

Preface

THE CATHOLIC RESPONSES TO Martin Luther project began in the shadow of Germany's Decade of Luther and the advance toward 2017 and the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses. Since 1987 the Pitts Theology Library (Candler School of Theology, Emory University) had been building the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection through the acquisition of original materials from the great reformer, his friends, and his opponents. As the collection neared 4,000 items—more than a thousand of which were by Luther himself—the Pitts Library was fully engaged in exhibits and other programs to mark the anniversary of Luther's emergence on the stage of world history. However, it had become increasingly clear that while the publications of Luther and other great reformers were readily available in English translation, the same could not be said for their Catholic opponents (with the notable exception of Erasmus). Therefore, in the interest of ensuring that both sides of the religious debates of Luther's day were accessible to contemporary English-speaking audiences, the current project was developed as a contribution that the Kessler Collection could make to teaching and scholarship.

Therefore, in 2015 with the assistance of Mathew Pinson, Associate Dean of Advancement and Alumni Engagement for the Candler School of Theology, and with the encouragement of Candler's Dean Jan Love and Richard Kessler, a proposal was developed to translate into English several Catholic pamphlets from the Kessler Collection. These had been issued in Latin or German, and most had never before been translated into English. The Halle Foundation (Atlanta) saw merit in the proposal and graciously agreed to fund it. Without the foundation's support and commitment to the project, it would not have moved forward, and so we are deeply grateful to W. Marshall Sanders (executive director), Eike Jordan (chair of the board of trustees) and members of the Halle Foundation board of trustees for their confidence in the Pitts Theology Library and commitment to this

initiative to help contemporary audiences better appreciate the complexity of sixteenth-century German debates sparked by Luther's reforms.

The editors are also grateful to the staff of the Pitts Theology Library—particularly to the director, Dr. Bo Adams, and to the curator of archives and manuscripts, Dr. Brandon Wason—for their ongoing encouragement and support in many details, ranging from budgetary matters to the scanning of pamphlets and mounting early drafts of the translations on the library's web site.

As for the course of the project, translators were invited to review a list of Catholic pamphlets from the Kessler Collection and proceed with a relatively free hand to develop their translations, providing each text with a brief introduction. In some cases the translators worked from a critical edition of the text, but in others the translators worked from a scan of the Pitts pamphlet. We are profoundly grateful to each of the translators for their careful and conscientious work with these difficult texts, for their collaborative spirit, and for their responsiveness to editorial inquiries.

The introductions and translations were edited and made publicly accessible on the Pitts website. Further editorial work on these texts was done in preparation for the current volume, and a general introduction to the collection has been added, along with indexes created with the assistance of Roy T. Wise, an energetic and generous supporter of the Kessler Collection since its founding. We are deeply grateful to Wipf and Stock and to its editorial staff for including this volume under its Pickwick Publications imprint and for their assistance in bringing the work to publication.

Our hope is that this collection of translations will prove useful for teaching and research and foster a deeper understanding of the sixteenth-century debates by allowing readers today to hear the voices that have been largely silent for the English speaking world for centuries. If such is the case, then the vision of Richard Kessler and his initial Emory partner, Prof. Channing Jeschke, director of the Pitts Theology Library, will be further vindicated and affirmed.

The Editors