

Christian Beyer

Christian Beyer (born in 1482 was in Kleinlangheim; † October 21 1535 Weimar), a Saxon Chancellor and International Lawyer. In documents partially different names and spellings (Bayer, Peyer, Bayarius, Bayoarius, Bavarus, Cristoferus Bauari, etc.).

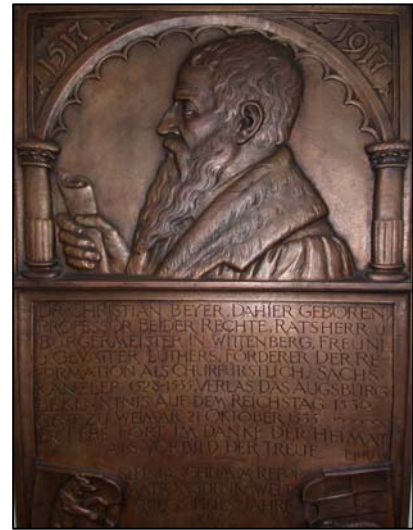
Christian Beyer was born in 1482 Kleinlangheim in Lower Franconia, now part of Bavaria the son of the town mayor Hans Beyer. He enrolled in winter semester 1500/1501 at the University of Erfurt, Thuringia. In the summer of 1503 left the young Franken, accredited as Cristoferus Bauari de Lanckhem (ie. Christianus Baierus, Quinomen Magnum.) to [the free] University of Wittenberg in Saxony.

According to the historic collection of the Wittenberg University, he became one of the first students at the newly founded [free establishment] with a fast gaining reputation. In 1505 he obtained the master's degree and in 1507 they called the highly talented young man “already a teacher at the “artistic faculty”. Three years later (1510), he received his doctorate from the new Faculty of Law as *Doctorado* [PhD] in both law disciplines and also got married.

From this marriage he has a son Christian Beyer, the Younger († 1561) and a daughter Barbara Beyer (she later was married to Leonard D. Stetner, the District Registrar of Ansbach province.)

He bought the property “Market no.6” in centre of the old town Wittenberg, the now constituting the famous "Beyer-Hof". In 1512 his house was victim of a fire outbreak, but the professor began as early as the same year with the reconstruction of the house. Because he suffered so much in construction costs, he later asked the Elector [of Saxony] to increase his salary by 30 florins.

This building was like most of the major buildings of the time also lodging for students. Payments for boarding and lodging of the students were an important source of income for the citizens of Wittenberg as well as for the professors. This is quite well known, and even in the houses of Luther and Melanchthon's students was staying and living.



Christian Beyer, Kleinlangheim epitaph



Kleinlangheim, Franconia



Beyerhof in Wittenberg

1513 became Dr. jur. Christian Beyer Councillor of Saxon Elector Frederick the Wise and also for the first time town Mayor. He served as Mayor for further periods in the years 1516, 1519, 1522 and 1525 and served in the years 1520, 1523 and 1526 as a consulting former Mayor, the Council of the former spa town of Wittenberg.

In the years of advancing the Reformation, so he turned his endeavours for the town of Wittenberg towards fulfilling his teaching post at the university. Nevertheless Martin Luther criticized him initially because he did not immediately renounced the papal principles, and because of his stubbornness to continue the “Jus Canonicum” .

He soon altered his opinion and strode in the aftermath to a conversion to the Reformed faith.

In October 1520, Christian Beyer and other members of the Electoral Councils the advice to Frederick, the Wise on the threat of excommunication bull against [Martin] Luther.

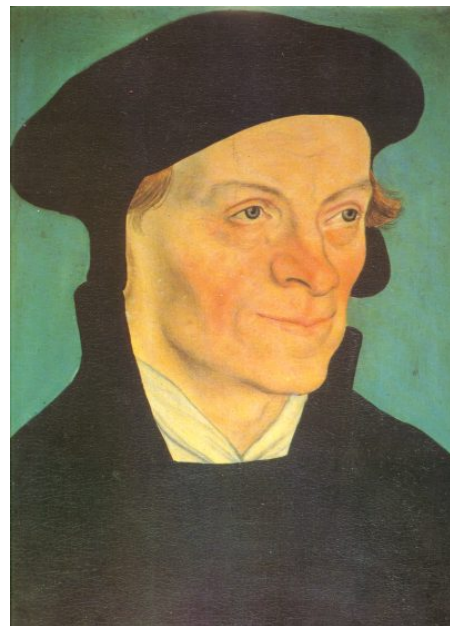
They argued that the issue "should be treated the matter as harmless and dilatory”

In 1521, the “Wittenberg movement” began among the Augustinian monks of the monastery of Wittenberg. The first church services in accordance to the Pope's way was abolished in the Castle and Town Church in Wittenberg. [Martin] Luther held at that time a hiding place on the Wartburg Castle, and did not know what strides his religious brethren was conducting in Wittenberg. When he heard this, he wrote them a letter. In which, he congratulated them and wished that the “project happy operations were carried out”. This letter shows, however, that the monks were not unanimous or undiversified. George Spalatin, the [Saxon] Electors theological adviser had restrained them to moderation, out of concern that Martin Luther could gain even more resentment of his adversaries.

However, this process had reached the ears of the Prior of the Augustinians, Conrad Held. He did not agree with what had occurred, and made a strong notion towards an abolition of the strides. He denounced the Augustinian monk Gabriel Didymun, as ringleader of the movement.



Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony



Georg (Burkhardt) Spalatin

The Elector Frederick the Wise was very upset by this news and sent his Chancellor Gregor Brück to the Academy in order to prevent the undertaking. However, the Augustinian friars were able to convince the old Chancellor that this approach was wrong, so that he officially changed his position in this debate. However, the Elector was with not all satisfied with his statement in this issue. Therefore, he instructed [Vice-Chancellor] Christian Beyer with a further clarification of the matter. However, Christian Beyer could not achieve anything amongst the monks, because the monks had a conviction of their conscience.

Based on this dispute probably not only the Elector Frederick, the Wise converted to the new gospel, but also Christian Beyer. Following the successful implementation of the monks, it also made the other churches to implement these changes.

In 1522 Christian Beyer was very busy as Town Mayor. Andreas Bodenstein [von Karlstadt], gave instruction that schools and churches should be stormed to remove and destroy pictures and precious insignia. This is denoted in history as “iconoclasm”. Because Christian Beyer was council member of University of Wittenberg and also the Town Council, he had to calm down turmoil caused and restore community order. It can be hard to imagine how the shrewd lawyer obtained a solution between the Elector and Andreas von Karlstad. However, he was able to initially alleviate these efforts through mediator’s settlements.

The consequences of the Reformation development, not always met the consensus of the citizens of the town. Between the Council and the reformers there was negotiated a social order that was brought into force.

Barber surgeon Valten publicly insulted the reformer Martin Luther and the Mayor Beyer, with his remark “they were worthy to chased out the state”. He was later fined for profanity through his remarks.



Saxon Chancellor Gregor Brück



Andreas Bodenstein v. Karlstadt

On 7 July 1526 brought Luther's wife, Katharina von Bora Luther, her son John to the world. The infant was baptized in accordance with custom on the same day 16 o'clock in the church by the deacon George Rörer. Among the sponsors, who all belonged to the inner circle around the reformer, are Johannes Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, the Elder, Lucas Cranach, the Elder, the wife of the mayor Hohndorf Benedicta († 1546) and the Saxon Vice-Chancellor Christian Beyer. Luther called [his old friend] the lawyer from now, in mutual recognition, as his "godfather".



Martin Luther and Katharina Haugwitz von Bora, 1526

When the [Saxon] Elector Frederick the Wise died in 1528 and his brother John took over stately business of government, Christian Beyer was called at the court as Chancellor of the [Saxon] Elector John the Steadfast, in Weimar. He was one of the highest officials of the Electorate. Beyer now put an end to his teaching at Wittenberg University "Leucorea" and waived his rights as a town council member of Wittenberg.



Elector of Saxony John, the Steadfast

In the capacity as Chancellor of Saxony, we now find him in the proceedings of the Elector again from 1529. Furthermore as the Chancellor of Saxony he performed the on 25 June 1530 in the afternoon from 3 until 5 o'clock "the Diet of Augsburg" to Emperor Charles V and the [other] Electors of the Roman Empire with the German edition of "Augsburg Confession", as developed by Philipp Melanchthon.

The session was held in the chapter-hall of the Episcopal Palace. He read it aloud and was widely heard, so that the crowd, which stood close together in the outside courtyard, could understand word for word of the speech through the open window. This is the first official and until now has remained firm commitment of the [Evangelical] Lutheran Church.



The Diet of Augsburg, 1530

In 1532 of his chancellery phase, he served in the succession homage proceedings of the Elector John Frederick in the city of Gotha, as when he also was at the convention in Brunswick to confirm the formal council authority of Butteltstädt. In 1533 he was invested as witness to the dispute regarding the Elector's financial credit given to Wolffen, Count of Barby, and the Castle

and town of Barby and it's signed "Privileges of Werdau". In 1534 he was in the then Upper Kranichfeld (today Kranichfeld), where he exhibited the Credit documents.

In 1535 the Chancellor Christian Beyer was a member of the Arbitration Court held between the Elector John Frederick of Saxony and Duke George of Saxony. The proceedings for the prominent gentlemen of Hofgarten was to be held in Leipzig. However, before it could come to the legal proceedings, he died on 21 October 1535 in Weimar. His property was passed to his son Christian Beyer jr. in the same year.

Built in 1917, the village Kleinlangheim, was honouring of their great son of the Reformation, Christian Bayer with an epitaph. In his original residential building located in the Lutherstadt Wittenberg, there is also commemorative plaque.

Family

On 3 October 1510 he married Magdalena, daughter of the mayor of Wittenberg Andreas Gertitz. From this marriage is 21 (in question for misinterpretation?) children to have emerged. After the death of Beyer [Phillip] Melanchthon granted custody care of his children.

These are known:

Christian Beyer, the younger, married in 1541 Sybille († September 8, 1563 in Wittenberg), the daughter of a physician Stephen Wild

In year 1545 Caspar married Sibyl Beyer

Andreas Beyer [family descending from him lived in Kleinlangheim up to 2001.]

Georg Beyer married Catharina Albrecht. He was a princely Council and Mayor in Gera. 3 of their sons, George, Andreas, and Henrich, was employed by Duke Hans, the Elder in Haderslev, Schleswig, Denmark. A daughter also married in Flensburg. A fourth son, Johannes (Hans) became mayor in Eisenberg. Georg (Jörg/Jürgen) Beyer, the Younger (c. 1522 to 1587) was Secretary to the Duke Hans, the Elder in 1547, married Magdalena Richertsen in 1553, the daughter of Flensburg mayor.

A famous epitaph of the family is found in St. Mary (St.Marien) Church in Flensburg. He is also listed in the Danish Dansk Biografisk Leksikon.

Ascanius Beyer

Barbara Beyer, married to the Royal Chancellor to the Margrave of Ansbach Leonard Stetner († 1601 in Naumburg)

Johann Beyer became County Commissioner in Altenburg [the city holding the German Supreme Court]



The Beyer epitaph in St.Marien Church in Flensburg

Litterature:

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Theodor Muther: *Beyer, Christian*. In: *General German Biography (ADB)*. Band 2 Duncker & Humblot, Leipzig 1875, p. 596 f.

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Hamm 1975, Sp 569-570.

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