Once the concession was made it was no longer necessary.

The choosing of the Lenten preachers and the response to Vergerio were opportunities for Elizabeth to express her Lutheran sympathies, if she had them. But she did not take them. The English interest in Lutheran church orders is evidence that all protestant options were being considered, but this does challenge the argument that, as the Device implied, the 1552 book was being 'reviewed' as the basis for the settlement.

## Appendix

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<sup>76</sup> Only Haugaard (p. 99) has noted the significance of the 19 February concession.

**Johannes Spithovius to Andreas Barby, Chancellor of the King of Denmark and  
Bishop of Lübeck, 27 February 1559  
Copenhagen, Rigsarkivet, TKUA/SD/England A.II.9, art. 4**

**Text<sup>77</sup>**

**[fo. 1 recto]**

Serenissime Patrone Magnifice domine Cancellarie, Die dominica Inuocauit diligenter tuam ad magnificenciam scripsi Londini, ijs de rebus, quas tam paruo temporis spacio explorare potui. Literas misi Rostochium per hominem fidum, qui promisit diligenter curaturum, vt inde Hafniam in domum Doctoris Bordingi perferrentur. Nunc quid interea temporis potissimum acciderit, scribam. Quarto die, posteaquam Londinum venissem, serenissimam reginam conueni. Ea clementer me excepit, simulque gratias egit quod quasi postliminio ad ipsius Majestatem reuerti voluissem. Horam aut circiter mecum sub coelo sereno ambulando & colloquendo consumpsit, de varijs rebus, & maxime statu regni istius diligenter perconctata est; & cum serenissimae reginae Daniae nomine istius regni officia ad religionem veram restaurandam, & dignitatem istam suam ornandam, eius Majestati obtulissem, maximas egit gratias pro beneuolentia ista reginae & officijs oblatis. Cum istius regni

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<sup>77</sup> Two folios, holograph, in a hurried informal italic hand. A slight fold has obscured two words [indicated in bold] towards the bottom of folio 1v, see nn. 67-8 below. We have maintained the capitalisation found in the manuscript, but have silently expanded all abbreviations ('&' excepted) and have inserted punctuation in brackets where it appears a full stop has rubbed away. Spelling has been preserved, where for example 'v' is rendered as 'v' and 'u' as 'u'; accent marks such as those found in è, â and û, however, have been dropped.

statum pacatum, & quomodo rex ipse cum omnibus regibus & principibus concordiam pacemque seruasset, exponerem, ipsa classem tamen isthic instrui affirmavit, & eius instruendae causam se admirari, si cum vicinis principibus istud regnum tam diligenter pacem coleret. Ego vero cum respondi eam non ad taedendum quenquam sed ad defensionem instrui, si qua fortasse vis in ista immutatione inferretur, simulque dicerem; pacis tempore de bello maxime esse cogitandum, illa assensit id esse verissimum. Colloquio finito, dimisit me & dixit se alias latius mecum commodiore tempore esse locuturam. Aliquanto tempore post equitem quendam auratum ad me misit qui me ad eius Majestatem accerseret, admissus sum in hortum Westmonasteriensem vbi ambulabat. Ostendi me conspiciendum. Sed occupationes primum cum consiliarijs de negotijs regni, deinde aduentus Legati Imperatoris Ferdinandi Comitis Helfenstein, qui triduo ante primum Londinum appulerat, colloquium cum eius Majestate impediuit. Nam erat hora circiter vndecima, & legatus statim a prandio me vidente ad ipsius Majestatis colloquium admissus, tandem intra dimidiam horam & citius honorifice in diuersorium deductus est. Quid negotij tractet necdum possum cognoscere. Id certum est Legatum Philippi, Comitem Ferres Hispanum, & legatum Ferdinandj honorifice admodum tractari, & magnam, spem fiduciamque hosce homines in Philippo & Ferdinando collocare, quantum quid ego possum subodorari. Gallus vehementer hic metuendus est. Habet enim Scotiam per matrimonium filij sui & reginae mmoris Scotiae, Scoti aperti sunt hostes, Boloniam, Caletum & alia loca munitissima Gallus occupat, a pontifice irritatur, vt si pacem cum Philippo Gallus ineat, ab eadem Anglos excludat, & occasionem tantam sibi nunc



datam non negligat. Ob religionis in hoc regno unitationem futuram pontifex omnem mouebit lapidem vt non Gallj modo, verumetiam Ferdinandi & Philippi animum ab hisce hominibus alienet. Et si Ferdinandus ac Philippus cum hisce hominibus amicitiae aliquod foedus ineant, suppetias ijsdem hominibus contra Gallum hostem acerrimum & potentissimum ferant, pontifex sub poena excommunicationis vtrosque terrebit. Scit autem tua dignitas quanti excommunicatio in animis istorum principum valeat. Aut itaque Philippus & Ferdinandus metu excommunicationis continebuntur in officio, aut pontificis autoritate plane abiecta & contempta, papisticoque iugo excusso, Anglis subuenient. Quod vix erit verosimile[.]

**[fo. 1 verso]**

Herent itaque religionis mutandae nomine in grauissimis periculis, si humano more iudicandum est. Etsi nullam plane Angli in religione mutationem admitterent, tamen Gallus tantas occasiones sibi nunc contra hosce homines sponte oblatas non negligeret. Immiscuerunt enim se bello Philippi contra Gallum non necessario, in quo Caletum amiserunt, vt interim non dicam quantopere hoc regnum maximis opibus iam hoc quinquennio toto sit spoliatum. Parliamentum die 23 Januarij inchoatum adhuc durat, duraturum hac quadragesima, vt opinantur plerique. Quid hactenus actum sit, ignoratur, sed in lucem breui proferetur. De religione mutanda iam actum esse certum est[.] Fuit apud me Doctor Smitthus, qui nostrae serenissime regine de ceremonijs isto in regno & Ecclesijs Saxoniae vsitatis mecum egit, simulque rogauit, vt ordinationem aliquam Saxoniam inuenirent. Ego suasi vt in ceremonijs ordinationem Saxoniam sequerentur, quoad fieri posset, & de sacramento contentiosas disputationes & parum

vtiles cohiberent. Ordinationem a Spangenbergio conscriptam, item Coloniensem siue Bonnensem a Bucero & Philippo Melanchthono approbatam conquisiui, vtranque traditurus vt ipse, aliique videant. Neque enim ausim in aliena republica nimium esse curiosus, maxime in ea, vbi quisque vult esse oculatissimus. De reginae matrimonio futuro nihil adhuc est certi. Multi multa loquuntur sed que proxime scripsi, ita se habent. Si testamento patris obsequetur regina, id quod cupit populus, intra regnum nubendum est; Sed vbi parem inueniet hic, styrpe mascula regia penitus extincta? Caetera nobilitas eaque pauca, & impar est, & ea prudentia destituta, quae in regni administratione requiritur. Alij prudentes quidem sunt, sed generis carent nobilitate, quae addit auctoritatem. Auctoritas autem potentia & prudentia sunt necessaria ad foeliciter imperandum[.] Multi quidem currunt hic, & quorum numero qui acceperit brauium postea a caeteris vix debito honore affieretur. Si ad externum aliquem eumque potentem animum adijceret, sibique iungeret, populus indignaretur, quem vetera terrent vestigia, & is princeps, quisquis tandem esset, graui bello, quod a Gallo metuendum est, sese implicaret. Quare vtut res cadat, haec mutatio vix futura est sine maximis malis & periculis. Ego in genere quaedam egi, expresse adhuc nihil: Nulla enim data est hactenus oportunitas commoda. Si quid erit in quo istis prodesse me posse sperem, id nullo vnquam tempore a me praetermittetur. Fidem & diligentiam, quam possum & debeo, praestabo. & id vna cum caeteris serenissimae reginae quaeso tua dignitas latius exponat. Hoc enim perinde erit, ac si ipse prolixè ad eius Majestatem scripsissem. Oro quoque vt tua magnifica curet ne haec absentia mea isthic mihi detrimento sit. Si ex verbis plane praescriptis agendum esset mihi, aut

agere possem, nunc me rursus itineri accingerem. Sed momenta singula expectanda sunt[.] Quanta hic cotidie sint negotia vix dici potest. Et eorum Finis erit nullus ante finitum parliamentum, in quo de singulis ad tranquillitatem constituendam pertinentibus cotidie tractatur. **Caeremoniae** papisticae necdum sublatae sunt; Quisque enim quam vult **itussificat/missificat**. Et qui ex Germania reuersi sunt libere quoque etiam coram regina ter septimanis singulis contra antichristianam doctrinam concionantur. Regina totius parliamenti & sua autoritate puram religionem cupit restaurare. Quare praesentem fert statum, donec parliamenti acta & decreta in lucem veniant. Habet tua amplitudo, quae hoc tempore scribere possum, quae oro vt serenissimae reginae exponas, & me meamque operam qualemcumque eius Majestati commendes.

**[fo. 2 recto]**

Si fieri posset, vellem cum eius Majestate hisce de rebus ageres, & illius voluntatem apertam, tuumque in agendo consilium ad me perscriberes litteris Londinum missis vpt [apvt] Stalhoff ad Baltazarum Remstorp Luneburgensis qui fideliter eas traditurus est. Literae commodissimae mittentur Antverpiam, & inde per postam (vt vocant) facile & cito Londinum perferentur. Ignoscat quaeso tuo Amplitudo, quod ea vtar ad tuam Amplitudinem scribendj audacia, & haec raptim & tumultuario scripta aeque bonique consulat. Bene valeat Tuae amplitudo. Londini 27 Februarij Anno 1559[.]

Tuae dignitati semper obseruantissimus,

Johannes Monasteriensis

## Translation<sup>78</sup>

[fo. 1 recto]

Most serene patron and magnificent Lord Chancellor, on *Invocabit* Sunday I diligently wrote to your magnificence from London about what I had been able to discover in the short time I had been here.<sup>79</sup> I sent my letters by way of a faithful man of Rostock, who promised to arrange that they would be delivered from there to Doctor Bording's house in Copenhagen.<sup>80</sup> Now I shall address what has happened of note in the meantime. On the fourth day after I came to London I met the most serene queen.<sup>81</sup> She received me happily, and the same time gave thanks that I had wished to return to her, as if I were returning to my homeland after exile.<sup>82</sup> We spent an hour or so walking under a fair sky and talking about various matters. She diligently enquired about the state of that realm [*i.e.* Denmark] in particular. After I had presented the queen's offer of service to her in the name of Denmark for the restoring

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<sup>78</sup> Owing to Spithovius's liberal use of honorific adjectives and his inversions, translation is not straightforward. While we have attempted to be as literal as possible, some passages have been slightly paraphrased.

<sup>79</sup> The first Sunday of Lent, 12 February. Presumably this letter, which has not been located, was written immediately upon his arrival in London.

<sup>80</sup> See n. 18 above.

<sup>81</sup> Assuming Spithovius arrived on the 12th, this would have been 16 February. Elizabeth spent the first months at Whitehall (still regularly termed Westminster). She regularly used the privy garden for informal audiences, the best-known example being James Melville in September 1564, see T. Thomson, ed., *Memoirs of his own Life by Sir James Melville of Halhill* (Bannatyne Club, xviii, 1827), 116.

<sup>82</sup> They probably conversed in Latin, for how much English Spithovius had learnt is unknown. He was probably responsible for Elizabeth's limited knowledge of German. Early in 1564 she told an envoy from Württemberg in French: 'car j'entend asses bien l'aleman, ... encore que je ne le parle point', Diemer, 'Die Heiratsverhandlungen', p. 353 (cf. Klarwill, *Queen Elizabeth*, p. 194). Sir James Melville, who could speak German, described her 'Dutche' as 'not gud', *Memoirs*, 125.

of true religion and adorning its dignity, she was extremely thankful **to for** the queen's goodwill and offer. When I remarked on the peaceful condition of the realm and the manner in which the king had preserved peace and concord with all kings and princes, she asserted nevertheless that a fleet was being constructed for some purpose.<sup>83</sup> She wondered why it was being constructed if that realm were persistently fostering peace with neighbouring princes. But when I had answered that it was being prepared for defence not offence in case some force might be brought to bear during that change, and said at the same time that war is especially to be thought of in time of peace, she agreed that that was very true. With the conversation finished she dismissed me and said she would speak more fully at a more convenient time. Some time afterwards, she sent a certain knight bachelor to summon me to her, [and] I was admitted into the garden at Westminster where she was walking. I presented myself, but preoccupations with her councillors on the affairs of the realm and then the arrival of the Emperor Ferdinand's ambassador count Helfenstein, who had landed near London three days previously, prevented me from conversing with her.<sup>84</sup> **For, it** was about 11 o'clock, and the ambassador having dined in my presence, immediately afterwards was admitted to an audience with her Majesty and within half an hour was led honourably into the lodgings.<sup>85</sup> I have not yet been able to learn the matters he

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<sup>83</sup> The king in question was Christian III, not Frederick II, who was not crowned until the summer. Christian III's expansion of the navy is discussed in Lockhart, *Frederik II*, pp. 18, 56-7.

<sup>84</sup> Helfenstein arrived in London on 22 February, and his first audience took place on the 25th.

<sup>85</sup> On the 26th Helfenstein **sent to** Ferdinand a detailed account of his audience. It was arranged for 2 o'clock. He was escorted to Whitehall and then after waiting in the watching chamber was taken into the presence chamber where Elizabeth received him, see Klarwill, *Queen Elizabeth*, pp. 34-5. Spithovius uses *prandium* (lunch) rather than *cena*; according to English usage this would have been dinner rather than supper.

spoke of.<sup>86</sup> It is certain that Philip's ambassador, the Spanish count of Feria, and Ferdinand's ambassador are to be treated very honourably, and so far as I can ascertain **these men** place great hope and trust in Philip and Ferdinand. The Frenchman is greatly feared here. Indeed, he controls Scotland through the marriage of his son and the so-called queen of Scots, the Scots are open enemies, and he holds Boulogne, Calais and other well fortified places. He is urged by the Pope to exclude the English if he enters into a peace with Philip; and given such an occasion now, he would not disregard it. For the sake of future unity of the religion of this realm, the Pope will move every stone to turn not only the Frenchman, but also Ferdinand and Philip against these men. And if Ferdinand and Philip enter into any alliance of friendship with these men for aid against their vigorous and powerful French enemy, the Pope will frighten them both with excommunication. **But** Your Honour knows how much excommunication weighs on the minds of those princes. Therefore, either Philip and Ferdinand will be constrained in their duty by fear of excommunication or, with the authority of the Pope plainly cast away and held in contempt and with the papal yoke shaken off, they will assist the English. The latter seems hardly likely.

**[fo. 1 verso]**

As a result the alteration of religion remains in the gravest of dangers, if one is to judge from a human perspective. Even if the English were to adopt no clear change in religion, nevertheless the Frenchman would not disregard the opportunities that are now freely presented to him against these men. Indeed, they involved themselves

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<sup>86</sup> Helfenstein was actually Ferdinand's ambassador with Philip II. Although he was widely believed to be bringing a proposal for one of the Austrian archdukes, he was only sent to assess English receptivity to a proposal. Klarwill, *Queen Elizabeth*, pp. 35, 38

unnecessarily in Philip's war against the French, in which war they lost Calais, such that in the meantime I cannot say how greatly this realm has been despoiled of its resources during these past five years.<sup>87</sup> The Parliament that opened on 23 January still continues and will continue throughout Lent, as many suppose.<sup>88</sup> What has been done thus far is unknown, but will be brought to light shortly. It is certain that the alteration of religion has been concluded.<sup>89</sup> Doctor Smith has visited me and spent some time regarding the ceremonies used there in our queen's realm [Denmark] and in the churches of Saxony, and asked if some [copy of] the Saxon church order could be found. I urged that they follow the Saxon order in their ceremonies as far as possible and that they restrain contentious and useless disputations on the Sacrament. I have acquired the order written by Spangenberg,<sup>90</sup> and also the Cologne or Bonn order approved by Bucer and Philip Melanchthon, each of which I will hand over so that he and the others can see them.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, I do not dare to be overly meddlesome in a foreign country, especially in this one, where everybody wishes to be most

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<sup>87</sup> Feria Letter

<sup>88</sup> In the writs of summons Parliament was to open on 23 January, but it was delayed for two days owing to Elizabeth's indisposition. T.E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I: Volume I 1558-1581* (Leicester, 1981), p. 3. The belief it would be a short session was belied by the slow process of the bills through the Commons.

<sup>89</sup> The day after Spithovius wrote, the Commons' 'composite bill' had its first reading in the Lords. Jones, *Faith by Statute*, p. 95.

<sup>90</sup> Johann Spangenberg (1484-1550), pastor of Nordhausen. His only work translated into English was *The Sum of Diuinitie Drawn out of the Holy Scripture very necessary, not only for Curates & Yong studentes in Diuinitie: but also for al Christen Men and Women what soeuer age the be of* (1548), STC 23004.

<sup>91</sup> This was presumably the church order for Cologne drafted by Bucer with Melanchthon's assistance, circulated in manuscript in 1543 as the 'Einfeltiges Bedenken' and published the following year under the name of Hermann von Wied, Archbishop of Cologne (1477-1552) as the *Simplex ac Pia Deliberatio*. Two editions of an English translation, *A Simple, and Religious Consultation of vs Herman by the Grace of God Archebishop of Colone, and Prince Electour* (STC 13213-4), were published in 1547-8 and heavily influenced Archbishop Cranmer's 'Order of Communion' of 1548. See Constant, ii, pp. 60-61, and MacCulloch, p. 385.

observant of the situation. On the future marriage of the queen nothing is yet certain. Many people are saying many things, but matters remain as I wrote in my last letter.<sup>92</sup> If the queen observes the will of her father, which is what the people desire, she ought to be married within the kingdom.<sup>93</sup> But where will she find an equal here, the male royal lineage having died out entirely? The remaining nobility, what few there are, are of inferior rank, and are without the prudence required for the administration of the realm. There are certainly others who are prudent, but they lack nobility of descent, which brings authority. Authority, power and prudence, however, are all necessary for the good running of a state. To be sure, many are hastening to this place, and from that number he who will take the prize will afterwards hardly be recognized with due honour by the others.<sup>94</sup> If she were to look upon someone foreign, and one with a capable character, to join him to herself, the people would be indignant, for they are frightened by the remains of the past, and this prince, whoever in the end he might be, would be implicating himself in a serious war which is to be feared from the Frenchman. Hence however the affair should fall out, this change will hardly take place without the greatest evils and dangers. I have done a few things in a general way, but as yet nothing specific. Indeed, no convenient opportunity has yet been given. If anything occurs in which I might hope to be successful in this matter, it will at no time be omitted by me. I shall exhibit fidelity

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<sup>92</sup> Probably the letter he wrote upon his arrival on 12 February, which may have included a reference to Elizabeth's response to the parliamentary petition on marriage on the 10th.

<sup>93</sup> Assuming Spithovius meant the will of Henry VIII, he was misinformed, for although Henry had not prohibited domestic marriages for his daughters, the dowries he bequeathed them were to be bestowed on their 'being married to any outward Potentate', T. Rymer, *Foedera* (1704-35), xv, 116.

<sup>94</sup> From the previous sentences it seems Spithovius was still referring to possible domestic candidates.



and diligence as much as I am able and ought to do.<sup>95</sup> And so I ask that Your Honour explain this and the other matters more fully to the queen. Indeed, it will be just as if I had written at length to her Majesty. I beg also that your magnificence take care lest my absence from where you are is to my detriment. If from the words plainly written above there might be something for me to do, or that I might be able to urge, I would prepare myself now to return [*i.e.* to Denmark]. But every moment is one of expectation. The greatness of what goes on here daily can hardly be expressed, and there will be no end before this Parliament is finished, in which every issue pertaining to the establishment of tranquillity is discussed daily. [The ceremonies]<sup>96</sup> of the Papists are not yet taken away; for everybody [does/celebrates the mass] as he wishes.<sup>97</sup> And those who have returned out of Germany also are preaching in public freely, even before the queen three times per week, against the doctrine of the Antichrist.<sup>98</sup> The queen desires to restore the pure religion by her own authority and that of the whole Parliament. Therefore this represents the present situation until the acts and decrees of Parliament come to light. Your Honour has all that I am able to write at present, which I beg that you relate to the queen and that you commend me and my service to her Majesty.

**[fo. 2 recto]**

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<sup>95</sup> If cryptic, these sentences suggest Spithovius was to raise a candidate, presumably Frederick.

<sup>96</sup> Owing to the two illegible words in the MS, this sentence poses difficulties. The first word is most likely *Caeremoniae*, ‘ceremonies’, ‘practices’ or ‘traditions’.

<sup>97</sup> The final verb could be either *itussificat* (‘does what he pleases’) or *missificat* (‘celebrates the mass’). Either reading echoes Il Schifanoja’s comments of 6 February, *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, VII [1558-1580]* (1890), 26-7.

<sup>98</sup> The Lenten sermons, see above.

If it could be arranged, I wish that you could spend some time with her Majesty on these matters, and once her desire is known, that you inform me in full of her clear desire and of your advice on a course of action by way of a letter sent to Balthazar Remstorp of Luneburg at the Steelyard in London, who will faithfully deliver them. That most desirable letter should be sent to Antwerp, from where it will be brought easily and quickly to London through the post (as they say). I beg Your Honour's pardon that I have used such audacity in writing to you and beg that you might fairly and justly consider this hasty and haphazard writing. Farewell Your Honour. From London 27 February in the year 1559.

Ever most observant to Your Honour,

Johannes Monasteriensis