

Reconstructing Broadsheet Production in Reformation Wittenberg

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On the eve of All Saints' Day 1517, Martin Luther posted an invitation to an academic debate on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg. If there is one event that affirms the importance of print in European history, it was the posting of this broadsheet. The *Ninety-Five Theses* spurred an eruption of printing activity that transformed religious identities across Europe. Unfortunately, the original broadsheet edition has not survived.

Broadsheets were valuable work for early modern printers. They could be produced quickly. They were easily inserted on the press while the printer was in the middle of larger jobs. They provided a quick return on investment, assisted cash flow and created investment capital for future projects.¹ Larger jobs, such as Bibles, inevitably took longer before printers saw a return on their investment and in consequence funding such projects was both more complex and carried greater risk.

Although Wittenberg's printing history is usually overshadowed by its immaculate Luther Bibles and Reformation pamphlets, broadsheets played an important role. This importance has been overlooked due to the fact that few broadsheets survive and those that do are scattered among numerous libraries and archives. Broadsheets were fundamental to the advancement of evangelical doctrine and a preferred method for mitigating internal disputes.

This chapter examines the importance of broadsheets both to the local industry and the Reformation movement by analysing Reformation and university broadsheets. It also attempts to document Wittenberg's lost broadsheet history. This can be reconstructed based on surviving archival documents, such as account books detailing payments to printers. The result is not only a glimpse into the ways in which early modern governments adopted print, but also a snapshot of early modern printing practices and the role of broadsheets in the economy of print.

1 See: Goran Proot, 'The Importance of Jobbing Printing: A Framework Agreement between the Ghent Jesuits and the Printer Baudewijn Manilius for the Production of Theatre Programmes (1664)', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse boekgeschiedenis*, 21 (2014), pp. 89–112.

Broadsheet Production before the Reformation

Prior to the Protestant Reformation, Wittenberg's print industry was relatively primitive, with only a single commercial press in operation. Wittenberg's proximity to the large printing centre in Leipzig made it difficult to sustain a commercially viable venture in the small university town. The first printing press, arriving in 1502, functioned primarily in the service of the newly created University of Wittenberg.² Most printing during this period was for religious or humanist texts, which aligned with the university's goal of becoming a leading centre of humanist thought. However, new archival research by Thomas Lang has shown that the Elector started to adopt print for official purposes during this time as well, though none of these early items survive.³ Only two broadsheets have survived that were printed in Wittenberg during this period. Both foreshadow important developments that transformed the local industry and the wider European landscape.

The first of the surviving items is a religious broadsheet depicting the celestial ladder of St. Bonaventure ascending from earth to heaven.⁴ Printed by Simprecht Reinhart around 1510, the full sheet woodcut illustration has movable type inserted throughout the image in pictorial scrolls. The Holy Trinity is the focal point, surrounded by symbols of the Gospels, angels, and other holy men and women. There are two Saxon coats of arms in the top corners, those of the Elector of Saxony and the Duke of Saxony. Despite the beauty and sophistication of this image, its importance to Wittenberg print lies largely in the presence of a small device cut into the bottom left leg of the ladder. It is a winged serpent, the signature of someone who would become one of the leading artists of the Northern Renaissance and Protestant Reformation: Lucas Cranach the Elder.

Lucas Cranach was the court painter to Elector Frederick the Wise. Cranach was one of a number of leading German artists lured to Wittenberg by Frederick to work on the great building projects which he designed to improve the cultural prestige of his capital. Dresden, the capital of ducal Saxony, was under the jurisdiction of Frederick's cousin, George. Frederick longed to create

2 Maria Grossman, 'Wittenberg Printing, Early Sixteenth Century', *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies*, 1 (January 1, 1970), pp. 53–74.

3 Thomas Lang, 'Simprecht Reinhart: Formschneider, Maler, Drucker, Bettmeister – Spuren eines Lebens im Schatten von Lucas Cranach d. Ä.', in Heiner Lück, etc. (eds.), *Das ernes-tinische Wittenberg: Spuren Cranachs in Schloss und Stadt* (Petersberg: Imhof, 2015), pp. 93–138.

4 *The Celestial Ladder of St. Bonaventure* (Wittenberg: Simprecht Reinhart, [1508–11]). USTC 710946.

an equally beautiful capital city by renovating Wittenberg's castle and castle church, founding the university, and as a patron of the arts. Cranach soon became crucial to the success of this ambitious agenda.

In 1508 Frederick rewarded Cranach for his artistic contributions by presenting him with a coat of arms. This was focused around the image of a winged serpent, which would become iconic on his portraits of famous Lutheran Reformers. In addition to the portraits, Cranach also painted murals in the various ducal residences, decorated gun barrels, and designed tapestries, court dress, coins, and medals. This broadsheet was printed by Reinhart not long after Cranach received his coat of arms. Its presence on the broadsheet shows Cranach's eagerness to show off his new emblem; that he should use it on a broadsheet was also a testament to the importance he attached to the new printing medium. Rather than treating it as a cheap, ephemeral job, he ensured it was associated with his workshop. This was a preview of the prominent role Cranach would play in shaping Wittenberg print and spreading the Reformation message.

Cranach played an important role in the Wittenberg print industry as a publisher.⁵ Although he was only active for three years, 1522–1525, these were some of the most crucial years of Luther's developing movement. Cranach published many of Luther's early works, including the 1522 German translation of the New Testament, for which he provided the woodcut illustrations.⁶ Even after he quit publishing, he continued to play an active role in the printing industry by supplying woodcut title page borders to other local printers. These were influential in the evolving design and style of Wittenberg print.

While this example of an early Cranach broadsheet foreshadows the importance Cranach would play in the future of the Wittenberg printing industry, the other surviving pre-Reformation example – by Martin Luther – foreshadows the impending storm. From its foundation, the University of Wittenberg slowly moved from the old scholastic methodology of learning to the new humanist curriculum. Christoph Scheurl, who was appointed university rector in 1507, introduced many humanist innovations that helped Wittenberg gain status as

5 John L. Flood, 'Lucas Cranach as Publisher', *German Life and Letters*, 48 (1995), pp. 241–262.

6 The first edition of the New Testament is *USTC 627911*. For more on Cranach's illustrations, see Cäcilia G. Nesselstrass, 'Die Holzschnitte von Lucas Cranach zur ersten Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments von Luther und die Tradition der deutschen Wiegendrucke', in Peter Feist, etc. (eds.), *Lucas Cranach: Künstler und Gesellschaft* (Wittenberg: Staatliche Lutherhalle, 1973) and Peter Martin, *Martin Luther und die Bilder zur Apokalypse: Die Ikonographie der Illustrationen zur Offenbarung des Johannes in der Lutherbibel 1522–1546* (Hamburg: Friedrich Wittig, 1983), pp. 26–37.

a centre of humanist learning.⁷ By 1517 Luther was firmly aligned with Scheurl's modernizing agenda and prepared to challenge the more traditional theology still tenaciously maintained by some faculty members. In September he published a set of theses against scholastic theology.⁸

For many years, it was thought that these theses had not survived. It was only in 1983 that a copy was recovered from the pages of a larger volume at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel.⁹ This discovery confirmed that the theses were printed by Johann Rhau-Grunenberg in two columns on a single-sided broadsheet. There were four sections of 25 theses, a format he presumably also used for the lost edition of the *Ninety-Five Theses*. The theses on scholastic theology were offered as an invitation to a debate, but apparently did not stimulate enough interest, as the debate never took place.

Luther not only rejected scholasticism, but also rejected the traditional aim of humanism. Rather than embracing classical antiquity, Luther embraced humanist methodologies and applied them to his interpretation of scripture. Eventually his religious Reformation placed him at odds with many in the humanist community. But the theses against scholastic theology are important because they show the development of Luther's thought and represent his earliest known foray into a format of print he would use again only a few weeks later for another work—the *Ninety-Five Theses*.

Reformation Broadsheets

The publication of Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses* was the beginning of a new era in Wittenberg printing. The small university town would come to play a dominant role in the print production of northern Germany, and a seminal part in the development of the industry throughout the Empire. The original Wittenberg broadsheet edition of this important document has not survived; we know today of only two broadsheet editions printed in Leipzig and Nuremberg, and a quarto pamphlet published in Basel.¹⁰ The surviving broadsheets are known from only one or two copies. The survival rate for academic print of

7 Maria Grossman, *Humanism in Wittenberg, 1485–1517* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1975), p. 94.

8 Luther, *Ad Subscriptas conclusiones Respondebit Magister Franciscus Guntherus Nordhusensis pro Biblia. Presidente Reuerendo patre Martino Luder Augustinen. Sacrae Theologiae Vuittenburgen. decano loco & tempore statuendis* (Wittenberg: Johann Rhau-Grünenberg, 1517). USTC 710961.

9 *Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel A: 434.11 Theol. 2' (a)*.

10 USTC 751650 (Leipzig), USTC 751649 (Nuremberg) and USTC 639278 (Basel).

this sort was always low, and no-one at this point could have anticipated the momentous consequences of this particular work. Given the fact that Johann Rhau-Grunenberg was the only commercial printer in Wittenberg, had his printing premises either in or near Luther's Augustinian monastery, and had just recently produced a similar document for Luther, he was the likely printer of the now lost first edition.¹¹

Rhau-Grunenberg also published a broadsheet edition of Luther's defence against the accusations of Johannes Eck, who Luther famously debated in the Leipzig Disputation.¹² During the debate, held in the summer of 1519, Eck's rhetorical expertise pushed Luther to criticise papal authority, a step towards his break with Rome. Rhau-Grunenberg also published a quarto version of Luther's response, which was reprinted in Leipzig and Breslau.

As Luther's reform gained more and more adherents, a wide range of new ideas emerged. To clarify his positions, Luther issued several broadsheets that explained his beliefs. Sometimes these confuted the beliefs of catholic opponents, but often they were directed against others on the side of reform. Simon Lemnius was a humanist scholar at the University of Wittenberg, praised for his linguistic skills. However, he earned the ire of Luther after publishing a number of epigrams in 1538 with allusions insulting the reformer and other leading Wittenberg figures.¹³ Moreover, it was dedicated to the catholic Albrecht of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mainz. For Luther, this was too much to stomach, published on a Wittenberg press.¹⁴ Luther responded with a rebuke of Lemnius, printed as a broadsheet, which he read from the church pulpit and posted on the church doors.¹⁵ By this time, however, Lemnius had fled the city. Another famous dispute, resulting in six different disputations from Luther, was with Johannes Agricola over the importance of the Law and Gospel. It concerned whether Christians and non-Christians were bound to the Mosaic Law. In this case, Luther thought Agricola's view was too extreme. For the disputations, he issued six different sets of theses for discussion.¹⁶ All were originally printed as broadsheets and later reprinted together as a pamphlet.

In addition to printed disputations and denunciations, visual polemics were also widely employed during the Reformation. When it comes to illustrated

11 The lost Wittenberg edition is USTC 710962.

12 USTC 710974.

13 USTC 693984.

14 Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church, 1532–1546* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), p. 88.

15 Ibid. For Luther's denunciation, see USTC 710951.

16 USTC 710976, 710978, 710979, 710980, 710981 and 710982.

broadsheets however, Wittenberg played a very minor role. Interestingly, given the role such visual polemic has played in interpretations of the dissemination of the Reformation message, there are only two known surviving examples. The first stems from the beginning of the movement when Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt teamed up with Lucas Cranach to produce the *Chariots to Heaven and Hell*.¹⁷ Karlstadt was chair of the theology department in Wittenberg and participated in the Leipzig Disputation with Luther and Johannes Eck. He was an adamant supporter of the new evangelical movement and was named alongside Luther in *Exsurge Domine*, the papal bull threatening excommunication. His woodcut engraving featured two chariots headed in opposite directions, one entering Heaven and the other – driven by a papal prelate – headed towards Hell. The illustration, interspersed with text-filled pictorial scrolls, was a remarkably bold attack on the papal hierarchy early in the movement. It survives in several examples, including a Latin and a German version. Since the woodcut included space for the insertion of movable type, the Latin text could easily be replaced with the German type. It was printed first in Latin and then reissued in German prior to the Leipzig Disputation in 1519.¹⁸

The other instance of visual polemic is Luther's famous *Abbildung des Papstum* or "Depiction of the Papacy." This was a series of broadsheets with monstrous depictions of the Pope, each accompanied by two, short rhyming couplets written by Luther. It followed his 1545 publication of *Wider das Bapst zu Rom vom Teuffel gestiftt*, a long, polemical treatise satirizing the papal hierarchy.¹⁹ Four editions of the treatise were published that year, as well as many copies of the broadsheets. Cranach carved nine different woodcuts for the series, which resulted in 31 different printings in that year alone.²⁰ The woodcuts proved widely popular and were copied numerous times in the following decades.

In addition to scholarly debate, denunciations, and polemic, broadsheets played an important role in Reformation pedagogy. Parish visitations in the late 1520s revealed that most Christians and rural clergy in Protestant areas were largely ignorant about the major tenets of evangelical theology.²¹ In response

17 Andreas Bodenstein Karlstadt, *Will Gott. Szo würt vortewtsche erklerig Beber wagen* ([Wittenberg: s.n., 1519]). USTC 752666.

18 Only fragments of the Latin edition survive. Three copies of the German edition survive, two in Berlin and one in Hamburg.

19 Hans Lufft published four editions in 1545. For a digital edition, see USTC 706555.

20 USTC 711006–711036.

21 Robert James Bast, *Honor Your Fathers: Catechism and the Emergence of a Patriarchal Ideology in Germany, 1400–1600* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 38 and 99.

Luther delivered a number of sermons teaching the essentials of faith. He printed a set of wall charts with short explanations in a question and answer format. Broadsheets such as these rarely survive; the school room was an unforgiving environment for print, and single-sheets posted on the wall must have been especially vulnerable to the ravages of time and use. Two however do survive, both printed in Low German by Nickel Schirlentz in 1529.²² These wall charts, like Luther's *Small Catechism* to which they were closely related, were written in a question and answer format.²³ The charts were designed to assist pastors, teachers, and parents in instructing children in the new faith. The *Small Catechism* was so successful that by the middle of the sixteenth century its use was a defining feature of Lutheran communities.²⁴ Wall charts such as these must have been a common feature of the Lutheran schoolroom.

Beginning with the *Ninety-Five Theses*, broadsheets played an important role in defining and disseminating evangelical positions and beliefs. Texts were often printed first as a broadsheet and later, in Wittenberg and elsewhere, as pamphlets. However, on many occasions, broadsheets were not meant to stand alone, but rather accompany other works, rather like the illustrative broadsheets produced for Luther's attack on the papacy.

University Print

Although the earliest print shops in Wittenberg were founded primarily to serve the university, the local industry grew to accommodate the great increase in polemical and theological publications inspired by the Reformation. Despite this general reorientation of the local press, the university continued to play an important role in broadsheet production, especially with respect to theses printed for disputations. Even Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses* were a call for a scholarly debate to be held at the university. It was originally an academic affair.

As part of the mediaeval, scholastic tradition, if a scholar wanted to propose a debate, he would put forth a set of theses to be discussed. With the advent of the printing press, these were often printed, posted for public display, and handed out to attendees. Each thesis would then be considered and debated.

22 USTC 753433 (Universitätsbibliothek der JLU Gießen; Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig) and 753434 (Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel).

23 USTC 650492.

24 Michael J. Halvorson, *Heinrich Heshusius and Confessional Polemic in Early Lutheran Orthodoxy* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p. 115.

Afterward, the protocols of the disputation might also be printed and distributed. In 1540 Luther published a set of theses on the divinity and humanity of Christ.²⁵ It was a single-sided landscape broadsheet with 32 theses. This was a response to Caspar Schwenkfeld, who disagreed with Luther over Christ's two natures; the two men had already fallen out during the 1520s over Christ's presence in the Eucharist. The later controversy resulted in Luther orchestrating Schwenkfeld's expulsion from Silesia. Luther later extended the theses from 32 to 64 and wrote a detailed explanation for them.

Several broadsheets survive relating to a specific type of disputation: the *Promotionsdisputation*, debated at the ceremonies leading to the award of a doctorate.²⁶ On these occasions, Luther is often listed as presiding over the disputation: "*praesidente D. Martino Luther.*" This may explain why these particular copies have been preserved.²⁷ One surviving example is a disputation involving Georg Major and John Faber. The broadsheet, printed prior to the event, was a set of theses on the trinity and incarnation.²⁸ Major, who had been the court preacher in Wittenberg, also became rector of the university.

In 1537 Luther presided over the graduation disputation of two students named Palladius and Tilemann. A single-sided broadsheet was printed beforehand with 45 theses printed in two columns.²⁹ In his remarks, Luther discusses the importance of justification.³⁰ Events such as these also allowed the Reformer to address a wider audience than those gathered to hear the students in Wittenberg. In addition to simply presiding over the disputation, Luther was responding to a larger controversy with Conrad Cordatus, a pastor from Niemeck, a small town about thirty-five kilometres north of Wittenberg. Cordatus had made complaints about the doctrinal accuracy of Caspar Cruciger's university lectures on justification. As the lectures were based on Philip Melancthon's notes, he too was implicated. Melancthon had emphasized the importance of repentance in justification. But since repentance was a human

25 USTC 710992.

26 See Saskia Limbach's case study on academic disputations in Basel in Chapter 16. Also, see the catalogue of dissertations at the Leiden University Library in D.D. Breimer, A.A.M. Janssen and J.C.M. Damen (eds.), *Hora Est!: On Dissertations* (Leiden: Universiteitsbibliotheek, 2005).

27 For examples, see the *promotionsdisputation* of Petrus Hegemon (Benzing **3523a) or Philippus Motz (Benzing **3195a).

28 USTC 710999.

29 USTC 710975.

30 Olli-Pekka Vainio, *Justification and Participation in Christ: the development of the Lutheran doctrine of justification from Luther to the Formula of Concord (1580)* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 43.

action, Cordatus claimed it undermined Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone. Luther had previously addressed the issue in a set of theses, printed as a broadsheet, for the doctoral disputation of Philip Motz.³¹ Cruciger, who was presiding at that disputation, held his ground. After Justus Jonas, the university rector, refused to demand a recantation, Cordatus forwarded his complaint to the Saxon chancellor. This brought it to the attention of Elector John Frederick, who was insistent that doctrinal unity should be preserved within his territory.³² Luther's intervention in the debate at the disputation of Palladius and Tilemann was intended to pour oil on these troubled waters. It was later published as a pamphlet with the earliest surviving copy being a 1553 octavo published in Magdeburg by Melchior Lotter the Younger.³³ This episode demonstrates how small, ceremonial events were used by the reformers to address their larger theological and political concerns.

Luther continued to use the forum of academic disputations throughout his career. They were integral to clarifying his positions and defending himself from academic and theological attacks. It was one of his preferred methods of discussion, which he recognized as one of his strengths.³⁴ Not only did he prefer the disputation process for settling disputes, he also thought it fundamental to a successful training for theologians and ministers of the church.³⁵ More importantly, it shows how Luther, famed for his use of the German vernacular, still valued Latin discourse. Scholars have long praised Luther's use of German, specifically, his 1522 German translation of the New Testament.³⁶ Of the 4,500 editions by Luther published during his lifetime, over 3,600 were in German. Fewer than two out of every ten Luther editions were printed in Latin. Mark Edwards, in his study on Luther and the printing industry, shows how Luther's use of the vernacular helped him appeal to a wider audience and how

31 USTC 711037.

32 Brecht, *Martin Luther*, pp. 148–152.

33 USTC 638746.

34 *D. Martin Luthers Werke Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden 1531–46*, ed. Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake (Weimar: Hermann Vöhlhaus Nachfolger, 1916) IV, p. 635, lines 19–21 (no. 5046, May 21 to June 11, 1547).

35 See Chapter 2 of Christine Helmer, *The Trinity and Martin Luther: A Study on the Relationship Between Genre, Language and the Trinity in Luther's Works (1523–1546)* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1999), pp. 41–120.

36 See Hans Volz and Henning Wendland, *Martin Luthers Deutsche Bibel: Entstehung u. Geschichte d. Lutherbibel* (Hamburg: Friedrich Wittig, 1978) and Heimo Reinitzer, *Biblia Deutsch: Luthers Bibelübersetzung und ihre Tradition* (Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1983).

it undermined his catholic opponents' responses.³⁷ However, while Luther preferred German for his printed sermons and polemic, much of the internal doctrinal debates within the clergy were confined to Latin. This was in large part due to the university settings of the disputation, but also because Luther valued the disputation as a means both of encouraging debate, and controlling it within agreed parameters. In this way, broadsheets continued to play a large role in the shaping of protestant doctrine. That said, it is often only a later pamphlet version that survives. When pamphlets were printed detailing the contents of a disputation, the theses were usually reprinted at the beginning or interspersed within the text at the appropriate response. The broadsheets, printed prior to the event and only including the bare text of the theses, were no longer needed. They were difficult to store and likely discarded. Scholars instead collected the pamphlets, especially when the dispute became important in later doctrinal controversies.

Although the *disputatio* was a product of mediaeval, scholastic tradition, it was not abandoned by scholars in the sixteenth century. While it was clearly a tool especially favoured by the early reformers, the disputation remained an essential part of the university regime, in Wittenberg as elsewhere, through to the end of the century and beyond.³⁸

Official Print: Reconstructing Wittenberg's Lost History

While many of the surviving Reformation and university broadsheets were printed in Latin, German was the language of preference for the other major broadsheet patron in Wittenberg: the Elector of Saxony. This too was an area of production susceptible to considerable attrition: but there is no doubt that in its time the publication of broadsheets played a crucial role both in expanding the role of government and underpinning the viability of the printing press. In addition to its university, Wittenberg was important as the seat of the Elector of Saxony— one of the most powerful princes of the Empire. It was at the insistence of the Elector that the first printing press in Wittenberg was established.³⁹ Although it was established to serve both the university and the

37 Mark U. Edwards, *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

38 In the case of Wittenberg demonstrated by a collection of broadsheets from the 1580s surviving in the Berlin State Library. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Az 18401.

39 Grossman, *Wittenberg Printing*, p. 60.

Elector, most official print has not survived. The history of official print must be reconstructed from surviving archival records and account books.

While the documented early imprints of the Wittenberg press served mostly the needs of the university, new research by Thomas Lang reveals the existence of a separate official printing press housed in the Wittenberg castle operated by Simprecht Reinhart.⁴⁰ Reinhart came to Wittenberg from Strasbourg and started printing in 1509.⁴¹ After 1512, he disappeared until 1525, when he published *Anwysynge yn de hillige goetlicke schrift*.⁴² Lang believes that during this period Reinhart was operating a press within the castle. He discovered archival documents mentioning a press located in the castle from at least 1514. Several surviving bills show that the chancery clerk regularly travelled from Torgau to Wittenberg carrying edicts and other documents to be put to the press.⁴³ Another castle document records the purchase of a lock and key in 1515 for the *druckerey*.⁴⁴ Around this time, invoices are recorded in the electoral account books, documenting the existence of a press located on the third floor of the castle. Furthermore, according to financial records from the castle kitchen, Reinhart became the *Bettmeister* or “bed master” to the Elector in 1516, which placed him in charge of several household duties and allowed him to take up residence within the castle.⁴⁵ He is also listed in this position from the account books of 1525–26. Cranach’s painting workshop on the third floor of the castle was vacated after he purchased his own workshop in the middle of town in 1511. It is clear these rooms became the locations of Reinhart’s press and chambers.

The castle press was maintained exclusively for official business, printing various ordinances and other forms of official communication. Unfortunately none of them survive. Lang assumes Reinhart accepted the *Bettmeister* position because it offered a steady job and a stable income; plausibly it also conferred status and provided the printer with valuable connections with people in high places. He no longer had to worry about the uncertainty associated with being a printer touting for business in the commercial market. The history of Wittenberg’s first printers was not encouraging in this respect: four had come and gone before Rhau-Grunenberg was appointed in 1508. But it was hardly a ringing endorsement of Rhau-Grunenberg’s competence that the Elector

40 Lang, ‘Simprecht Reinhart’, pp. 93–138.

41 Christoph Reske, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), p. 1079. Grossman, *Wittenberg Printing*, p. 62.

42 USTC 683904.

43 Lang, ‘Simprecht Reinhart’, pp. 122–23.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 125.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 118.

should choose to establish his own occasional press for official business, rather than trust to Rhau-Grunenberg's expertise. The *Bettmeister* position allowed Reinhart to continue printing, while also earning a stable living. In 1528 alone, he was paid 11 Gulden for printing official letters. This was about the same as the annual income of a journeyman.⁴⁶ He continued in this position until his death around 1536.

After Reinhart's death, Georg Rhau became the printer of official documents. This was a change of strategy on the part of the Electoral Chancery. Rhau was one of the most successful printers in Wittenberg during the Reformation, printing over one thousand editions during his career, more than any other Wittenberg printer. His involvement in official print is evident because surviving account books from the reign of Elector John Frederick detail payments to Rhau for printing official proclamations and then shipping them to the place of issue.⁴⁷ The Electoral court routinely rotated between the various ducal residences in Saxony. Lang notes that when Reinhart was official printer, he printed documents issued in Torgau or Altenburg. When the court was in Weimar, Jena, or Weida, they were printed by Mattes Maler in Erfurt.⁴⁸ However, this division of labour does not seem to have been maintained into the 1530s, as the account books detailing payments to Rhau list him printing documents that were issued in Wittenberg, Torgau and Weimar. Further evidence identifying Rhau as Reinhart's successor is the fact that the castle inventory of 1539 mentions that equipment from Reinhart's press, such as his woodcuts, were borrowed by Rhau.⁴⁹ Many of the woodcuts used on official documents also appear in his later commercial publications, such as the 1548 edition of *Hortulus Animae*.⁵⁰ As the official printer, Rhau printed proclamations, missives, and letters in broadsheet form. Once again, none of these broadsheets have been matched to a surviving copy. But, the survival of the account book provides an opportunity to reconstruct this lost history and offers a glimpse into the workings of an early modern print shop.

The account book currently resides in the Thuringian State Archive in Weimar. After he lost Wittenberg and his Electoral title during the Schmalkaldic War in 1547, John Frederick moved his library and archive to Weimar and Jena, where he founded a new university. The account book lists thirty-three entries

46 Ibid., p. 124.

47 Georg Buchwald, 'Kleine Notizen aus Rechnungsbüchern des Thüringischen Staatsarchiv (Weimar)', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 31 (1934).

48 Lang, 'Simprecht Reinhart', p. 123.

49 Ibid., p. 127.

50 USTC 664284.

between the years 1538 and 1546 detailing payments to Rhau for printing official documents. This corresponds to sixty-five items of which forty-two are most likely broadsheets. The entries are very detailed with most providing a mixture of the following: the date and city of entry, the amount paid to Rhau, the type of document, the number of copies ordered, and a brief description of the subject matter. Nearly all the items were either missives, official letters directed to specific groups of individuals, or proclamations, whose audience was the entire community.

As an example, we can examine the entry dated 19 November 1541 from Torgau: “2 gulden 3 gr. [groschen] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 200 proclamations and 213 missives concerning the penalties to be applied to the guilds and crafts.”⁵¹ Like many in the account book, the edict described here (albeit rather laconically) concerns economic policy. Most of the edicts documented in the account book touch on one of three themes: purely local regulations concerning public welfare, safety, and education; political items with larger, regional concerns; and economic affairs. The local items concerning public welfare include proclamations regulating firearms, as well as the regulation of guilds mentioned above. In April 1541 Rhau printed 500 proclamations that “no one should have to endure foreign beggars.”⁵² These proclamations not only concerned the physical welfare of residents, but also their spiritual wellbeing. At the end of a large order in 1542, the chancery added “a number of extra slips of paper as a reminder to pray.”⁵³ The Elector also issued announcements concerning university scholarship holders. But these were issued in pamphlet form and thus outside the scope of this paper.

Most of the items recorded in the account book concern political affairs. There were a number of proclamations concerning preparations for war and for securing armaments. There were also broadsheets guaranteeing imperial safe conduct, although the account book does not specify for whom. Most are prohibitions or denunciations of various parties, such as the Ottoman Turks or the Jews. In 1541 Rhau printed 700 missives against the Turks and in 1543 printed mandates against the Jews. Items such as these occur frequently in the account book, as do prohibitions against undertaking foreign military service. In 1546 Rhau was paid 6 Gulden 13 ½ groschen for “printing 700 proclamations and 96

51 *‘ij gulden iij gr. Jorg Rauhen dem buchdrucker zu wittenbergk von ij^c ofnen ausschreiben und ij^c xij Missiven die straffen der zunft und handtwergk belangende zu drucken.* See Buchwald, ‘Kleine Notizen’, p. 211. Extracts from the account book, translated by Saskia Limbach, are included at the end of this chapter. Many thanks to Dr. Limbach for her assistance.

52 *[Ausschreiben bezüglich fremde Bettler, 1541]* (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1541). USTC 711044.

53 *[Ermahnung zum Gebet, 1542]* (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1542). USTC 710923.

missives, that no one should undertake foreign military service.”⁵⁴ An earlier proclamation and missive specifically prohibited anyone on foot or horseback from joining foreign military service.⁵⁵ John Frederick needed his subjects during this time for his own military conflicts with the catholic Duke Henry v of Brunswick-Lüneberg. An entry dated 29 May 1540 from Torgau listed “10 gulden 10 gr. for the printer Georg Rau in Wittenberg for printing 165 proclamations of my gracious lord and the Landgrave of Hesse against Henry, Duke of Brunswick and 8 Citations also against Duke Henry.”⁵⁶ Items denouncing Henry, banning foreign military service, and making arrangements for the improvement of fortifications appear throughout the account book until 1545.

The high cost of war inevitably required attention to state finances. In March 1542 Rhau printed 200 copies of an edict promulgating new taxes to support the war against the Ottomans.⁵⁷ Two years prior to this there was a proclamation prohibiting the sale of grain outside the territory. Not only would that protect the domestic supply of grain, but it also helped maintain the military supply chain during John Frederick's conflicts with the Duke in Wolfenbüttel. Many of the economic ordinances dealt with the issue of which coins were accepted in the territory. In January 1542 Rhau printed 100 mandates concerning coins, even though he had printed 700 only three months earlier. In June the following year, he printed 800 proclamations and 140 missives identifying coins prohibited within the territory. Coinage was far from standardized at this time in an Empire with hundreds of territories, archbishoprics, principalities, and imperial free cities all minting their own currencies. Exchange rates were constantly fluctuating. It was thus important to clarify and regulate which coins were acceptable within a given territory. Proclamations such as these usually had larger print runs, as they needed to be distributed throughout the territory and beyond. Merchants in neighbouring territories would need the information to conduct business in Saxony.

The audience for such items was reflected in the content; but it was also reflected in the size of the print runs. The average print run for a proclamation was around 400 copies. Letters addressed to specific groups on the other hand were produced in much smaller editions. They averaged a print run about

54 [Ausschreiben, dass niemand in fremde Kriegsdienste gehen darf, 1546] (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1546). USTC 710944; [Missive, dass niemand in fremde Kriegsdienste gehen darf, 1546] (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1546). USTC 710945.

55 USTC 710930 and 710931.

56 USTC 711041 and 711042.

57 [Ausschreiben bezüglich der Türkensteuer, 1542] (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1542). USTC 711048.

half the size of proclamations for a general readership. When a missive was printed to accompany a general proclamation, the print run was even smaller. The prohibitions on foreign military service were often printed in similar print runs with the number of proclamations printed running in the hundreds and the accompanying letters numbering less than 100. Because such official letters were directed to a smaller, usually nobler audience, they were on occasion personalized for different ranks of recipients. In 1542 a proclamation regarding the need to improve the execution of justice was sent out with six different forms of the accompanying covering letter. These were printed with different salutations depending on whether they were directed to the counts, princes, aristocracy, officials, cities or abbots of the cloisters. Bespoke publication such as this would undoubtedly cost more, which is evident by the hefty bill of 21 Gulden for the entire job.

The account book lists prices in terms of three coins: Gulden, groschen, and pfennigs. By 1540 one Gulden in Saxony was equal to approximately 24 groschen and one groschen was equal to about 12 pfennigs.⁵⁸ The presence of the price information invites two main questions: were these items expensive for the Electoral treasury and was Georg Rhau making a profit by printing them? The following three orders demonstrate that as print runs increased, so did the price—but not proportionally.

By way of comparison, getting a book coloured and bound cost about 8 Gulden whereas purchasing a horse suitable for a courier cost around 12 Gulden.⁵⁹ As any reader of sixteenth century documents might expect, the account book entries are not consistent, as some items are missing price information or fail to itemize the individual tasks, grouping multiple editions together into a single

Print run	Price (total pfennig)	Date
667	2 G. 3 gr. 9 pf. (621)	28 Dec 1539
796	6 G. 4 1/2 gr. (1,782)	14 Mar 1545
940	14 G. 4 gr. 11 pf. (4,091)	28 Jun 1543

FIGURE 5.1 Print runs of three representative Saxon edicts.

58 My thanks are due to Thomas Lang at the Leucoria Wittenberg for sharing his knowledge of Saxon currency.

59 The closest available price information comes from 1510. As the account book is thirty years later, prices would most likely have risen with inflation.

job lot. But the information on print runs, very precious for printed documents of this sort, does allow for a comparison based on price per copy. Even if multiple editions were paid for together, a price per copy can still be calculated. On average, looking at all the items that list print runs and price information, the printing of broadsheet ordinances cost the Electoral treasury four to five pfenings per copy. For each edition, various factors determined price, such as paper quality, whether the edition was a quarter, half or full sheet, or the presence of woodcut illustrations. The average unit cost would have been a bit less than the price of two litres of beer or a dozen eggs. Multiplying that by the average print run of 400 copies, the total price for the printing of each edict is comparable to 800 litres of beer. This is not an insignificant price. It may reflect the necessity to use high quality paper for proclamations, which had after all to represent the Elector and stand the ravages of weather and time exhibited in various public places. But it may also have been a form of deliberate over-payment, to reward the officially-favoured printer for making his press available whenever required. Even with these generous payments, it was probably more cost-effective than maintaining his own press in the Castle.

To determine the profitability of such ventures for Georg Rhau, the official print needs to be placed within the context of the overall activity of his workshop. The account book lists orders for 65 items, of which 55 include print runs. Adding up all the prints runs generates a total of 18,844 copies printed between the years 1538 and 1546. During this same period, Rhau printed an edition of the *Augsburg Confession* with a commentary by Philip Melanchthon.⁶⁰ It was a quarto with 481 leaves, which translates to 121 sheets of paper per copy. Using a conservative print estimate of 800 copies, it would take 96,800 sheets of paper to complete the job. That is nearly five times the amount of paper required for all the official print in the account book for a single, although large, quarto. That edition however was one of Rhau's largest. He normally published much smaller works, averaging only 12.5 sheets of paper per edition.⁶¹ Using the same conservative print estimate of 800 copies per edition, 10,000 sheets of paper would be needed for an average edition. In other words, the paper used for all the ordinances listed in the entire account book roughly equates to the amount of paper that would be needed to print two editions of the sort of books Rhau routinely published in his shop.

60 *Confessio fidei exhibita invictiss. imp. carolo v. caesari aug. in comiciis augustae. Anno. M. D. xxx. Addita est apologia confessionis diligenter recognita.* (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1540). USTC 624515.

61 Drew Thomas, 'The Industry of Evangelism: Printing for the Reformation in Martin Luther's Wittenberg' (PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, forthcoming).

It must be pointed out that the 18,844 copies listed in the account book do not directly correspond to 18,844 sheets of paper. It was quite common for two copies of a broadsheet to be printed on the same sheet of paper, which would then be cut.⁶² The same is true for the order requesting slips of paper with reminders to pray. A few items in the account book list extra costs for gluing. Some broadsheets, such as coin mandates with lots of woodcut illustrations, required at least two sheets of paper to be glued together. Thus, the 18,844 copies could be represented by fewer sheets if there were multiple copies per sheet or more sheets if gluing was required. Even with this margin of error, in relation to his other work, the items listed in the account book represented only a small percentage of Rhau's total output. The account book, however, does not necessarily represent all official print. There could be other account books that failed to survive, as well as the fact that many of the official broadsheets could also have been printed in Erfurt, depending on where the electoral court was located. Yet the general conclusion still stands: even if the number of commissions listed in the surviving account book was doubled, it would still represent only a small portion of Rhau's press.

That does not mean that he was not making a profit. The proclamation concerning arsonists ("*Ausschreiben bezüglich der Mordbrenner*") from 29 August 1540 cost 6 Gulden 14.5 groschen for 550 copies.⁶³ The weekly wage for a pressman was less than one Gulden. But this job would not have taken a week to complete; it would have taken less than a day.⁶⁴ The 14.5 groschen by itself would likely cover the daily wages of the pressmen. That leaves 6 Gulden for paper, ink, the compositor, and other expenses. It is difficult to know how much profit Rhau was making due to these variables and more. But these jobs, completed in a day or less, provided much needed liquid capital while resources were tied up in larger projects. And with official print the bill was settled by a single client, as Rhau was not responsible for distributing the publications to their intended audience.

One of the other advantages of jobbing printing for the economics of the print-shop was that because the works were so quickly accomplished, these

62 This is the case for many sixteenth-century broadsheets from ducal Saxony at the *Hauptstaatsarchiv* in Dresden.

63 [*Ausschreiben bezüglich der Mordbrenner, 1540*] (Wittenberg: Georg Rhau, 1540). USTC 711043.

64 A press in Wittenberg operating at full speed could print between 800–925 sheets per day. See Drew Thomas, 'Circumventing Censorship: The Rise and Fall of Reformation Print Cities', in Alexander Wilkinson and Graeme Kemp (eds.), *Conflict and Controversy in the Early Modern Book World* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2018).

commissions could be inserted on the press and quickly completed without having to pause larger jobs for very long. We see evidence of this in the best preserved of all printing-house records, the print shop of Christophe Plantin in Antwerp. Plantin printed some of the greatest books of the sixteenth century, but he was also happy to print for the local authorities. When a new job came in, official work clearly had priority. As we see from the itemised wages of those operating the press, their normal tasks were routinely interrupted to print off the necessary copies of an official ordinance.⁶⁵ As this example suggests, printing official proclamations could be quite demanding. Due to the nature of such tasks, the instruction to print an ordinance often came with tight time constraints. At one point, in the preparation for the ultimately disastrous Schmalkadic war, Rhau even equipped himself with a mobile field press, allowing him to follow the Elector into battle, and print off such official work as was necessary while the Elector was in camp.⁶⁶ No doubt it was intended that this should include an announcement of the Protestant princes' triumphant victory. Alas, after the disaster of Mühlberg, both Rhau and his press entered up among the Emperor's captured booty, along with the Elector.

Even away from the battlefield, mistakes could be costly. One account book entry dated April 1541 details an expensive order for 500 proclamations against Duke Henry of Brunswick. It states that six reams of paper were ruined due to poor printing. Since this reference specifically mentions the compositor and printer, these were likely to have been typographical errors. Rhau was paid an extra four Gulden to finish the job on time. The additional funds were to pay his pressmen double wages for working overtime.

There were also several post-printing expenditures listed in the account book, which could also increase the final price of an order. Coin mandates could require four to six sheets of paper to be glued together. In the few items that required gluing in the account book, the cost was usually less than ten percent of the price of the printing work. Nearly a third of the items in the account book list tips given to the printer's assistants; this was sometimes paid in beer rather than coin.⁶⁷ On average, tipping usually accounted for around five percent of the total cost, though on rare occasions, it could be as much as fifteen percent. This resulted in a tip that matched the assistants' daily wage and occasionally, much more. Since most of these jobs took less than a day to complete, they had the opportunity to double their daily wage. If such a practice was confined to official print, then this type of work would have been far more

65 I owe this reference to Arthur der Weduwen.

66 Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther* (New York: Penguin, 2015), p. 271.

67 This was mentioned in the order dated 12 October 1541 in Torgau.

amenable to print shop workers than normal assignments. Even though it represented only a small percentage of Rhau's publishing, the pressmen would probably have favoured such work; beer money could work wonders to speed a job off the press, as the Elector's officials knew well.

The production of broadsheets did not make up a large proportion of the work undertaken by the Wittenberg printing industry during Luther's lifetime. But broadsheets did play an important role in Reformation disputes and Saxon politics. They were not of course part of the normal print trade, in that those who consulted them at university disputations or saw them posted up on the church or town hall door did not normally pay to receive them: the whole job was paid for by the state chancery, in the case of edicts, or the unfortunate student, in the case of dissertations. But if not commercial in this sense, it was still extremely valuable work to printers since they received payment in full either up front or after the job was completed. Thus, the value of these small jobs was much greater than their relative contribution to overall printing activity. They provided printers with the ready cash necessary to pay wages on time, to buy supplies, to reinvest in equipment, or to finance a new project. In a challenging business environment securing commissions for broadsheet publications could provide the necessary liquid capital to keep a business afloat. Printing broadsheets was an attractive assignment for everyone in the print shop from the printer to all his workmen. This was true for Wittenberg, buoyed by the phenomenal demand for Luther's works, just as it was for other centres of print culture and government elsewhere in the Holy Roman Empire, and beyond.

Appendix. Payments to Georg Rhau from the Chancery accounts of Electoral Saxony⁶⁸

(translated by Saskia Limbach)

1538. *Torgau* (11 May)

10 gulden 3 gr. 2 [pfennig] to the messenger in Wittenberg who gave two proclamations to Georg Rhau to have them printed, the first on Friday after St Lawrence and the second on the Tuesday after Estomihi [Shrove Tuesday].

68 Based on the transcription by Georg Buchwald, 'Kleine Notizen aus Rechnungsbüchern des Thüringischen Staatsarchivs (Weimar)', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 31 (1934), pp. 209–214.

1538. Wittenberg (10 December)

2 gulden 6 gr. to the printer Georg Rhau for 1 Latin copy of the *Reichskammergericht*.

1539. Weimar (26 August)

4 gulden 13 gr. 8 [pfennig] for the printer Georg Rhau in Wittenberg for the proclamation concerning firearms, including 20 gr. for the messenger who brought it here [and] 3 gr. tip for the printer's assistants.

1539. (22 February)

3 gulden 14 gr. for Georg Rhau in Wittenberg for a number of proclamations that my gracious lord ordered to be printed, including 5 gr. for the assistants.

1539. Torgau (2 July)

3 gulden 1 ½ gr. for the printer Georg Rhau in Wittenberg for printing 482 copies concerning the free francs and the passport for the Jews.

1539. Weimar (28 December)

2 gulden 3 gr. 9 [pfennig] for the printer Georg Rhau in Wittenberg for printing 667 copies concerning armament.

1540. Torgau (29 May)

10 gulden 10 gr. for the printer Georg Rau in Wittenberg for printing 165 proclamations of my gracious lord and the Landgrave of Hesse against Henry, Duke of Brunswick and 8 Citations also against Duke Henry.

1540. Weimar (22 June)

2 gulden 8 gr. for the bookbinder for binding 4 books of my gracious lord and the Landgrave's proclamation, 2 gilded in leather and cut, each 18 gr., and the other 2 bound in leather, each 7 gr.

1540. Torgau (29 August)

6 gulden 14 ½ gr. printer's wage for 550 proclamations concerning arsonists, that Hans Maier, chancery scribe in Wittenberg, ordered to be printed including 12 gr. cartage etc.

1540. Torgau (2 November)

3 gulden 1 gr. Georg Rhau in Wittenberg for the proclamation that prohibits the transport of grain outside the country.

1541. Wittenberg (15 February)

19 gr. printer's wage for 100 copies concerning imperial safe conduct, to Rhau the printer here, including 3 gr. tip for the assistant.

1541. Torgau (9 April)

5 gulden 9 gr. 8 [pfennig] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 500 proclamations in the name of both lords, concerning foreign beggars and 150 copies of the same proclamation and 98 missives for the counts, princes and the aristocracy, including 5 gr. tip for the assistants and 1 gulden 5 gr. 6 [pfennig] for a ream of paper for the chancery.

1541. Wittenberg (13 April)

42 gulden 19 ½ gr. Georg Rhau, the printer here, for producing 500 copies of the third proclamation of my gracious lord against Henry, Duke of Brunswick, makes 21 ½ reams, each for 2 gulden.

4 gulden to the same Georg Rhau for tax, as during the hasty printing of this proclamation 6 reams got ruined and he had to comfort his compositors and printers with double wage, so that the documents will be done even sooner.

6 gulden tip for his assistants.

1541. Torgau (28 May)

7 gulden 9 gr. 3 [pfennig] Georg Rhau in Wittenberg for printing 300 copies against the incendiaries, making 75 books, for every sheet 1 [pfennig].

1541. Torgau (12 October)

22 gulden 9 ½ gr. for Hans Maier, chancery scribe, which he gave to the printer in Wittenberg for 2 proclamations concerning coins and the Turks, namely 700 open mandates on coins [,] 700 missives concerning the Turks and 700 accompanying missives concerning the coin mandate, including 19 gr. to paste the coin mandates together[,], 1 gulden for the printer's assistants to spend on drinks [,] 18 gr. for a ream of paper and 15 gr. for 25 copies of Henry's, Duke of Brunswick, apology concerning the incendiaries, which he sent my lord in Lochau.

1541. Torgau (19 November)

2 gulden 3 gr. Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 200 proclamations and 213 missives concerning the penalties in guilds and crafts.

1542. Torgau (14 January)

12 gr. for 100 mandates concerning coins [which] Hans Maier had printed in Wittenberg.

1542. Torgau (4 March)

20 gulden 1 [pfennig] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 500 open letters, namely 200 in the name of my gracious lord the elector and 300 in the name of the young lord, concerning the disbandment of soldiers from Francken, Duringen, Meissen and Voitland, 700 copies concerning the granted installation and missives and slips of paper concerning the disbandment, besides a number of extra slips of paper as a reminder to pray, including 4 gr. 3 [pfennig] for a number of my gracious lord's dialogues sent by Johann Maier and 20 gr. tip for the printer's assistants.

1542. Torgau (8 March)

2 gulden 18 gr. Georg Rhau the printer in Wittenberg for 200 copies of my gracious lord's proclamation concerning the taxes to support the war against the Turks.

1542. Torgau (10 June)

21 gulden 3 gr. Georg Rhau the printer in Wittenberg for 800 proclamations in book form concerning many necessary items to improve justice and 652 missives to the counts, princes, the aristocracy, officials, cities and cloisters.

1542. Wittenberg (6 July)

1 gr. for a messenger [named] Hans Muller, who delivered a letter from Georg Rhau concerning the printing shop and the printing presses to Johann Meyer in Torgau. Actum Thursday after the visitation of Mary.

1542. (19 November)

10 gulden 1 gr. Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for quickly printing letters concerning the preparation [for war], including 7 gr. wage for the messenger from Wittenberg to here – received in Torgau Sunday St Elisabeth's day.

1543. Torgau (11 February)

3 gulden 20 gr. 7 [pfennig] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 600 proclamations and 60 missives, prohibiting everyone on foot or on horse to join foreign military service.

1543. Torgau (26 February)

1 gulden 16 gr. Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 308 proclamations concerning the woods and heathland [in] Lochau, Torgau, Seidau and Leuchtenburg.

1543. Torgau (12 May)

12 gulden 1 [pfennig] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 1,400 proclamations 700 accompanying missives and another 100 copies that no-one should join foreign military service, and the mandate against the Jews.

1543. Torgau (28 June)

14 gulden 4 gr. 11 [pfennig] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 800 proclamations and 140 missives concerning many forbidden Taler and 3 pfennig groschen – paid in Rheinhartsbrun on Thursday after the feast of John the Baptist.

1543. Torgau (9 October)

5 gulden 2 ½ gr. to the printer in Wittenberg for 800 missives for preparations against the Turks, making 29 books, each printed for 3 ½ gr., including 6 gr. tip for the printer's assistants.

1544. Weimar (20 January)

5 gulden 19 gr. 7 [pfennig] Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 800 proclamations and 73 missives concerning Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt, who will be governor here, while my gracious lord is in Speier, including 1 gulden 3 gr. wage for the messenger to get it here from Wittenberg.

1544. Wittenberg (31 July)

13 gulden 3 gr. Georg Rhau printer here for printing 300 booklets against Julius [von] Pflug, each booklet contains 10 ½ gatherings, ergo 126 books, calculated 2 gr. each book, including 1 gulden gr. tip for the printer's assistants.

1544. Torgau (13 December)

6 gulden 18 gr. Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for printing 300 proclamations concerning tax [*Zehnter Pfennig*], each containing 3 gatherings, including 12 gr. for a bookbinder to paste them together and 7 gr. messenger's wage to get them here from Wittenberg.

1545. Torgau (14 March)

6 gulden 4 ½ gr. Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for 700 proclamations and 96 missives, in which an imperial mandate is printed as well, that no-one should join military service outside the empire.

1545. Torgau (3 March)

18 gulden 14 gr. 6 [pfennig] wage for Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for many proclamations and missives, namely

3 gulden 1 gr. for 200 proclamations of the Holy Roman Emperor concerning the elector in Saxony and other princes involved in the conflict in Wolfenbüttel, this makes 8 books, each book for 4 gr.

200 proclamations from the Holy Roman Emperor to Henry, Duke of Brunswick, this makes also 8 books, each book for 4 gr.

8 gulden 8 gr. 6 [pfennig] again printed in the weeks of Bartholomei, 300 proclamations of the elector concerning the ordinance for scholarship holders of the school in Wittenberg, comprising 2 gatherings which makes 24 books for 4 gr. each book.

500 [copies] concerning the same scholarship holders were printed in book form, each 1 2 gatherings and makes 30 books, each book for 2 gr., 50 missives for the officials, makes 1 book and 4 gr.

60 missives for the city, makes 4 ½ gr., which is 1 book and 5 gatherings, including 12 gr. for the book binder to paste the open letter together, 7 gulden 5 gr. idem printed again, 200 proclamations from the elector in Saxony concerning the ordinance for the scholarship holders, which has 1 2 gatherings which makes 16 books, each book for 4 gr., 8 gr. for the book binder to paste them together

500 ordinances concerning the scholarship holders in book form[,] 2 gatherings makes 40 books, each book for 2 gr.

1546. Torgau (14 February)

5 gulden 13 ½ gr. Georg Rhau printer in Wittenberg for printing 700 proclamations and 96 missives, that no-one should join foreign military service.

Translator's note: In this account book, the word 'book' is in many cases used to refer not only to our modern-day use of the 'book' but also to the unit of paper quantity, one 'book' containing 25 sheets of paper.