

# *Confessional Transformations from the Wittenberg Reformation to Lutheranism*

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The research literature treating the development of the Reformation at the beginning of the sixteenth century often makes use of terminology as if it is quite self-evident when its meaning, however, is in some respects ambiguous. It is actually terminology that requires both a clearer definition and reflective rethinking that is aware of the problems connected with it. For example, the “Lutheran Reformation” and “Lutheranism” are often mentioned when one intends to indicate the entirety of the reform movement emanating from Wittenberg, in which Luther indubitably took center stage but by no means acted alone.<sup>1</sup>

Even if Luther—as Albrecht Beutel has recently demonstrated—overcame his initial aversion to the group appellation derived from his name following the Diet of Augsburg and styled himself and those of like mind as “we Lutherans,” this ought not obscure the fact that neither a confessional Lutheran camp nor a confessional Lutheran theology that stood in contrast to peculiar positions taken by Melancthon and other reformers had yet evolved.<sup>2</sup> In the discussion of Lutheranism—when one refers to the first half of the sixteenth century—one encounters not only, in my opinion, an undue concentration on only one single person, namely, Martin Luther, but also a—probably inadvertent—stress on confessional aspects that were not yet present in the early days of the Reformation.

It was certainly plain already in the controversy between Luther and Zwingli concerning the Lord’s Supper and particularly in the Marburg Colloquy of 1529 that the Reformation emanating from Wittenberg was decidedly different from that of Zurich, and that during this interim period the formulation of differing theological positions was taking place. But not until the second half of the sixteenth century did that comprehensive process of differentiation begin. It then not only resulted in the emergence of the great

Christian confessional groups but also led to the differing theological positions within the Wittenberg circle—one can also speak of a collective of reformers—as they were differentiating themselves from each other. It was then that Luther's and Melancthon's positions began to be distinguished from one another theologically, even as their agreement and common understanding had always been emphasized during their lifetimes. Lesser disagreements between the two had hardly been of importance then.

This process of differentiation, especially within the Wittenberg theology, is vitally important for the development of a confessional Lutheranism. This is because all the attempts ultimately failed to hold together the teaching of the two personalities who were acknowledged on all sides as authorities of the Reformation, namely Luther and Melancthon, and to preserve them as a unity. Clear evidence of this failure is seen in the protracted intra-Protestant disputes that took place after Luther's death in 1546, especially provoked by the Augsburg Interim of 1548. These disputes divided the committed adherents of Luther from the convinced followers of Melancthon. The process of clarification connected with these controversies cleared the way for the formation of confessional identity, that is, to a confessional Lutheranism just as to a confessional Calvinism, which "absorbed" some Melancthonian or Philippist positions. Catholicism also took a similar journey to the formation of a confessional identity in the second half of the sixteenth century.

This progression into confessionalism is considered to be completed with the Formula of Concord and the Book of Concord in 1577 and 1580 for Lutherans; for Calvinism, the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566 is referred to as a decisive milestone and the Synod of Dort as the end of this process, and rightly so. At any rate, the Second Helvetic Confession became the standard confession of the Reformed churches in Europe, even as they retained their own respective confessions such as the *Confessio Gallica*, the *Confessio Belgica*, or the *Confessio Hungarica*. On the other side, Catholicism consolidated itself under the Tridentine Profession of Faith of 1563 and developed a definitive authority for a distinct ecclesiastical body in the decretals of the Council of Trent. The adoption of these confessions by political authorities and the obligation of servants of

both church and secular governments to adhere to such confessions and *corpora doctrinae* guaranteed the confessional homogeneity in the respective bodies politic of the early modern period. That was the case even if the discussions concerning doctrinal and confessional formation continued beneath the surface; thus, theological pluralism existed *de facto* so long as the territorial sovereigns did not silence dissent by expulsion. This process was not so simple at all.

It is possible to consider the first half of the sixteenth century as a “pre-confessional phase.” Some presentations in ecclesiastical history associate the “confessional distinctiveness” of the Reformation emanating from Wittenberg, and thereby the phase therein oriented toward confessional demarcation, already with the Augsburg Confession of 1530 or even earlier.<sup>3</sup> This point of view overlooks the potential for integration that characterized this document not only in its first stage but that also continued, at least in an intra-Protestant manner, through the continual refinements made by Melanchthon in the rhythm of colloquies seeking consensus on religious issues.<sup>4</sup> In the process, it is also overlooked that the intra-Protestant developments were still a long way from differentiating confessional positions that later became firm.

Accordingly, not attributing the later confessional codification to the first half of the Reformation century accurately reflects the state of affairs in the 1520s, 1530s, and 1540s. Thus, it is preferable in that context to speak of the Wittenberg Reformation rather than the Lutheran Reformation. This is because the Reformation theology that gained contours during the lifetime of Luther and the group of colleagues and friends surrounding him in Wittenberg was still a pre-confessional theology, which had the capability of holding differing theological elements together or at least of tolerating them alongside each other. Luther, for example, took no exception to the method and manner that Melanchthon developed his theology somewhat further in the succeeding editions of the *Loci communes*. On his part, the Preceptor saw himself to be in harmony with Luther. Both argued vehemently with Johannes Agricola concerning the understanding of law and gospel, specifically concerning the role of the law in the life of the Christian, without completely excluding him as their opponent.<sup>5</sup> Only in hindsight do the theological contrasts appear sharper.

Further, it follows that the broader impact of the Reformation emanating from Wittenberg is in no way due to Luther alone. On the contrary, we are dealing with a group of different actors working in various contexts.<sup>6</sup> Each member of this Wittenberg reformer collective<sup>7</sup> made his own contribution to the theological, societal, and political profile of the Reformation. They all had an interest in the spread of the Reformation beyond the borders of the city of Wittenberg and the Electoral Saxony of the time, even if Luther and Melanchthon remain the two central orienting figures. In fact, Melanchthon even exceeded Luther's influence from the perspective of the European impact of the Reformation emanating from Wittenberg. Further actors in this collegium were Johannes Bugenhagen, Nikolaus von Amsdorf, Justus Jonas, Johann Agricola, Caspar Cruciger, Georg Rörer, and Georg Major. They all contributed to the propagation and consolidation of the Reformation as organizers of ecclesiastical life, as partners in the translation of the Bible, as translators of Luther's writings, as members of the newly organized consistories, and as pastors, teachers, or headmasters. They helped determine the Reformation's impact on politics and society. One can even include an artist like Lucas Cranach the Elder in that group; at any rate, he certainly positioned himself as a part of this team by virtue of his artwork. Not to be forgotten are the musical components of the Reformation, represented by Johann Walter, cantor in Torgau.<sup>8</sup> This diversity of individual theological approaches and specific activities was characteristic of the pre-confessional phase of the Wittenberg Reformation in the first half century.

This essay sets out to trace the movement step by step from this pre-confessional phase to the confessional consolidation of the Wittenberg Reformation in a confession-oriented Lutheranism. At the same time, the historical junctures taking place in those events or phenomena are to come into view which promoted this development or can be considered as milestones in this process.<sup>9</sup> As a result, differing perspectives on this process of confessional consolidation (i.e. on the way to Lutheranism) are to be described. The first perspective is focused on the religious colloquies and their failure to reconcile feuding groups. The second treats theological standardization through the formation of confessions and the construction of authority.

*Religious Colloquies and their Failures*

In the time of the Reformation, the religious colloquy gained a new dimension as an intra-Christian phenomenon.<sup>10</sup> Never before were so many (intra-Christian) colloquies held in such a short period, and never had anyone set such great expectations and hopes on this form of exchange of views and the search for the truth. These were linked to the historical conditions under which the great colloquies of the sixteenth century took place. From these, three should be singled out as milestones for the path leading from the Wittenberg Reformation to Lutheranism: the Colloquy of Hagenau, Worms, and Regensburg in 1540 and 1541, the Colloquy of Regensburg in 1546, and the Colloquy of Worms in 1557. These owe their prominence in ecclesiastical history in no small part to the fact that they assumed a function that had actually been attributed to the general council, which had repeatedly been called for in vain since the late middle ages, namely, the task of finding a common solution to the religious questions that had become pressing with the Reformation.<sup>11</sup> Added to this was the fact that no less than the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation appeared as the initiator of these first three colloquies. This lent a secular authority to these imperial colloquies, which were aiming for solutions to questions of theology and doctrine.<sup>12</sup> These colloquies would finally prove pivotal to the process of eventual confessional demarcation on the path to Lutheranism insofar as they did not achieve that toward which they aimed, namely, overcoming existing dissent. On the contrary, they contributed to the cementing of divergent theological positions and thus also to confessional reflection.

This applies even to the Colloquy of Hagenau, Worms, and Regensburg although it could put forward an astonishingly far-reaching consensus in comparison with the following colloquies. At the beginning, in Hagenau, only questions of procedure were addressed. They were, however, not inconsequential insofar as they affected the basis for negotiation and the standards for decision-making of the subsequent colloquies. The Evangelicals insisted upon the Augsburg Confession, which had been adapted by Melancthon specifically for the colloquy, as the basis for its discussions.

Consequently, they insisted that solely the Holy Scriptures were permissible to be called upon as the authority for the doctrine to be discussed, whereas the Roman side generally also asserted the authority of the Church Fathers and councils alongside the Holy Scriptures. Both sides had thus raised principles to official points of reference that would remain formative for the later differing confessional positions, namely the normative commitment to the Holy Scriptures as the primary norm and the Augsburg Confession as a secondary norm in Lutheranism and the commitment to scripture and tradition in Catholicism. All later confessions of the emergent Lutheranism were understood accordingly as explanations of the Augsburg Confession, not as new confessions.<sup>13</sup>

For the procedure of the colloquies, it became important that the Augsburg Confession and its Apology were indeed accepted as a basis of negotiation and that those involved were committed to the Holy Scriptures. At the same time, it was established—over the objection of the Evangelicals—that the results of the colloquy required the recognition of the emperor and the Pope. The colloquy, which was resumed after an adjournment on 25 November 1540 in Worms was then in fact able to compile a draft that aimed at bringing the two sides together, the so-called Worms Book, through the efforts of Johannes Gropper and Martin Bucer.<sup>14</sup> The negotiation process and the other participants need not occupy us here. Important for our inquiry is only on which points a convergence in doctrine was formulated, and on which questions the parties differentiated themselves from one another—and continued to do so in a way that advanced the establishment of firm confessional positions. The reconciling document (i.e., the Worms Book) signaled a rapprochement in their understanding of original sin and justification just as in questions regarding scripture and tradition. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper (i.e., the understanding of the Mass) remained unresolved. The article on the Lord's Supper worked out by Gropper and Bucer, which sought to combine the Roman understanding of this sacrament with the reformational understanding, provided no real solution.<sup>15</sup>

When the Colloquy of Worms was broken off on January 18, 1541, and was postponed until the previously announced diet in

Regensburg, this also meant a new examination of the Worms Book. It was refashioned into the Regensburg Book.<sup>16</sup> At the instigation of Cardinal Gasparo Contarini and the papal nuncio Giovanni Morone, both of whom had a good understanding of the Reformation theology, the article on the Lord's Supper was corrected first and foremost, and the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was tenaciously repudiated by the Evangelicals, was emphasized.<sup>17</sup> Even the article on justification came back into the discussion just as did the question of the interpretive authority of the church. In the doctrine of justification there was first of all a far-reaching agreement insofar as one developed it with the definition of a "*duplex iustificatio*,"<sup>18</sup> which allowed an Evangelical reading of justification as a justification of the sinner "*sola gratia*," with fruits of faith proceeding from it, just as it allowed the Roman understanding of a "*iustitia inhaerens*" effected in the human being by the Holy Spirit, which would empower him for growth in righteousness and good works. At first, this seemed suitable to bridge the theological gap, but the revision of the article in the Regensburg Book, which dispensed with the term "*duplex iustificatio*" and with it also the associated concept, renewed the difficulties and impeded the consensus.<sup>19</sup> When the emperor requested the results of the discussions on 22 May 1541, it became clear that they had truly agreed only on very few articles. The colloquy, which had begun so promisingly, had certainly achieved the rudiments of understanding but had also at the same time established borders and thus taken an important step toward formation of a confessional identity on both sides. Persistent differences emerged especially in the understanding of the Lord's Supper, in the concept of church, and in the understanding of repentance. In the end, both Luther and the curia rejected the Regensburg Book.<sup>20</sup>

None of the succeeding colloquies managed to revitalize the elements of consensus from Worms and Regensburg in 1540 and 1541. This is because only four or five years later, when Emperor Charles held out prospects for a new colloquy at the Diet of Worms in 1545, the situation had already changed fundamentally. This was due to three factors: first, the preparation and the proceedings of the Regensburg Colloquy of 1546 fell during the time of the first session of the council of Trent,<sup>21</sup> which was opposed by the Evangelicals.

The status of toleration granted to them in the Recess of Speyer from June 10, 1544, played a major role.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the imperial estates favoring the Roman party had no interest in a colloquy that would run parallel to the council and in their eyes was only a concern of the emperor. They made this known in the Worms Recess of 1545. Second, the emperor's policy was already aimed at resolving the question of religion through military action. The Regensburg Colloquy clearly stood in the shadow of the Smalcald War, which would break out shortly thereafter, and had in any case only a dilatory effect. Third, the prospect of a consensus was more often obstructed than enabled by the personalities making up the cast of characters at the colloquy.<sup>23</sup> It is possible to say that the colloquy served to work out the abiding and fundamental differences. It became clear to everyone that the question of the doctrine of justification constituted the epicenter of the differences.<sup>24</sup> The articles on faith, the law, good works, sacraments, ceremonies, and ecclesiology additionally slated for the disputation were not addressed further—admittedly due to the premature departure of the Evangelicals as an expression of their protest.<sup>25</sup> The “propositions” on the doctrine of justification submitted by Petrus de Malvenda, the emperor's chief father-confessor, represented a step backwards from the accomplishments of Worms and Regensburg insofar as they saw “*iustificatio*” as bound not only to the forgiveness of sins through Christ but also at the same time to the “*gratia infusa*,” which enabled believers to perform meritorious works. This retreated from the openness of interpretation in the Regensburg Book<sup>26</sup> and represents already at its core the content of the article on justification of the later Augsburg Interim of 1548.<sup>27</sup> The Evangelicals considered this article a step back toward the old faith and decidedly rejected it. The Regensburg Colloquy of 1546 had thus encouraged the doctrinal division of the two parties from one another in a central article of doctrine.

Not much different was the last of the great colloquies, held in 1557 in Worms.<sup>28</sup> Here as well, the historical conditions of the time made reaching a consensus unlikely from the outset since the recently settled Religious Peace of Augsburg, which guaranteed toleration under imperial law to the adherents of the Augsburg Confession, essentially rendered a search for consensus initiated by



the political authorities unnecessary. Furthermore, the Evangelicals had been divided since the controversy over the Interim and the alternate Leipzig Proposal, which had been worked out with the involvement of the Wittenberg theologians. Thus, they no longer spoke with one voice.<sup>29</sup>

The rivalry between the so-called Gnesio-Lutherans, who held strictly to Luther's theology, and those who followed Melancthon broke out in all its ferocity at the colloquy appointed for Worms in 1557. The representatives of the conservative Roman theology, specifically Petrus Canisius, used this conflict to bring about an anti-Protestant frame of mind. It was the question of original sin, which had otherwise not been a major point of contention between the Roman and Wittenberg sides, that served Canisius as a means of making the intra-Protestant disunity obvious. It was in the doctrine of original sin that intra-Evangelical battle lines were starting to form, especially between the strictly Lutheran-minded Matthias Flacius Illyricus<sup>30</sup> on the one side and the majority of his colleagues on the other. Canisius did also, however, bring up other questions under dispute among the adherents of the Augsburg Confession, such as the role of good works in salvation, debated in the Majoristic controversy, or the doctrine of justification of Andreas Osiander, who had formulated his own idiosyncratic, spiritualizing interpretation of this doctrine.<sup>31</sup> Canisius demanded a clear statement of the Evangelical stance, including clear rejections of false positions, on these issues. However, exactly this—the decision for or against the use of anathemas and whether, if used, they be directed at people or only at doctrines—had already divided the Evangelicals.<sup>32</sup> This “strategy” of Canisius, which aimed at exposing the internal disunity of the Catholics’ negotiating partners, made further consensus negotiations impossible. The colloquy was terminated without producing any results after the Gnesio-Lutheran delegation of Ernestine Saxony had presented a written protest to the Roman Catholic assessors of the colloquy and departed prematurely. The Colloquy of Worms had painfully demonstrated the theological diversity rampant among the Evangelicals; however, it had also—nudged along by the Roman negotiating partners—made the necessity of confessional unity evident. The ability of Evangelicals to delineate

clearly and unambiguously their own theology over against false doctrine in their own camp was clearly discussed for the first time as a prerequisite for consensus negotiations.

### *Theological Standardization Through Confessions and Authority*

The phase of the Wittenberg Reformation shaped by the Augsburg Interim of 1548 demonstrated that it was not only a question of being able to reach consensus but also of being forced to do so by both theological and political necessity. Introduced after the defeat of the Evangelicals in the Smalcald War, this Interim, as imperial religious law, sought to restore church unity through a return of the reform-minded territories to what was a largely pre-Reformation state. It granted only the marriage of priests and reception of both kinds in the Sacrament to the Evangelicals.<sup>33</sup> Especially in the south of the empire, where the emperor's presence was both more menacing militarily and more effective than in the north, it was necessary for many clergymen who did not wish to submit to abandon their congregations and go into exile. These developments fed the apocalyptic interpretation of history, which had been cultivated especially in the groups that were strongly committed to Luther's way of thinking. They presumed that the eschatological struggle between Christ and Belial, that is, between Christ and Antichrist, had already broken out.<sup>34</sup> They considered what was happening in their time, especially the interference in matters of faith and doctrine by an imperial government which had proven itself in their eyes to be manifestly godless, as a crisis in which a clear confession of the truth was indispensable. These ideas characterized the attitude of the strict adherents of Luther<sup>35</sup> whenever they took a stand on the theological and ecclesiastical-political developments of their time.

They regarded the fact that a group of Wittenberg theologians around Philipp Melancthon had worked out an alternate proposal to the imperial interim as a betrayal of the Reformation of Martin Luther. Authorized by the new Saxon Elector Moritz, a member of the Albertine dynasty who was among those who had won the war, this proposal—designated by its opponents as the Leipzig Interim<sup>36</sup>—defended the Reformation doctrine in detail, not merely

in its core concerns. Admittedly, this proposal combined the Reformation doctrine with medieval rites and ceremonies; in this way it sought to ensure a compromise without jeopardizing or calling into question the Reformation in Electoral Saxony. Nevertheless, it ignited a host of controversies concerning the theological content of this alternative proposal. The bitterness of these controversies is explained by the fact that in every single case, as different as the theological issues might in each case be, it was all about preserving the Reformation legacy of Martin Luther as purely and authentically as possible in the various contexts of controversy.

This proved to be the problem insofar as it became clear in this so-called Leipzig Interim that the theology of Melanchthon and that of Luther present therein had developed in quite different directions. In view of the crisis, which was perceived as a situation in which clear confession of the truth was necessary, not only the question of theological and confessional integrity was up for debate. The decisive question of who would be regarded as the Reformation's authority figure had to be answered. While it had been possible up to this point to think of the authority of the recently deceased Martin Luther and that of Philipp Melanchthon as complementary and in that way to tolerate different accents in the doctrine of the Wittenberg Reformation, a process of differentiation had now begun. This process resulted in the long term in Lutheran confessional identity and established "Lutheranism" in a proper confessional sense.<sup>37</sup> It is noteworthy that almost all the actors responsible for this development—with the exception of Nikolaus von Amsdorf—had studied under Melanchthon and were, in the broadest sense, his students. This meant that even when they gradually turned away from him, they brought with them elements of his theology and especially the methodological skills that they had learned from him into their formation of the Lutheran confessional and doctrinal positions. Other students of Melanchthon further developed the positions of their teacher independently, especially on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper and in their Christology. This brought them close to Calvinism, with which they would later not infrequently align.<sup>38</sup> By contrast, there was never a confessional Melanchthonianism, even if the *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum*, largely consisting of

Melanchthon's writings, exerted for a time an authoritative influence and gained a considerable circulation.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, Lutheran confessional formation and the question of doctrinal authority are closely connected. After Luther's death and the discrediting of Melanchthon in the course of the controversy following the Interim, the confessional documents steadily assumed the function of a normative authority as secondary authorities to the primary "*norma normans*" of Holy Scripture. This was foundational in the early Reformation, which had already insisted upon the Holy Scriptures and the Augsburg Confession as normative foundations for faith and public teaching in the negotiations with the Roman party. Since its delivery to the emperor at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, the Augsburg Confession had even become a foundation for political alliances such as the Smalcald League, in which the Evangelical estates had joined together for defense against possible military aggression by the emperor. "No alliance without a common confession"—this had developed into a standard maxim.<sup>40</sup> But even more than that, the Augsburg Confession was considered a foundational confession, which defined the theological identity of the Evangelical churches emanating from the Wittenberg Reformation.

In the course of the further theological developments and discussions, it was certainly a norm that provided orientation for the emergent Lutheranism, but not in the form in which Melanchthon had continually updated it, especially in the *Confessio Augustana Variata*. He had done this, on the one hand, in order to give the doctrine of justification a clearer expression, and, on the other hand, as a reflection of the negotiations seeking intra-Protestant consensus negotiations which had paved the way for acceptance of the Confession by the southern Germans who had been influenced by the theology of Martin Bucer.<sup>41</sup> From the perspective of the controversy following the Interim, the short articles of the Augsburg Confession, in which the Evangelical faith and doctrine were formulated succinctly, did not go into sufficient detail theologically to provide answers to the many questions that had given rise to debate in that vacuum of authority of the 1550s and 1560s. Consequently, from both the theologians and political figures, there were various initiatives to overcome the discord among Protestants through a renewed

commitment to the Augsburg Confession. In these, articles clarifying the confession were placed alongside it, such as in the "Frankfurt Recess" composed at the Frankfurt diet of princes of 1558.<sup>42</sup> Further, the diet of Naumburg attempted a similar course of action in 1561.<sup>43</sup> This is because not only the controversies but also the failure of the Colloquy of Worms in 1557 had made evident the necessity of an agreement embracing the several Evangelical governments. A decided supporter of this cause was Duke Christoph of Württemberg. At that time, Landgrave Wilhelm of Hesse along with Duke Julius of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel came to his aid; Elector August of Saxony did so later. Through the activities of Jakob Andreae, the Tübingen superintendent and university chancellor, a confessional consolidation began, extending over some ten years, finally resulting in the preparation of the Formula of Concord in 1577 and the establishment of confessional Lutheranism.<sup>44</sup>

All in all, there were six documents along this path that were continually being revised in reaction to comments and counter-proposals.<sup>45</sup> In the earlier texts, the intense struggle for theological unity among the adherents of the Augsburg Confession becomes clear; however, they also reveal the potential of the final product, the Book of Concord published in 1580, to integrate various Protestant groups.<sup>46</sup> Even if Jakob Andreae can rightly be considered the architect of the work of Concord and the true engine of the efforts for theological unity,<sup>47</sup> the process of developing the Formula of Concord involved a theologically multifaceted group of scholars representing both church and secular governments. The composition of this group reflects not only the involvement of influential Evangelical rulers, as whose representatives the scholars were acting, but also the integration of differing theological orientations shaped by Luther and Melancthon.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, the development of the Wittenberg Reformation into Lutheranism was in no way a process of simply finding a confessional identity and setting confessional boundaries. It was certainly also an exercise in reaching consensus with integrative potential. This consensus was found within the boundaries set by the Augsburg Confession, of which the Formula of Concord understood itself to be the Lutheran interpretation<sup>49</sup> (i.e., to the exclusion of Roman

Catholicism and Calvinism). The “*Concordia*” or the Formula of Concord presented Martin Luther as the “foremost teacher of the Augsburg Confession.”<sup>50</sup> The flipside of this was the suppression of Melanchthon’s authority, which, especially through the widely-disseminated *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum*, had played a role that is certainly not yet sufficiently recognized. But it was Martin Luther to whom the function of an interpretive authority was ascribed. Of course, the Holy Scriptures, their content regarded as summarized in the creeds of the Early Church and made known anew in the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, remained authoritative. However, Luther’s interpretive authority was emphasized by the fact that the Book of Concord, which was put to use as a *corpus doctrinae*, provided Luther’s catechisms and his Smalcald Articles alongside the foundational texts of the confessions of the Early Church, the Augsburg Confession, and its Apology as further writings explaining faith and doctrine.<sup>51</sup> The Formula of Concord, as the conclusion of the Book of Concord, made the argument in its individual articles of doctrine with reference to these writings, and it also enlisted other writings of Luther.

For the Concordists, the recourse to Luther’s doctrinal authority served to substantiate their claim to the pure truth of the Evangelical faith, in conformity with the Scriptures, as well as to legitimate the Lutheran doctrine codified in the Formula of Concord. This is because the theologians of the Formula of Concord, along with many of their contemporaries, saw in the Wittenberg reformer a chosen instrument of God, who had rediscovered the Gospel that had been buried for centuries and had made it accessible again. They saw God himself at work, having brought his Word back to the light through Luther. Accordingly, they found in the writings of the reformer—as the Formula of Concord had articulated it—the “foremost articles of our Christian religion newly expounded from God’s Word and purified from any additions.”<sup>52</sup> This truth of the gospel, coming to expression in the teaching of the “man of God,” Luther, was already seen as authenticated in the Augsburg Confession of 1530.<sup>53</sup> That truth of the gospel was now codified once and for all in the Formula of Concord and the Book of Concord, the centerpieces of confessional Lutheranism.<sup>54</sup>

This exaltation of the person of Martin Luther in the course of Lutheran confessional formation was no new phenomenon. On the contrary, its roots lie first with the reformer himself, second in his contemporaries' assessment of him, and third in the early dissemination of writings that publicly praised and promoted Luther's prophetic prestige.<sup>55</sup> The Wittenberg reformer had himself developed a sort of prophetic self-understanding, which can be explained adequately only against the background of his view of history and his interpretation of the present. Not only he but also his colleagues put themselves in the context of an historical continuum, which they believed was moving toward an imminent apocalyptic end. Luther could only understand the outbreak of the Reformation in Wittenberg and elsewhere as an indication of the impending end of time. Moreover, he could understand himself as an actor in a sweeping divine plan of salvation, the consummation of which was expected in the immediate future. Before the background of this contemporary perception, the Reformation proclamation of the rediscovery of the gospel emanating from Wittenberg developed a lasting appeal. Luther himself appeared on the stage of history not only as a herald but also—as the Old Testament prophets—as an eschatological voice calling for repentance. Further, his proclamation of the justification of sinners *sola gratia* and *sola fide*, made an impression both rhetorically and in terms of content, and it actually made him a leading personality whose counsel was sought and whose word provided orientation. On the one hand, a herald of salvation and redemption similar to the apostles, on the other a prophet of judgment—these were the two sides of Luther's self-understanding.

Already in his early writings, the self-designation of "prophet" or "*propheta Germaniae*" is to be found. Finding therein self-stylization and hubris, however, does an injustice to the reformer. Rather, in these descriptions of himself lies Luther's conviction that he had an extraordinary, God-given mission to fulfill that always brought with it danger and peril. Luther's prophetic self-assurance was in this sense an expression of his "*Werkzeug-Bewusstsein*" [consciousness of his role as God's instrument], that is a knowledge that as a minister or servant of God, he had to fulfill a difficult mission under difficult conditions. This mission was to bring the long-buried,

salvation-bestowing truth of the faith to light. His demeanor and behavior thus stand in parallel to that of the prophet Elijah, who was expected to return at the end of time.<sup>56</sup> Luther could see himself as analogous to the prophet even if he refused a direct identification with Elijah, absolutely rejecting the belief in a return of an incarnate Elijah.

Luther's contemporaries adopted this prophetic pattern of interpretation.<sup>57</sup> In their view of the Reformer, the identification with Elijah that Luther rejected took form. They recognized in him a second Elijah or—after John the Baptist—a third Elijah, who preached against false doctrine and ceremonies just as the first prophet in the Old Testament proclaimed the wrath of God over all the unrepentant. Surprisingly, the Zurich reformer Huldrych Zwingli was among the first to give expression to this conviction in light of his impression of the Leipzig Disputation of 1519. Even with Melanchthon similar descriptions of Luther can be found. They continue into the second and third generations of the Reformation and made an impression upon all of those who played an important role in the development of a confessional Lutheranism. Thus, for example, Nikolaus Selnecker, a co-author of the Formula of Concord, remarked that Melanchthon had designated Luther as the father, preceptor, and Elijah of the end times.<sup>58</sup> Even in popular literature, in pamphlets and songs, Luther was styled as the second, or more aptly the third, Elijah and prophet of the end times.

This perception naturally had repercussions for the handling of Luther's oral and written statements after his death in 1546. Already by the end of the 1540s and the beginning of the 1550s, numerous collections of so-called prophecies of Luther were printed. What is more, these were statements of the Reformer compiled intentionally in order to strengthen and comfort his followers in times of crisis, to call them to repentance and conversion in view of the expected apocalyptic end. Frequent reprints verify the success of this genre,<sup>59</sup> which contributed significantly to solidifying the authoritative position of the reformer. Many were convinced "that even the very divine prophetic Spirit, who himself spoke through the holy prophets, has also spoken through the blessed Dr. Martin Luther in these last times."<sup>60</sup> But also in questions of doctrine and



confession, especially during the theological controversies and the *Concordia* negotiations, such Luther anthologies arose. Letters of Luther or other statements were compiled in light of particular circumstances, edited, and published for the first time. They also served to mediate theological attitudes and interpretations on a non-academic, popular level.

In the course of the Adiaphoristic controversy, for example, Matthias Flacius published a collection of letters of Luther, Melancthon, and the theologians present at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530 in order to illustrate the steadfastness of the reformers against the readiness to compromise seen in the Leipzig alternative to the Interim.<sup>61</sup> Johannes Westphal arranged a compilation of Luther citations entitled *The Opinion of the Reverend and Dear Man Dr. Martin Luther of Blessed Memory on Adiaphora*,<sup>62</sup> which attempted to prove that the Wittenberg Reformer, if he were still alive, would never have shared Melancthon's position that medieval ceremonies (though adiaphora) could be combined with the Evangelical doctrine. The text appeared in Latin in 1549 and in German in 1550. In 1575, shortly after the downfall of the so-called Crypto-Calvinism in Electoral Saxony and in the midst of the debate concerning the understanding of the Lord's Supper and Christology, a further collection of writings of the reformer was published with the title *The foremost and best writings of the most illumined and humble man of God, Dr. Martin Luther*,<sup>63</sup> which in turn aimed to moderate theological attitudes. In this way Luther's contemporaries imparted to this "true Elijah of the last world" a voice that extended through the ages and a timeless theological authority, even if the authority of the confession—before that of the person of Luther—would eventually claim the place of a secondary authority after the Holy Scriptures.

The message from Wittenberg in the 1520s and 1530s had left some questions open and unanswered, when compared to later confessional positions. The Wittenberg faculty was able to hold a variety of theological currents together and to tolerate the resulting theological heterogeneity for a time. With the developments recounted here, the path from the Wittenberg Reformation to a confessionally consolidated Lutheranism reached its destination.

### *Conclusion*

The path from a pre-confessional Wittenberg Reformation to Lutheranism involved a gradual process, in which various factors functioned to set the pace: historical events as well as spiritual and theological developments. This process of confessional consolidation—in this case the formation of Lutheranism—was often described as a story of decline, especially in the view of the ecclesiastical unions of the nineteenth century. This does not do justice to the phenomenon of confessional formation. It should rather be considered as a process of clarification and formation of a theological identity. The interpretation proposed here makes it possible both to accept and to appreciate the confessional groupings that originated in the second half of the sixteenth century in their appreciable confessional diversity.

The great religious colloquies marked an important milestone along the way to a characteristically confessional Lutheranism. Even if their intended goal was to bring about theological consensus, in the end, they contributed more to making the negotiating parties truly aware of their differences and able to distinguish themselves from each other in crucial matters. This is true in reference to differing norms and the emphasis on differences in faith and doctrine for which compromise was not possible.

A further decisive impetus to the shaping of the confessional character of Lutheranism arose from the theological interpretation from the pivotal historic events that they had experienced, such as the attempt to reinstitute the old faith associated with the Augsburg Interim. These events were experienced not only as an eschatological struggle over the truth but also as a stage on which the Reformation legacy of Martin Luther was again made clear.

Thus, the question of the decisive personal authority of the Wittenberg Reformation was posed anew. Martin Luther stepped into the foreground as the re-discoverer of the gospel and the chosen man of God. The path to confessionally established Lutheranism passed through a phase marked by the attempt to combine the personal authority of the Wittenberg reformer with that of the confessional documents, especially the Augsburg Confession.

In the end, however, it was the Confession—not the person of Martin Luther—that endured as the secondary authority after the Holy Scriptures. This is due to the vacuum of authority after the deaths of Luther in 1546 and Melancthon in 1560, a vacuum that could only be filled in an enduring manner by these confessional documents.

*Translated by Christian Einertson from Irene Dingel, “Von der Wittenberger Reformation zum Luthertum. Konfessionelle Transformationen,” in Luther: Katholizität & Reform. Wurzeln—Wege—Wirkungen, ed. Wolfgang Thönissen, Josef Freitag, Augustinus Sander (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, and Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2016), 239–260, with the permission of publishers.*

## NOTES

1. Luther's contemporaries connected the Reformation emanating from Wittenberg with him in an undifferentiated manner. Thus, for example, the first Reformation-minded people in France, who gathered around the humanistically-minded Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet in Meaux, were designated as “luthériens.” Irene Dingel, “Luther und Europa,” in *Luther Handbuch*, ed. Albrecht Beutel (Tübingen: UTB, 2005), 206–217 (esp. p. 213f.). Luther himself urged a distancing from this designation for the group. In his *Earnest Exhortation to All Christians*, he wrote “Tzum ersten bitt ich, man wolt meynes namen geschweygen und sich nit lutherisch, sondern Christen heysen. Was ist Luther? ist doch die lere nit meyn. Szo byn ich auch fur niemant gecreutzigt. S. Paulus i. Corint. iij. wolt nit leyden, das die Christen sich solten heysen Paulisch oder Petersch, sondernn Christen. Wie keme denn ich armer stinckender madensack datzu, das man die kynder Christi solt mit meynem heyloszen namen nennen?” *D. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–1993 [henceforth WA]) 8:685.4–10; *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 55 vols. Eds. Pelikan and Lehmann (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress, 1955ff. [henceforth LW]) 45:70.

2. Compared with that, Beutel concluded from statements of the reformer, aimed at the differentiation from opposing positions, that “Luther spätestens zur Mitte der 1530er Jahre” had developed a “konfessionelle[s] Identitätsbewusstsein.” Albrecht Beutel, “Wir Lutherischen: Zur Ausbildung eines konfessionellen Identitätsbewusstseins bei Martin Luther.” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 110 (2013): 158–86, quotation on p. 185.

3. Harm Kluebing, *Das Konfessionelle Zeitalter 1525–1648* (Stuttgart: Ulmer, 1989).

4. For Melancthon's revisions in the case of the article on the Lord's Supper in the Augsburg Confession, see Gottfried Seebaß, “Der Abendmahlsartikel der Confessio Augustana Variata von 1540,” in *Dona Melancthoniana: Festgabe für Heinz Scheible zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Johanna Loehr (2nd ed. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann, 2005), 411–24.

5. Irene Dingel, "Philipp Melanchthon—Freunde und Feinde," *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 135 (2010): 775–804, esp. pp. 787–790.

6. In this regard, the Frühjahrstagungen on the Wittenberg Reformation, which have been taking place since 2000, have systematically examined the different actors of the circle of Wittenberg reformers. The conferences are documented in the series *Leucorea-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und der Lutherischen Orthodoxie*. cf. Hans-Günter Leder, "Luthers Beziehungen zu seinen Wittenberger Freunden." In *Leben und Werk Martin Luthers von 1526 bis 1546*, ed. Helmar Junghans (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 1:1419–1440, 2:863–870.

7. Eike Wolgast even speaks of a Wittenberg collective authority. "Luther, Jonas und die Wittenberger Kollektivautorität," in *Justus Jonas (1493–1555) und seine Bedeutung für die Wittenberger Reformation*, ed. Irene Dingel (*Leucorea-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und der Lutherischen Orthodoxie* 11, Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009), 87–100.

8. Matthias Herrmann, ed., *Johann Walter, Torgau und die evangelische Kirchenmusik* (Altenburg: Reinhold, 2013).

9. Of course, this is only possible by selection of and limitation to the significant events.

10. For the medieval colloquies between Islam and Christendom as well as Judaism and Christendom and their particular directions, see Jacques Waardenburg, "Religionsgespräche II. Muslimisch-christlich," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Müller et al., 28. (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1997) 28:640–648, and Ora Limor, "Religionsgespräche III. Jüdisch-christlich," in *ibid.*, 28:649–654. (Henceforth, TRE.)

11. Already in 1533, Erasmus of Rotterdam argued for overcoming the differences that had arisen with the Reformation in his *Liber de sancienda ecclesiae concordia*. For a digitalization of the Basel copy, see Erasmus. *Liber de sancienda ecclesiae concordia* (Basel: Froben, 1537). Accessed October 29, 2014. <http://digitale.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/vd16/content/thumbview/1173625>.

12. On the format of the imperial colloquies, see Irene Dingel, "Religionsgespräche IV. Altgläubig—protestantisch und innerprotestantisch." In TRE 28:654–81, esp. 658–63.

13. This can be demonstrated by various examples. For a long time, the *Confessio Doctrinae Saxonica* of 1551, which Melanchthon had put forward for submission to the Council of Trent at the insistence of Elector Moritz of Saxony and which was even called a "*Repetitio Confessionis Augustanae*," was often consulted as a reference confession. *Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl. VI. Band. Bekenntnisse und kleine Lehrschriften*, ed. Robert Stupperich (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1955), 80–167. The Formula of Concord of 1577, which likewise was understood not as a new confession but as an interpretation of the Augsburg Confession, became crucial to confessional Lutheranism. *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche*, ed. Irene Dingel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014 [henceforth BSELK]), 1306,3–1308,14; *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert, eds. Charles Arand et al., trans. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000 [henceforth BC]), 524.4–526.10.

14. It was presented on 31 December 1540. A critical edition can be found in *Martin Bucers Deutsche Schriften*, ed. Cornelis Augustijn and Marijn de Kroon (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1995 [henceforth BDS]), 9,1: 323–438.

15. The Worms Book in BDS 9,1:436–438.

16. It is to be reconstructed from the text-critical notes for the edition of the Worms Book. Further-reaching changes are interjected in petit font, BDS, 9,1:323–483.

17. For the article on the Lord's Supper in both the Worms and Regensburg books, see Joachim Mehlhausen. "Die Abendmahlsformel des Regensburger Buches," in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie der Reformation: Festschrift für Ernst Bizer*, ed. Luise Abramowski and J. F. Gerhard Goeters (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), 189–211.

18. BDS 9,1, 355, 10.

19. See the completely revised article on justification in the Regensburg Book in BDS 9,1: 397–401.

20. Luther rejected this compromise altogether even if he spoke more moderately of it from time to time. Calvin accepted it. The conservative side also judged the compromise negatively.

21. The beginning of which Pope Paul III had fixed in the middle of March by means of a bull of 30 November 1544.

22. The Evangelicals demanded an assurance that the peace granted to them at the Diet of Speyer in 1544 would not be impaired by the meeting of the council. They wished to make their further cooperation dependent upon this. On these connections, see Irene Dingel, "Die Rolle Georg Majors auf dem Regensburger Religionsgespräch von 1546," in *Georg Major (1502–1574): Ein Theologe der Wittenberger Reformation*, ed. Irene Dingel and Günther Wartenberg (Leucon-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und der Lutherischen Orthodoxie 7, Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2005), 189–206, esp. 190–194. For the colloquy in general, see Lothar Vogel, *Das zweite Regensburger Religionsgespräch von 1546: Politik und Theologie zwischen Konsensdruck und Selbstbehauptung* (Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte 81, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2009).

23. The four participants from the Evangelical side, namely Georg Major, Martin Bucer, Erhard Schnepf, and Johannes Brenz stood opposite the extremely strict supporters of the old faith, namely Eberhard Billick, Johannes Hoffmeister, Johannes Cochlaeus, and Petrus de Malvenda.

24. The imperial instruction had presumed that the articles of the Augsburg Confession would be chosen as the basis of the colloquy (following the method of the earlier diet at Regensburg) and that the first three articles "Concerning God," "Concerning Original Sin," and "Concerning the Son of God" should not be part of the discussion, as there should not be disunity in those areas (namely, because they had already been treated extensively). They had been considered as essentially comparable to Roman Catholic positions in the Confutation of 1530. Admittedly, there had been an objection from the Roman-Catholic side to the definition of original sin in Article II of the Augsburg Confession "Concerning Original Sin," an objection with which Melancthon then dealt in detail in his Apology. *Die Confutatio der Confessio Augustana vom 3. August 1530*, ed. Herbert Immenkötter (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 1981), 78–83. It would be disputed again in Worms in 1541; Heinz Scheible, *Melancthon: Vermittler der Reformation. Eine Biographie* (Munich: Beck, 2016), 161.

25. Georg Major related the following in his "Short and Truthful Report" (C1b): "Nachmals / do die handlung auff den 27. tag Januarij / angangen / ist vns ein Keyserlicher beuehl vorgelesen / wie / vnd von welchen Artickeln das Colloquium sollte gehalten werden / Nemlich / das man die Augspurgische Confessio / vor die hand nehmen / vnd von dem Artickel / der Justification vnd rechtfertigung des menschen / anfangen / vnd volgent nach der ordnung / von einem

*Artickel zu dem andern Disputiren / vnd erwegen / welcher anzunemen oder nicht anzunemen / und dauon Keyser. Maiestat vnd den Stenden des Reichs / Relation thun solt / welches dann vns verwundert / das man wider von dem Artickel der Justification disputiren solt / dieweil der selbige / im vorigen Colloquio zu Regensburg / vorglichen were / Wie dann hernach sol angezeigt warden / Derhalben wir bald gedacht / das die Sophisten / die vorige disputation vnd vorgleichung / von diesem / und andern Artickeln / wider auffß newe streitten / anfechten vnd vmb zustossen / sich vnterstehen wu(e)rden / wie dan hernachmals von jnen geschehen. cf. Major, Georg. Kurtzer vnd warhafftiger bericht / Vond dem Colloquio: So in diesem xlvj. Jar / zu Regensburg / der Religion halben gehalten / Durch D: Georg: Maior [ . . . ] Wittemberg 1546.” On the development and outcome of the colloquy, see H. von Caemmerer, *Das Regensburger Religionsgespräch im Jahre 1546* (Berlin: Ebering, 1901), 190–191, 46–60, 61–70. Also Vogel, *Das zweite Regensburger Religionsgespräch von 1546*, 269–479.*

26. In the Regensburg Book, an agreement had been reached on the language of an infused “*charitas sanans voluntatem*,” which constituted a necessary addition to justification “*per fidem uiuam et efficacem*.” See the article “*De iustificatione hominis*” in the Regensburg Book in BDS 9,1: 399,12–14: “*id quod tamen nulli obtingit, nisi etiam simul infundatur charitas sanans voluntatem, vt voluntas sanata [ . . . ] incipiat implere legem.*”

27. See articles 3–8 of the Augsburg Interim in *Das Augsburger Interim von 1548*, ed. Joachim Mehlhausen (2nd ed., *Texte zur Geschichte der evangelischen Theologie* 3, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996), 40–59.

28. See Björn Slenczka, *Das Schisma der Augsburger Konfessionsverwandten von 1557: Protestantische Konfessionspolitik und Theologie im Zusammenhang des zweiten Wormser Religionsgesprächs*. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Benno von Bundschuh, *Das Wormser Religionsgespräch von 1557: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der kaiserlichen Religionspolitik*. (Reformationsgeschichtliche Studien und Texte 124, Münster: Aschendorff, 1988).

29. For the intra-Protestant controversies, see the brief overview in the historical introduction to *Reaktionen auf das Augsburger Interim: Der Interimistische Streit (1548–1549)*, ed. Irene Dingel (*Controversia et Confessio* 1, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 3–32.

30. Luka Ilić has presented a new biographical examination, *Theologian of Sin and Grace: The Process of Radicalization in the Theology of Matthias Flacius Illyricus* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz 225, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014).

31. Timothy J. Wengert, *Defending Faith. Lutheran Responses of Andreas Osiander's Doctrine of Justification, 1551–1559* (Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 65, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012).

32. Hans-Werner Gensichen, *We Condemn, How Luther and 16th Century Lutheranism Condemned False Doctrine*, trans. Herbert J. A. Bouman (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1967).

33. The Augsburg Interim, Article 26 in Mehlhausen, *Das Augsburger Interim*, 135–144.

34. Irene Dingel, “‘Der rechten lehr zuwider’—Die Beurteilung des Interims in ausgewählten theologischen Reaktionen,” In *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaftskrise und Glaubenskonflikt*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte (Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte 203, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005), 292–311, esp. 303–310. On Apocalypticism in the time of the Interim generally, see Anja Moritz, *Interim und Apokalypse: Die religiösen Vereinheitlichungsversuche Karls V im Spiegel der magdeburgischen Publizistik 1548–1551/52* (Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 47, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

35. These included, for example, Nikolaus von Amsdorf, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, Nikolaus Gallus, Johannes Wigand, Tilemann Heshusius, and Matthaeus Judex.

36. Critically edited in *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen*, eds. Johannes Herrmann and Günther Wartenberg, 4 (Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1992): 254–60. Günther Wartenberg, “Das Augsburger Interim und die Leipziger Landtagsvorlage zum Interim.” In *Politik und Bekenntnis: Die Reaktionen auf das Interim von 1548*, ed. Irene Dingel and Günther Wartenberg (Leucon-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und der Lutherischen Orthodoxie 8, Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007), 15–32.

37. See the historical preface in Dingel, *Reaktionen auf das Augsburger Interim*, 3–32.

38. This development and the controversy in this context are documented in *Die Debatte um die Wittenberger Abendmahlslehre und Christologie (1570–1574)*, ed. Irene Dingel (Controversia et Confessio 8, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008).

39. Irene Dingel, “Melanchthon und die Normierung des Bekenntnisses,” in *Der Theologe Melanchthon*, ed. Günter Frank (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2000), 195–211; “Philip Melanchthon and the Establishment of Confessional Norms” in Irene Dingel, Robert Kolb, Nicole Kuropka, and Timothy J. Wengert, *Philip Melanchthon. Theologian in Classroom, Confession, and Controversy* (Refo500 Academic Series 7, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 161–79.

40. See Gerhard Müller, “Bündnis und Bekenntnis: Zum Verhältnis von Glaube und Politik im deutschen Luthertum des 16. Jahrhunderts.” in *Causa Reformationis: Beiträge zur Reformationgeschichte und zur Theologie Martin Luthers*, ed. Gottfried Maron and Gottfried Seebaß, (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1989), 25–45.

41. This is shown by Seebaß, “Der Abendmahlsartikel der Confessio Augustana Variata, 411–24.

42. “Der Frankfurter Rezess—Abscheid der evangelischen Chur- und Fürsten in Religionssachen zu Frankfurt am Mayn aufgerichtet, anno 1558” is printed in CR 9:489–507, #6483. Irene Dingel, “Melanchthons Einigungsbemühungen zwischen den Fronten: der Frankfurter Rezeß,” in *Philipp Melanchthon: Ein Wegbereiter für die Ökumene*, ed. Jörg Hausteiner, (Bensheimer Hefte 82, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 121–43; “Melanchthon’s Efforts for Unity between the Fronts: the Frankfurt Recess,” in *Philip Melanchthon, Theologian*, 123–40.

43. Robert Calinich, *Der Naumburger Fürstentag 1561: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Lutherthums und des Melanchthonismus aus den Quellen des Königlichen Hauptstaatsarchivs zu Dresden* (Gotha: Perthes, 1870).

44. This is expressed more precisely in the preface to the Formula of Concord in BSELK, 1165–1178.

45. These documents that were used in constructing the Formula of Concord have recently been critically edited in *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche: Quellen und Materialien*. Vol. 2, ed. Irene Dingel, Marion Bechtold-Mayer, and Hans Christian Brandy (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014 [henceforth BSELK, Quellen und Materialien]).

46. Ernst Koch, “Ökumenische Aspekte in Entstehungsprozess der Konkordienformel,” in *Aufbruch und Weg: Studien zur Lutherischen Bekenntnisbildung im 16. Jahrhundert* (Arbeiten zur Theologie 68, Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1983), 34–47.

47. Jobst Ebel, “Jakob Andrae (1528–1590) als Verfasser der Konkordienformel,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 89 (1978): 78–119.

48. The theologians crucial in the formation of Lutheranism, namely Martin Chemnitz, Nikolaus Selnecker, and David Chytraeus, were among the most significant students of Melanchthon at that time. Ernst Koch, “Der Weg zur Konkordienformel.” in *Vom Dissensus*

zum Konsensus: Die Formula Concordiae von 1577 (Fuldaer Hefte 24, Hamburg: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1980), 10–46.

49. The goal of the Formula of Concord was not to supercede the Augsburg Confession as a new confession but only to present a clarifying and more precisely worded reiteration of the contents of the Augsburg Confession. This took place in relation to the controversies at hand, with the greatest possible integration of the theological tendencies of the time, and excluding those “extreme positions” on the edges of the process of Lutheran confessional formation, namely the Flacians with their specific teaching on original sin on the one side and the Calvinists in view of their teaching on the Lord’s Supper and Christology on the other side.

50. FC SD VII in BSELK, 1468, 17–18; BC 598.34. See also BSELK 1468, 5–9; BC 598.33.

51. For this process of confessional formation, Irene Dingel, “Melanchthon und die Normierung des Bekenntnisses.”

52. Luther was said to have exposed the errors, abuses, and idolatry of the old church of the Middle Ages as aberrations. FC SD, Preface in BSELK, 1304.9–15; BC 524.1–2.

53. FC SD, Concerning the Binding Summary, in BSELK, 1310.18–35; BC 527.5.

54. Irene Dingel, “Ablehnung und Aneignung: Die Bewertung der Autorität Martin Luthers in den Auseinandersetzungen um die Konkordienformel,” *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 105 (1994): 35–57.

55. For this and the following, see Irene Dingel, “Luther’s Authority in the Late Reformation and Protestant Orthodoxy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and L’ubomír Batka, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 525–539.

56. Elijah’s divine mission before the Last Day had been proclaimed by the prophet Malachi (Mal. 4:5).

57. Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520–1620* (Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999).

58. “*Philippus Lutherum agnouit & nominauit patrem, praeceptorem, postremae aetatis Eliam, currum & aurigam Israël, & de eo versum crebrò repetijt: Nulla ferent talem secla futura virum. Et cum dona collegarum considerans exprimeret, dixit, D. Pomeranus est grammaticus, & textus verba perpendit: ego sum dialecticus, & ordinem, contextum, membra, consequentias considero: D. Ionas est Rhetor, & potest oratorio lepore & splendore verborum ornare & illustrare res, sed Doctor Lutherus est omnia, cui conferri nemo nostrum potest,*” in Nikolaus Selnecker, *Recitationes aliquot 1. De consilio scripti Libri Concordiae, et modo agenda, qui in subscriptionibus seruatus est: [ . . . ] 5. De controversis nonnullis articulis* (Leipzig: Georg Defner, 158)1, 265.

59. For example, in 1557 the Dresden preacher Petrus Glaser released a collection of 120 prophecies of Luther. He published it in an expanded edition with 200 prophecies in 1574 and published it anew in an affordable octavo format. The first edition would be totally sold out, as he explained in the preface. At least two other editions (1592 and 1628) are demonstrable. In 1578, immediately after the completion of the Formula of Concord, another volume with Martin Luther’s prophecies was published; the publisher Johannes Lapaeus designated Luther as the third Elijah. Lapaeus, a native of Einbeck and colleague of Anton Otho in Nordhausen, had extracted so-called “prophecies” from the reformer’s writings and arranged them thematically in six chapters under the title *Wahrhaftige Prophezeiungen des teuren Propheten und heiligen Manns Gottes D. Martini Lutheri*. Along with it,



there was a compendium of “*dicta Lutheri*,” the wide impact of which is not to be underestimated. cf. Kolb et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, 530–535.

60. Quoted from Ernst Koch, “Lutherflorilegien zwischen 1550 und 1600: Zum Lutherbild der ersten nachreformatorischen Generation,” *Theologische Versuche* 16 (1986): 105–17.

61. *Eitliche Brieffe / des Ehrwürdigen Herrn D. Martini Luthers seliger gedechtnis / an die Theologos auff den Reichstag zu Augspurg geschrieben / Anno M. D. XXX. Von der vereingung Christi vnd Belials / Auss welchen man viel nuetzlicher Lehr in gegenwertiger gefahr der Kirchen nemen kann / Verdeutscht. Jtem etliche andere schrifftten / nuetzlich vnd troestlich zu Lesen* (s.l., s.d.) (“Without location, without date”).

62. Joachim Westphal, *Des Ehrwürdigen vnd teuren Mans Doct. Marti. Luthers seliger gedechtnis meinung / von den Mitteldingen / durch M. Joachim(m) Westphalum Pfarhern zu Hamburgk zusammen gelesen* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotther, 1550), Latin: *Sententia Reverendi Viri D.M. Luth. sanctae memoriae de Adiaphoris ex scriptis illius collecta . . .* (s.l., 1549) (“without location”). This is only one of the approximately twelve further writings of Westphal against the Interim and Adiaphora from the period after 1549.

63. *Die fu(e)rnehmsten vnd besten Schrifftten des Hoherleuchten vnd Geistreichen Mannes Gottes / Herrn Doctoris Martini Lutheri / Von den beiden Sacramenten des Neuen Testaments / Nemlich von der heiligen Tauff / vnd dem Abendmal des Herrn. [ . . . ] Durch die Theologen der Vniuersitet Witteberg / vnd darselbst Gedruckt durch Hans Lufft. Anno 1575* (Wittenberg: Hans Lufft, 1575). [http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10206284\\_00002.html](http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10206284_00002.html) (accessed December 10, 2014). See Ernst Koch, “Auseinandersetzungen um die Autorität von Philipp Melanchthon und Martin Luther in Kursachsen im Vorfeld der Konkordienformel,” *Lutherjahrbuch* 59 (1992): 128–59, esp. 147–49.