Adiaphora and the Apocalypse: Protestant Moral Rhetoric of Ritual at the End of History (1544 – 1560)

Adiaphora and the Apocalypse: Protestant Moral Rhetoric of Ritual at the End of History (1544 –1560)

A dissertation presented
By

Klaus C. Yoder

To

The Faculty of Harvard Divinity School

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Theology

In the Subject of

Theology

Harvard University

Cambridge, Massachusetts

April 2016

Dissertation Adiver: Professor David Lamberth Klaus Yoder

Adiaphora and the Apocalypse:
Protestant Moral Rhetoric of Ritual at the End of History
(1544 – 1560)

Abstract

This dissertation argues that the Protestant Reformation did not degrade the importance of ritual, but instead reinvested it with a new form of power. By interpreting a theological controversy over the benefits and dangers of "human ceremonies," this project demonstrates how liturgical practices and implements made competing theologies materially present in moments of apocalyptic expectation. Following their defeat by emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire in 1547, German Protestants were supposed to assist in repairing the breakdown of the western Latin Church by accepting compromises in church ceremonies as "external things" that were immaterial to their core theological commitments. However, the mere suggestion that traditional Catholic elements could "make no difference" to Protestant worship touched off a firestorm of protest among a group of theologians and pastors passionately devoted to the memory of Luther. Far from being "indifferent things," or *adiaphora*, ritual materials and gestures were instead presented by these critics as the means for infecting pious souls with the "prostitution of idolatry" and inscribing the apocalyptic "mark of the Beast" [*Malzeichen des Thiers*] on their bodies.

I argue that the polemical rhetoric of the *adiaphora* controversy reflects a larger trend in early modern Protestant thought: the fusion of the concepts of pollution and idolatry. Idolatry remained associated with opinions and dispositions, however it was also

transmitted through corrupted speech. Corrupted speech, in turn, polluted the material of idolatry. The objects and practices stained in this way materialized idolatry in Protestant liturgical settings. Idolatry, therefore, was not just located in false beliefs or statements, but was also embodied and transmitted through tainted practices and paraphernalia. The materialization of idolatry threatened bodies, souls, doctrines, and communities, and its dangers were brought into view through metaphors of filth, disease, and prostitution. These were employed in polemical rhetoric to mark the practices of allegedly hypocritical Protestants, making their moral and theological corruption legible to a broader Protestant public. By exploring the operations of this rhetoric, I offer an interpretation of Protestant liturgical purification that stands in contrast to dominant scholarly accounts of the Reformation as a moment of "anti-ritualism" and rationalization.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Abbreviations

CR: *Corpus reformatorum: Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*

MBW: *Melanchthons Briefwechsel*

WA: *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimarer Ausgabe)

Acknowledgments

This dissertation was made possible through the encouragement and support offered by my committee. David Lamberth gave me confidence in the direction my research was taking along with strategic advice that was essential for conceptualizing, organizing, and writing the dissertation. Mark Jordan helped me feel for the theological and rhetorical threads running through my sources in moments when I was beginning to lose my touch. Conversations with Amy Hollywood broadened my perspective on the implications of my findings and helped keep my curiosity alive. I must also express my thanks for the financial support I received for a research stay in Germany during the academic year 2013 – 2014 provided by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst and the Sinclair Kennedy Traveling Fellowship. I also wish to thank the Historisches Seminar at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt and especially Prof. Dr. Luise Schorn-Schütte for the hospitality I received during those two semesters. My thinking was stimulated and challenged by conversations with Prof. Dr. Irene Dingel, Dr. Benjamin Steiner, and Dr. Mirjam Thulin. My stay in Germany was facilitated by Prof. Dr. Markus Friedrich and Dr. Reimund B. Sdzuj, who both played important roles in getting this project off the ground. Moritz Dörfler was an invaluable dialogue partner and friend during my stay in Frankfurt am Main. Back in the US, my work benefitted from the feedback I received from Constance Furey, Adam Stern, and Travis Stevens. I am ever grateful for the love and encouragement from my mother, Maureen Yoder, and my brother, Todd Yoder, which sustained me through this entire process. I can never sufficiently express my love and gratitude to Kirsten M. Wesselhoeft for her kindness, encouragement, resourcefulness,

and sense of adventure, without which none of this would have been possible. This work is dedicated to her and our daughter, Stella Josephine Yoder.

Introduction

I. Historical horizons:

The years after the death of Martin Luther (1546) were marked by crisis and bitter strife among his followers. Through an analysis of print and archival sources, this dissertation argues that ritual was central to the apocalyptic rhetoric of the period precisely because the body of the Christian and the figurative body of the Church were considered important battlefields for the conflict between the defenders and enemies of the Gospel. Ritual functioned as the material vector between idolatrous teaching and the practices that constituted Protestant communities.

Within a year of Luther's death, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V routed the military defense alliance of German Protestant leaders known as the Schmalkaldic League. Following this victory, all Evangelical churches within the empire were compelled to adopt a program of ritual and doctrinal rehabilitation. The imperial settlement, known as the Augsburg Interim, included some concessions to Protestant concerns, such as the possibility of tolerating married clergy and communion in both kinds, while retaining the doctrinal and ecclesiological core of Roman Catholicism. Charles's important Evangelical ally, Maurice of Saxony, understood that the Interim in its original state would prompt scandal and rebellion in his territory, the heartland of the Reformation, and thus attempted to negotiate for an adaptation of the Interim that would be limited to liturgical uniformity.[1] His justification for the return of certain robes, candles, oils, and salts depended on the assumption that such matters were useful for imperial solidarity and

[1] This demand for uniformity in liturgical practice in Protestant Saxony was something of a novelty, as attested to by the dissidents in the controversy. However, ritual uniformity was at this moment beginning to emerge as a governmental strategy for distinguishing confessional loyalties. Sabine Arend, " "Lassets alles züchtiglich vnd ordentlich zugehen": Vorstellungen von "guter Ordnung" in den evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Gute Ordnung: Ordnungsmodelle und Ordnungsvorstellungen in der Reformationszeit*. Ed. Irene Dingel and Armin Kohnle (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsansltalt, 2014) 31 – 48.

discipline in Protestant communities, without affecting Protestant theological commitments. The shorthand they used to express this was the Greek word *adiaphora*, from the verb ἀδιαφορέω, to make no difference, or to be negligible. The mere consideration of this course of action touched off a firestorm of protest among a group Evangelical theologians and pastors passionately devoted to the memory of Luther, most prominent among them, Matthias Flacius Illyricus.[2] Far from being merely "indifferent things," ritual materials and gestures were instead presented by these critics as the means for infecting pious souls with the "prostitution of idolatry" and inscribing the apocalyptic "mark of the Beast" [*Malzeichen des Thiers*] on their bodies.

The concept of the *adiaphoron* begins in ancient philosophy with the Cynics, who used it to describe all matters of human convention in Greek culture that had no relevance for the pursuit and cultivation of virtue. This vocabulary was adapted by the Stoics, who understood it to pertain to external matters that could become either good or evil, i.e., things which were not inherently one or the other.[3] The actual word *adiaphoron* never appears in the New Testament, but early interpreters linked Paul's teaching "all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not" (1 Corinthians 10.23) to this philosophical terminology, along with Paul's teachings on the believer's relationship to society and mortality. Christian thinkers such as Clement of Alexander and Origen favored the Stoic interpretation, with Clement explaining that "intermediate things" are "the material of good and bad actions."[4] At the same time, they narrowed the sphere of "indifferent things," because of their emphasis on the power of sin in human life. The dominant paradigm for conceptualizing the adiaphoric realm, extending from Augustine through Thomas

[2] For biographical information for the participants in the controversy who figure most prominently in this dissertation, consult the appendix below at 237 – 244.
[3] Bernard J. Verkamp, *The indifferent mean: Adiaphorism in the English Reformation to 1554* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1977), 20 – 25; for a more detailed summary of the late antique *adiaphora* topos, consult James L. Jaquette, *Discerning What Counts: The Function of the Adiaphora Topos in Paul's Letters* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995) 37 – 70.
[4] Verkamp, *The indifferent mean*, 22.

Aquinas to Jan Hus, was to focus on the purpose behind a given action for assessing its moral worth. In Erasmus of Rotterdam's reception of the concept, moral indifference applies to many of the details of Christian doctrine and ritual. The spiritual disposition of individual and community were the sites of his *philosophia Christi*, while the rest of late medieval piety and theology simply obstructed the authentic message of the Gospel. This is not to say that they could not be put to good use, but only, at best, in an ancillary way.[5]

Erasmus's emphasis on the wide range of *adiaphora* in Christian life was expressed in satires such as *Praise of Folly*, his handbook for Christian morals, and his broad correspondence.[6] Verkamp points to his influence in the English theater of the Reformation and the same can be applied to the German contexts studied in this dissertation. At the same time, thinkers such as Luther, and even the more irenic Melanchthon, tended to exclude doctrinal topics from the domain of indifferent, non-binding matters, applying the discourse of *adiaphora* almost exclusively to ceremonies. This does not mean that they did not conceive of the topic's relevance for other ethical concerns, but that in their attempts both to negotiate and differentiate themselves from rival theological positions, ritual practice became alternately an olive branch or a gesture of separation. This is the sense of Adiaphorism at work in the theological controversy examined here.

The first *adiaphora* controversy (1548 – 1560) was significant, not just for early modern understandings and representations of ritual, as I argue below, but also for the rivalries it provoked among Luther's followers. Subsequent controversies concerning the freedom of the will, the value of good works, the effects of the Fall on human nature, and the question of

[5] Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1996) 43 – 102.
[6] Specifically with regard to his *Enchiridion*, Erasmus instructs in the Rules three through five about the vanity of external concerns such as one's career, the cult of saints, and the beauty of the body.

Christ's physical presence in the Eucharist divided these followers into factions known as Gnesio-Lutherans, Philippists, and Flacians. Without the charismatic presence of Luther to hold the community together, certain points of doctrine and ritual demanded careful articulation, especially in an age when the irenic strategy of being vague about doctrinal differences for the sake of peace had given way to the demand for a level of clarity that would put confessional differences into greatest relief.[7] Eventually, this fractious atmosphere motivated certain princes and theologians to seek out a solution that would settle the controversies within the proto-Lutheran camp while excluding those whom they saw as Calvinistic interlopers.[8] This confessional statement, the Formula of Concord, was composed in 1577 and appeared as part of a genealogy of Christian confessional statements. Shortly thereafter it was brought together with other authoritative confessional statements—the Augsburg Confession, its Apology, the Schmalkaldic Articles, the Treatise on the Primacy and Power of the Pope, and Luther's two catechisms—in a compilation known as the Book of Concord.[9] Thus the closely related controversies concerning the Interim and compromise in ceremonial *adiaphora* were the beginning of a series of debates that culminated in the solidification of Lutheran confessional culture. This process was neither direct nor inevitable, but it does fit with a larger European pattern of hardening and contrasting confessional differences between Catholics, Lutherans, and the Reformed.

---

[7] Irene Dingel, "The Culture of Conflict in the Controversies Leading to the Formula of Concord (1548 – 1580)," *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550 – 1675.* Ed. Robert Kolb (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008) 15 – 65.

[8] The chief political promoters of this confessional statement were Duke Julius of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel and Elector Johann Georg. The theological proponents of concord were Jakob Andreae, Martin Chemnitz, and Nicholas Selnecker. Consult Robert Kolb, "Formula of Concord," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* Vol. 2 ed. Hans J. Hillerband (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 117 – 121.

[9] Ibid..

Confessionalization itself played a role in the political tensions that were the conditions for the outbreak of the Thirty Year War and a period of unprecedented violence within and around the Holy Roman Empire.[10] In the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, the political recognition of the Reformed confession was added onto the Catholic and Lutheran confessions, as stipulated in the 1555 Peace of Augsburg.[11] Placed in this larger historical context, the *adiaphora* controversy is a complicated phenomenon, with the possibility of compromise in ritual "externals" appearing to some as a potential alternative to the hardening confessionalism that would emerge in the wake of the Augsburg Interim.[12] Nevertheless, the resistance to those compromises also appears as instrumental to the development of confessional culture. Without controversies such as this one, confessional norms would never have been established, and yet the controversies that generated these norms often relied on the eschatological opposition of Christ and Antichrist. In other words, enduring confessional culture were generated in moments when nothing seemed permanent. The culture of theological controversy was productive for unifying confessional cultures, creative in the sense of the breadth and depth of its literary productions, and destructive with regard to its influence on the armed conflicts of the 16th and 17th centuries.

There are others narratives in which the *adiaphora* controversy belongs in addition to this theo-political history I have roughly sketched above. Another example, made explicit in the

---

[10] " Die Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland läßt sich – etwas pathetisch formuliert – beschrieben als Weg von der politisch-juristischen Leistung des Religionsfreidens hin zur Kapitulation vor den Zwängen der religiös-ideologischen Weltantschauungssystem, und damit zum kollektiven Versagen, das in die über Jahrhunderte hin unübertroffene Katastrophe des selbstzerfleischenden Bürger- und Mächtekrieges führte." Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1 – 45, at 41.

[11] This "peace" was the result of the Princes' Rebellion, led by Maurice of Saxony, after his aborted attempts to adapt and enforce the Interim for Saxony.

[12] Consult, for example, Luther D. Peterson, "The Philippist Theologians and the Interims of 1548: Soteriological, Ecclesiastical, and Liturgical Compromises and Controversies within German Lutheranism." Phd Dissertation, The University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1974.

pioneering work of Reimund Sdzuj, is the story of the unfolding of the aesthetic in early modern Europe. If aesthetics emerges as the science of the senses and circumscribes an independent domain of experience for the beautiful and the sublime, then Sdzuj argues that it emerges from an old tradition of theorizing morally indifferent acts in Western philosophy and theology. He traces the career of the *adiaphoron* from its genesis in Stoic ethics to debates about the permissibility of theater, opera, and secular literature in 18th century theology. Sdzuj shows how this concept gets taken up (if rarely named) in medieval scholastic debates about moral action. He argues that the medieval context provides the point of origin for a persistent dialectic in Western thought, often cast as one between the moral thought of Thomas Aqunias and Duns Scotus. On this reading, for Thomas every human action takes place through rational judgment and purposeful willing. Certain actions could be morally indifferent by their own nature, such as taking a walk. But since in application every human action tends toward an end, even acts considered indifferent on their own terms gain moral status when they become the object of a particular willing. Duns Scotus sets forward what he takes to be the opposing position, arguing that acts may be done without a moral purpose, or any purpose at all. If the act does not fit into any divine, natural, or positive legal or moral framework, it has no moral valence.[13] Sdzuj acknowledges the contrast between the two great scholastics could be overdrawn, especially by later readers with particular agendas and pieties. However, he employs the contrast as a heuristic for interpreting controversies over morally and ritually indifferent practices that break out during the early modern period.

[13] Reimund B. Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst: Studien zur Genealogie ästhetischen Denkens* (Tübingen: Max Niedermeyer, 2005), 55 – 90; Thomas A. Osborne, *Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University Press, 2014), 198.

During the controversies swirling around the Augsburg Interim, Sdzuj discerns the influence, or at least the structure, of the Scotist answer in the pro-*adipahora* party of theologians around Melanchthon, while the dissident theologians adhered more to Thomas's understanding of moral indifference. Of course it essential to mark the conceptual drift—we have gone from debates about moral action to that of ritual action. The two are linked by their focus on the potentials and limits of human action. One of the great insights of Sdzuj's book is the paradox he identifies in Protestant discourses around worship— "human ceremonies" are unavoidable in the performance of divine worship, given the worldly limitations and historical contingencies enveloping and conditioning the communities that come together in the cult. Yet there is a core to the ritual life of the Church that is sacred and eternal. The question is how one finds the seams between the holy and the merely ancillary?[14] With his focus on the relationship between these debates and aesthetics, Sdzuj hones in on the problem of false appearances. From the perspective of the critics of the *adiaphora* compromises and Reformed theologians, it was most important to discern and separate the human and divine when human ceremonies masquerade as high worship—when they become theatrical, disguise their true essence, and slip into idolatry. Even as the dissidents and the sternest of Protestants polemicized against what they represented as clownish playacting or even the prostitution of the human senses, they were still contributing to an emergent set of vocabularies that linked ritual, sensory experience, and taste. The impetus behind the critique of pseudo-*adiaphora*, for Sdzuj, was anxieties and uncertainties about the proper management of ritual space and embodied experience for the sake of Christian edification.[15] Yet the controversy and the intellectual energy it stirred creating a growing conceptual vocabulary for a domain of experiences and practices outside of the moral and

[14] Sdzuj, 97 – 126.
[15] Ibid., 164 – 171.

religious realm. This vocabulary would be used by theological actors in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially as orthodox Lutherans answered the critiques of Reformed and Pietist authors descrying immorality in secular culture, such as literature, the visual arts, and opera. They did so by appealing to the freedom of the Christian in matters of theological and moral indifference.[16]

Sdzuj influences this dissertation in the way he thematizes the conceptual tension at the heart of Christian worship (the dependence of the eternally sacred on historically contingent practices and materials) and the anxiety about false appearances that follows from this tension. Apart from this, his work provides an example of how to trace the development of an important aspect of modernity without recourse to the disenchanting logic of secularization narratives. This path was not blazed through a secular reaction to Christian theology, but developed internal to both Protestant and Catholic discussions of the experiential dimensions of religious life found in ceremonies and the use of images. One might be tempted to see the discourse of Adiaphorism as a self-sabotaging aspect of Christian theology that opens up a space for a competing good, the secular aesthetic. Yet for Sdzuj, the "worldliness" of the aesthetic is never stable. Indeed, he remarks at the end of his study that can be no accident that in the same moment as the theological origins of the aesthetic were being repressed at the end of the 18th century, "art was elevated [*erhoben*] by the Romantics to religion."[17] This ought to prompt one to question the boundaries between the Christian and the secular, as well as the Christian elements that remain embedded and obscured in Western discourses of ethics and aesthetics. Before turning to this broader theoretical question, I lay out some prominent accounts about the Reformation's role in the secularization of society and the concomitant devaluation of ritual practice.

[16] Ibid., 251 – 265.
[17] Ibid., 289.

II. Scholarly stories about ritual and disenchantment in the Reformation:

It is a commonplace in scholarship and popular discourse that the Protestant Reformation was a movement that transformed Christianity from a religion of rituals to discrete confessions of faith. The Reformers themselves often appear to argue for this very transformation. Matthias Flacius, a 16th century Lutheran polemicist who features prominently in this dissertation, complains that gaudy, Catholic ceremonies rush into the soul through the eyes, distracting worshippers from the divine word: "indeed it is much easier to be idle with external ceremonies and gestures than to obey the divine commands with all of one's heart."[18] This seems to sum up Protestant antipathy toward ritual very neatly. At the same time, it is worth asking what it means for a religious movement to be "against ritual?"

The historiography and broader theories of secularization in the West have provided a number of answers to the question of what happened to ritual during the Reformation, explanations that are complementary in many ways. The first is associated with Weber and the notion of the "disenchantment of the world," often paraphrased as the "de-sacralization" of Western society. In this view, the assault on the priesthood and the Mass served to ban any intimacy with divinity's presence, that is to say, with Brad Gregory, it "excluded God from the world." Sociologists such as Philip Gorski point to a valorization of textual expertise over sacramental power as the signature emphasis of Protestant Christianity.[19] For Jan Assmann, the en-textualization of religious teaching and cultural memory in Judaism and Christianity marks a

[18] "De veris et falsis adiaphoris," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548 – 1560)*, ed. Irene Dingel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 268, page D 8^{r} in original edition. All translations are my own unless indicated otherwise.

[19] "Historicizing the Secularization Debate: Church, State, and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe," *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000): 138 – 167, at 148 – 149.

decisive break with the more ritualistic religions that preceded them.[20] By returning to "the sources themselves," the Reformation repeats this break with the embodied storage and performance of religious knowledge. Beyond this alleged prioritization of textual pieties over liturgical practices, Gregory alleges that the reformer's over-dependence on nominalist philosophy, which he claims conceives of all being as being reduced to mathematical and spatial terms, makes the question of divine presence a zero-sum game: "the denial of the possibility of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist … ironically implies that the "spiritual" presence of God is *itself* being conceived in spatial or quasi-spatial terms—which is why, in order to be kept pure, it must be kept separate from and uncontaminated by the materiality of "mere bread."[21] Divinity itself must be purified of all artificial material residues, according to this interpretation, and thus reform ejects Christian practice of all of its former power.[22]

Another, and not unrelated identification of Protestantism's anti-ritual ethos appears in the scholarly thesis about confessionalization and social discipline. That is to say, because, with the exception of Baptism and Eucharist, other church practices were designated as "mere external ceremonies," and were accordingly more human than divine, they ought to be placed under the jurisdiction of secular powers. Thus, the Reformation made Christian ritual a tool in the interest of state power that functioned by re-enforcing national or territorial identity as "rites of

[20] "Text and Ritual: The Meaning of Media for the History of Religion," *Religion and Cultural Memory*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 122 –138.
[21] *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 42 – 3.
[22] Gregory is right to question the spatiality of spiritual matters for the Protestant reformers. We will see how they understand the "bad ideas" of idolatry to take up material space through false ritual throughout the dissertation and especially in chapters three and four. And yet, according to my interpretation, this insistence upon the theological valences of matter and practice has more to do with an incarnationalist view of reality, one that discerns dynamic continuities and transformations between the material and the spiritual, rather than merely being an impoverishment of nominalism.

differentiation."[23] The use of pipe organs, vestments, the elevation of the host, all of these observances function to create confessional boundaries that correspond with and re-enforced political divisions. By subordinating rituals of communion and fellowship to political ends, the Reformation of ritual is seen by historians such as Susan Karant-Nunn and Ronnie Po Chia-Hsia as an act of purification that strips away the sacred altogether.[24]

Up until the last ten years, research on the history of Adiaphorism has taken place on the periphery of these larger narratives about religion in the West. However, this changed when Philippe Buc, a skeptic about the analytical value of the category of ritual, located its origin in the Melanchthonian distinction between essential doctrines and rites over and against non-binding ceremonies. Melanchthon developed this distinction in the lead up to the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and it informed his approach to the *adiaphora* controversy. Buc follows those scholars interested in the use of ritual for social discipline in the Reformation, yet he does so in order to trace the influence of Melanchthon's theory of ceremonies on functionalist accounts of ritual all the way through Durkheim's writings on solidarity, effervescence, and social coherence. For Buc, the highly particular origins of ritual as a category for polemic, and its denotation as an artificial device for producing social discipline through the emotional coherence of a community renders it unfit for general application, and in his case, for analyzing medieval political culture.[25] However, from the beginning of his account of the Reformation's innovation, "mere ceremony," he ignores the controversies among Evangelical theologians and writes off the opinions of thinkers such as Calvin and Zwingli as "radical" and thus of less use

[23] Wolfgang Reinhard, *Glaube und Macht: Kirche und Politik im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2004), 20-22.
[24] Susan Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007); Ronnie Po Chia-Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550-1750* (Milton: Taylor & Francis, 1992).
[25] *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 237 – 247.

for evaluating the essential Reformation innovation.[26] This is a rather dubious move, given the larger international reach achieved by the Reformed church compared to the Lutheran.

What's more, the official creed of the Lutherans that emerged in the wake of controversies beginning with the debate over *adiaphora* adapted the positions of the thinkers who were most critical of Melanchthon's justification for compromise, theologians whose views harmonized with the opinions of leading lights among the Reformed such as John Calvin and John Łaski.[27] Article Ten of the Formula of Concord states that in "times of crisis and confession" things that are "truly *adiaphora*" must not be accepted when they are forced on the Church by its enemies.[28] This is an adaptation of the formula developed by Äpinus and Westphal that "nothing is an *adiaphoron* in the case of confession" [*nihil est adiaphoron in casu confessionis*.][29] Such an adaptation in the binding confessional creed of the more "traditional" Lutherans signals a repudiation of Melanchthon's position on ritual inessentials from the period of the imperial Interim. The question that comes out of this is, if the majority of Protestants resisted the notion that ceremonies were only tools for disciplining political subjects, how did they understand the Reformation to have changed the embodied practice of religion? What was its purpose and what were its inherent risks? What did the pre-Reformation past mean for present forms of worships? Because the *adiaphora* controversy revolves around the question of how traditional ceremonies could be used and abused, I will use its particular representations and theorizations of ritual as a way to approach these questions and gain some perspective on the changes to understandings of

[26] Ibid., 164 – 165, fn. 3.
[27] Calvin's critique of the Interim, *Interim Advltero Germanvm*, was published at Magdeburg in 1549.
[28] *Triglot Concorida: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1923), 828 – 830.
[29] For the original articulation of this principle, see *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia* Volume VII, ed. Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil (Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1840), 373 – 374.

Christian practice that took place in early modern Europe. The key binary at the center of these representations and theories is between the pure and the polluted practice of Christianity.

In seeking to understand the motives and impact of Reformation-era critiques of ritual, scholars have latched onto the language of purification, drawing on the rhetoric employed by the reformers themselves to narrate the Reformation process. These investigations have complicated the straight-forward representations of rationalization and desacralization of Protestant teaching, practice, and society. In the effort to eliminate idolatry and to practice Christianity in what they took to be its authentic form, the reformers often seem to be drawing a hard boundary between spirituality and materiality. The overdrawn contrast between Protestant transcendence and medieval Catholic immanence has been complicated by two critical observations. First, the process of purification took place through embodied performances, "rites of destruction," which authors such as Robert Scribner name as rites of passage. Second, even the most spiritualistic and minimalistic approach to religious signs and practices involves some relationship with materiality. In the aftermath of purification, new forms of practice emerge that depend on material culture. This points back to the paradox at the heart of Christian ritual identified by Sdzuj above: the eternally, unchangingly sacred takes place in the folds of historical contingency. To put it in the words of anthropologist Webb Keane, "this inability to achieve complete purification is *inherent* in the very materiality of semiotic form. This is apparent, for example, in the perpetually recurring efforts at religious purification that run through histories of scriptural religions…Semiotic form

requires material instantiation. The purification process can never fully separate the material from the non-material and stabilize the difference."[30]

For Keane, the desire for purification at the heart of the Protestant tradition creates the conditions for new scenes of purification by establishing new practices that will eventually need to be purged of their own accretions. Iconoclasm is the first step in a process of creation. This would imply that the Reformation did not simply ruin the reputation of ritual but instead prompted a continuous assessment of its risks and rewards; ritual became more of an obsession than an afterthought. Keane's insight serves as a corrective to the argument put forward by scholars such as Edward Muir and Peter Burke that the rhetoric of ritual deployed during the Reformation can be reduced to suspicion, pessimism, and scorn. As we shall see in the chapters that follow, aggressive critique held a prominent place in early modern discourses on ritual, and yet it is always working to secure the pure cult and the authentic experience of the Gospel in body and soul. For Muir, a specific misunderstanding of ritual generated through the Protestant work of purification outlived the purified ritual forms themselves. This misunderstanding amounts to the assertion "that ritual must be interpreted, its hidden meanings ferreted out, when what rituals do is not so much mean as emote."[31] Contra Muir, I will demonstrate how the controversialists understood the dangerous effects of false ritual to be their instantiation of false teaching, which drove souls to despair in scandal, hypocrisy, and atheism. Emotion, ideas, and bodies were bound up together for sixteenth century German controversialists theorizing the use and abuse of ritual.

---

[30] *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007), 80.
[31] *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 299.

III. Thesis and its implications:

Through my analysis of the rhetoric of ritual in the *adiaphora* controversy, I argue for the following claims:

1. In Protestant discourses on ritual from this period, and above all in the *adiaphora* controversy, the notion of pollution, formerly associated with physical "impurities" such as childbirth, became attached to the concept of idolatry.[32] Thus pollution and idolatry were linked, even indiscernible. Another way to explain this is that idolatrous beliefs, mediated through language, and performed through speech acts, are thought of as polluting the practice of Christianity.

2. Objects and practices polluted in this way materialized idolatry in Protestant liturgical settings. Idolatry was therefore not just located in the beliefs of certain people, but also embodied and transmitted in tainted practices and paraphernalia.

3. The dissidents in the *adiaphora* controversy theorized about how something morally and religiously indifferent could shift into the zone of impiety in the "situation of confession." They were less explicit about the status of these ceremonies once that situation reverted to normalcy—indeed, thinkers such as Flacius and Westphal practically condemn these "pseudo-*adiaphora*" to an eternity of disuse because of their association with idolatry, their taint. Given the apocalyptic atmosphere pervading German Protestant culture at this particular moment, it seems plausible that they never expected the situation of confession to pass. Even as the dissidents argued for the dynamic and contextual meanings and connotations of ritual acts as transforming certain *adiaphora* into impious acts, by relying on the rhetoric of pollution, their critique reified the substance of "pseudo-*adiaphora*."

[32] Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, 86.

The *adiaphora* controversy was an early example of Reformation-era thinkers imagining confessional culture through tropes of containment, pollution, and infection as part of the eschatological interpretation of history. The rhetoric of purity and contamination at work in the *adiaphora* controversy, and others like it, helped motivate absolutist, confessionalized states to police the orthodoxy and orthopraxy of its subjects through practices such as church visitations. During the Reformation, many sovereigns obtained oversight if not control over church administration, and through institutions such as consistories, superintendencies, or bishoprics, engaged in programs of social discipline through enforced catechesis and ritual participation.[33] In this way, absolutist states, as they became affiliated with particular confessions, inherited the administration of what Michel Foucault names as the Christian pastorate, an influential mode of power in the West derived from the interpretation of biblical literature, in which the pastor cares for a "flock," church, or given population. The care for these subjects, the breeding of subjects prepared engage in "the new relationships of merits and faults, absolute obedience, and the production of hidden truths" is the chief concern as much as the domination of territory.[34]

Notions and images of purity and contagion were crucial to this process of shaping and caring for subjects. This becomes apparent not only in early modern efforts to theorize and control the spread of disease in society, but also in the scrutiny of one's confessional purity, the performance of confessional identity through participation and devotion to culturally specific practices such as Corpus Christi processions, the elevation and breaking of the host, or the

[33] Consult Po-Chia Hsia and Karant-Nun above, fn. 24 as well as Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1 – 45.
[34] *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977 – 78* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 183.

singing of vernacular hymns accompanied by secular melodies (*contrafacta*.)[35] By taking over the early modern pastorate, the state concerned itself with confessional purity, with the subject's moral disposition and ideological commitments, and with the normative practices and materials particular to a given confession. These normative performances of "purified Christianity" would become an important factor in the development of national identity.[36] The incarnationalist assumptions about the agency and threat of contagious materials and ceremonies from the *adiaphora* controversy foreshadows the increasing indiscernibility between the moral, material, national, and ideological dimensions of life in the West.

The relationship between discourses of purified rituals and populations may be drawn out through a brief comparison with the Spanish Inquisition. Attention to the defense of religious purity in Protestant contexts parallels and overlaps with concerns about "blood purity" being worked out in Spain around the same time. As has been well documented, there was a tight relationship between the suspicion of Jewish blood in an individual and the search for "Judaizing" tendencies in his or her writings or theological attitudes. As the Inquisition progressed, and scrutiny of the purity of practice, disposition, and genealogy intensified, it became more and more apparent that Spain was a land "where Christians had lost any immunity to Judaism."[37] The shared logic of the contagiousness of false religion ties together the discourses of blood and ritual pollution. In both instances, the wrong approach to religion possessed immediate material effects, whether in the bodies of the *converso*'s descendants, or in the cloth of traditional vestments. Moreover, the material effects of spiritual abuse are equally virulent, communicating idolatry and evil morals. The parallel becomes stronger when we

[35] Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 40 – 75; 185 – 210.

[36] For example, Muir notes how the 1617 centenary of the posting of the Ninety Five Theses emerged as new part of the ritual calendar of Lutheran Germany (215).

[37] David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013) 244.

consider that Luther and his followers associated Catholic ritual practices, and normative status in canon law, as instances of Judaizing. In the same way, Flacius laments, in his *Book of True and False Adiaphora*, that many disloyal German Protestants take up the role of the disobedient and ungrateful Children of Israel, eager to return to the "Egyptian fleshpots," or bow down before Aaron's Golden Cow, as manifest in their willingness to accept traditional ceremonies anew.[38] Indeed, for Flacius, their treachery outstrips that of the Israelites, since these are Christians voluntarily backsliding into superstition and slavery. The logic of Anti-Judaism is crucial for making such a claim. Adiaphorism, represented as legalistic, externally oriented, and decidedly "fleshly" appears as a more destructive, hypocritical form of "Judaizing" than even Judaism itself. In both the case of the Inquisition and the *adiaphora* controversy, the emphasis falls on the dynamic nature of pollution, which is at once a corruption of ideas, bodies, communities, and morals.

IV. Method

My approach to this material is to consider the persuasive techniques and effects of competing representations of ritual during the controversy. Scholars such as Heinz Scheible have recognized for a long time that emotion was a driving force in this debate: "the so-called adiaphoristic controversy… makes clear that logically coherent thought can founder on irrational emotions, that the formation of political consensus cannot be negotiated with theories alone, and that the effect of symbols on human feelings must also be taken into account."[39] It seems to be no accident that the intense emotion of the controversy coincides with debates about the embodied, communal practice of Christianity, and that disagreements concerning the

[38] "De veris et falsis adiaphoris," 198.

[39] Heinz Scheible, "Melanchthon, Philipp," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, Vol 3, ed. Hans Hillerbrand (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 44.

preservation of spaces of Protestant devotion could spark not only outraged polemic but also "irrational" fantasies about the cause of the problems. This link between affect and ritual signals that the controversy, and others like it, were not simply verbal acts of iconoclastic destruction, but also expressions of communal values and attempts to construct or conserve sacred spaces. It also suggests that careful attention to the imagery, tropes, insults, and gossip does not come at the expense of the theological or philosophical content of the arguments. Engaging with the metaphors that animate these controversial writings provides the student of early modern religion with a deeper perspective on the theological imagination of the period than what might be obtained from summaries of doctrine. According to Hans Blumenberg, certain metaphors function pragmatically, working to cement the coherent structure of a theory, and even hinting at fantastic forms of experience that would make its vision of truth manifest:

> By providing a point of orientation, the content of absolute metaphors determines a particular attitude or conduct [*Verhalten*]; they give structure to a world, representing the nonexperiencable, nonapproachable totality of the real. To the historically trained eye, they therefore indicate the fundamental certainties, conjectures, and judgments in relation to which the attitudes and expectations, actions, and inactions, longings and disappointments, interests and indifferences, of an epoch are regulated.[40]

This is all to say that the analysis of a central metaphor reveals the emotional investment in an argument, the passion that is holding it together. When Jan Łaski writes to Martin Bucer that he supports bishop John Hooper in his critique of vestments because the white, priestly alb "is so profusely soaked in the blood of Christ," he is doing more than expressing the opinion "I find

[40] *Paradigms for a Metaphorology*, trans. Robert Savage. (Ithaca: Cornel University Press, 2010) 14.

elaborate costume in Christian worship distasteful."[41] Instead he is using language to summon the metaphysical stain of the alb into visibility, to force Bucer to reckon with this version of reality, an image that makes the rationale of his resistance self-evident. My method, then, for understanding the power and danger of ritual in the *adiaphora* controversy is to attend to the metaphors, fantasies, and desired emotional response operating in its polemical literature, wood-cut images, as well as the letters and protocols produced in the Saxon efforts at compromise and adaptation. In these sources, and above all in the pamphlets and treatises of the controversy, the performance of shame over the corruption insanity of one's community attempts to elicit a mimetic response from the reader, which would culminate in a moment of self-recognition and the recovery of faith.[42] Failing this, the rhetoric attempts to mark the unrepentant Adiaphorist, along with certain practices and practitioners as cancerous, disgusting, and outrageous by overflowing with such imagery. Thus mimesis is used at first to shame of the intended target, the Adiaphorist, and then later to provoke outrage and attack against them.[43]

V. Overview of the dissertation:

Chapter one introduces the topic of the dissertation by providing an overview of the impact of the Interim across the empire. It profiles how secular powers attempted to manage ritual matters for the sake of political stability as well as the moments of critique and resistance

[41] "hoc potissimum tempore, quo vestes istiusmodi tanta sanguinis Christiani profusione" in Constantin Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946) 165.
[42] For a theory of this approach to rhetoric, and a probable source, given Luther's own reliance on him, cf. Quintilian "The chief requisite, then, for moving the feelings of other is, as far as I can judge, that we ourselves be moved, for the assumption of grief, anger, and indignation will be often ridiculous if we adapt merely our words and looks, and not our minds, to those passions" (*Quintilian's Institutes of Oratory*. Vol. 1. Trans. John Selby Watson (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1856) 427 (6.2.26).
[43] Horkheimer and Adorno give an example of this mode of mimesis: "the screamers deliberately use the wail of the victim…to induce in themselves the desperation of the persecuted who have to hit out" (*Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. Edmund Jephocott [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002) 150.)

to this annexation on the part of theologians participating in or dissenting from negotiations with imperial and Catholic authorities. It demonstrates that basis for critique for both "Adiaphorists" and dissidents was the notion that ceremonies were corrupted by false speech conveying idolatrous teachings. **Chapter two** examines attempts to claim the prophetic authority of Martin Luther to either defend or attack compromise in ceremonies. It concentrates on competing representations of the reformer as either a champion or a foe of "Adiaphorism," demonstrating his ambiguous legacy for later generations of Protestants. **Chapter three** compares the diverse application of the rhetoric of purity and pollution among different Protestant communities in order to interpret the precise dangers of participation in the "wrong ceremonies." Through this comparison, it argues that an incarnational view of created matter persists across the Reformation. **Chapter four** goes deeper into the application of this rhetoric in the *adiaphora* controversy, demonstrating the connection between the anxieties of polluted churches and the plague-like spread of idolatry. Finally, if Adiaphorism is a disease, **chapter five** describes it chief symptom: the inability to experience divinity through the senses and in the heart. This chapter concludes the dissertation by showing how controversies over polluted rituals fits into epistemological anxieties about the reliability of experience and the authority of human institutions that mark theological and philosophical innovations of the period.

Chapter I:

Corrupted Language in the Rhetoric of Ritual:

The Interim Negotiations In Saxony, 1548-49

Introduction:

On April 24, 1547, the Schmalkaldic League, the political alliance of Protestant territories and cities, was defeated by imperial forces at the Battle of Mühlberg. As a reward for his service to the emperor during this struggle, Duke Maurice of Saxony was granted the title of imperial elector which had been stripped from his cousin John Frederick, one of the leaders of the Schmalkaldic League. John Frederick was widely seen as a godly prince and protector of the Reformation, while Maurice's motives were always under suspicion, even if he was himself a professed Evangelical. In the following months, emperor Charles V summoned the imperial diet in Augsburg. One of the chief items on the agenda was the reunification of the imperial Christian communities until the schism in the Western church could be addressed at the Council of Trent. The imperial decree that resulted from the diet (May 15, 1548) was designed to unite Protestant and Catholic churches at the level of liturgy by calling for the return of Catholic rituals such as the performance of the Mass as a priestly sacrifice, priestly vestments, and Corpus Christi processions. Additionally, it included doctrinal statements that attempted to find some balance between Evangelical and Catholic interests, but ended up satisfying neither side with the exception of its authors, irenic humanistic Catholics, a group that was increasingly in the minority.[1] Rome did not support the measure, which prevented the Interim from having any

[1] Nathan Rein, *Chancery of God: Protestant print, polemic, and propaganda against the empire, Magdeburg, 1546 – 1551* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 91-120. The one author who wasn't Catholic was Johann Agricola Eisleben, who had clashed with Luther and Melanchthon on antinomianism and was then became the court preacher for Joachim II of Brandenburg. Cf. Horst Rabe, *Reichsbund und Interim:*

legitimacy as a uniting force; Catholic territories were exempt. This chapter gives an account of how the new elector of Saxony, Maurice, and his counselors attempted to adapt the Interim for a firmly Evangelical population, and how they were resisted and critiqued by two sets of theologians: a group who agreed that compromises in *adiaphora* could theoretically be made for the sake of appeasing the emperor, and another who rejected ritual compromises with confessional opponents in principle. It is important to go over the various stages because the documents produced at the time were grist for the mill of the Magdeburg propaganda machine—many of them would be printed verbatim and commented to expose "the Adiaphoristic fraud." This means that the arguments, evasions, and images deployed in these documents would be addressed throughout the *adiaphora* controversy.

In the process of commenting and adapting the Augsburg Interim for use in Saxony, ritual and rhetoric became intertwined. On the one hand, the willingness even to discuss compromising on "older observances" was supposed to perform obedience to the imperial decree. Discourse on the possibility of ritual change functioned as persuasive rhetoric at the diplomatic level. Simultaneously, a commitment shared by all of Luther's followers in this debate was the notion that the efficacy of a given ritual depended on the clarity and purity of specific speech-acts and their source texts, such as prayers and blessings. "Unjust," "sophistic," and "false" speech marked specific (but not all) traditional rituals and rendered them unsuitable and even dangerous in Protestant worship because they would scandalize believers and sully the reputation of the Reformation. Thus both the political and theological interpretations of ritual in Saxony were concerned with its persuasive aspect, while being fundamentally in disagreement about how to use that rhetorical power responsibly. In this chapter, I demonstrate how this disagreement

---

Die Verfassungs- und Religionspolitik des Karl V. und der Reichstag von Augsburg 1547/8 (Cologne, Vienna: Böhlau, 1971) 92-117.

hampered the implementation of the Saxon adaptation of the Interim.

I. Early phase, Summer of 1548, after return from Augsburg, Pegau Conference

Maurice of Saxony returned to his homeland in mid summer of 1548 after failing to persuade the emperor to desist from implementing a religious ordinance that was only binding on Protestants. Indeed, he was obliged to promise that he would do everything possible to enforce the Augsburg Interim in Saxony.[2] The ordinance appeared to Protestants as a punitive measure instead of a means of unifying the Church, given the fact that it impacted them exclusively.[3] This was not Charles V's original intention, but he was unable to negotiate with the Vatican for a papal indulgence pertaining to clerical marriage and communion in both forms for Catholic ecclesiastical principalities in the empire.[4] Maurice was troubled at this result. He thought he had been promised that the religion of his subjects would not be affected by the war against the Schmalkaldic League. He argued to the emperor that this matter touched "his honor and his conscience, not to mention the consciences of his subjects."[5] This statement actually reflects very well the Elector's dilemma. His legitimacy as an evangelical Prince would be forfeit if he enforced the Augsburg Interim at home; it had already been rejected in print by Melanchthon, his foremost theologian.[6] The other important component is his honor—by pressing hard for the Interim, Charles was alienating his erstwhile collaborator. And in fact, this already foreshadows

[2] Simon Ißleib, "Das Interim in Sachsen 1548 – 1552," *Aufsätze und Beiträge zu Kurfürst Moritz von Sachsen (1877—1907)*, vol. 1 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1989), 531.
[3] Horst Rabe, *Reichsbund und Interim*, 445.
[4] Horst Rabe, "Zur Interimspolitik Karl V," *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaft und Glaubenskonflikt*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte. (Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 2005): 127 – 46.
[5] *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen*, Volume 3, ed. Johannes Hermann and Günther Wartenberg (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1978) 755 – 6. Hereafter cited as PKMS 3, 4.
[6] Ißleib, 532, fn. 4.

the course Maurice would later take—armed rebellion, and the defeat of the emperor, the so-called princes' rebellion [*Fürstenaufstand*.]

Back in his home district of Meißen, Maurice called for his foremost theologians to evaluate the permissibility of introducing the Interim into Saxony on July 2, 1548. These church leaders, including Melanchthon, Georg von Anhalt, Caspar Creuziger, Johannes Pfeffinger, Daniel Gresser, Georg Major, and Johannes Forster, would eventually come to defend the argument that compromises were permissible in matters of *adiaphora*. Yet at this point, they balked at the prospect of accepting the Augsburg Interim with all of its defects [*Mängel.*] They would prefer to forego compromises until a general church council.[7] After receiving this report, Maurice revealed to them that he has been ordered to implement the Interim, and urged their cooperation for the sake of preserving peace in the homeland.[8] His first step in "building up a facade" of cooperation with the imperial agenda while avoiding any real alterations was to have the coadjutor of the Merseburg cathedral, Georg von Anhalt, open diplomatic channels with two prominent Catholic ecclesiastical princes whose territories were located in Maurice's domain, Julius Pflug, the bishop of Naumburg and Johann VIII von Maltitz, the bishop of Meißen.[9] The point of this contact was to get the Catholic bishops to respond to the critiques offered by the Protestant theologians who had met in Meißen in order to move toward a compromise. By including one of the authors of the Interim (Pflug), Maurice looked to gain credibility in the eyes of the emperor.[10] What's more, these men were all from the same noble Meißen milieu.

---

[7] *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume VII, ed. Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil. (Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1840), 30 – 45. Cited hereafter as CR VII. Ißleib, 532

[8] Ißleib, 533

[9] Günther Wartenberg, "Philipp Melanchthon und die sächsisch-albertinische Interimspolitik," *Lutherjahrbuch* (55): 60-82, at 72-3.

[10] Johannes Hermann, "Augsburg – Leipzig – Passau: das Leipziger Interim nach Akten des Landeshauptarchives Dresden 1547 – 1552," Phd. dissertation, Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig, 1962, 64.

The first discussions took place in the town of Pegau, in the vicinity of Leipzig, in August of 1548. While the participants were capable of finding some common ground in ceremonies, the discussions foundered on the doctrine of justification. According to Flacius's biographer, Oliver K. Olson, Melanchthon and the rest of the Saxon theologians effectively "surrendered" the essence of the Lutheran reformation by refusing to squabble over one little word— "alone"—as in justification by faith alone. It is true that Melanchthon had come to understand the process of justification differently than Luther.[11] On the other hand, different historians and the records themselves indicate that Melanchthon refused to accept the vision of justification laid out in the Interim (CR VII, 16 –8; 122). From Melanchthon's perspective, the articles on justification in the Interim were too obscure, sounding Evangelical at moments (justification is given freely by God) but also spilling back into a more traditional position, with its insistence that good works are inexorably bound up with justification.[12] In their appraisal of the Interim at Meißen a month before, Melanchthon and his colleagues observed that the Interim confuses the justification that is freely and undeservedly imputed to the sinner with its fruits. Cause and effect are not identical [*so ist solche Besserung und angefangene Frömmigkeit nicht die Rechtfertigung.*][13]

As the discussions between the theologians and the bishops began to stall, the quick-witted courtiers Ludwig Fachs and Christoph von Karlowitz requested that the Protestant theologians simply allow the statements to be combined with the Catholic statement [*eingeliebt würde.*][14]

---

[11] Compare, for example, the respective loci on "good works" in the 1559 edition of *Loci Praecipui Theologici* with the first edition of 1521.

[12] For the text of the Interim, consult PKMS 3, no. 1095, 815 – 19. "WIewol Gott den menschen gerecht gemacht…doch handelt der barmhertzig Gott nit mit eym menschen / wie mit eynem Todtenblock…"

[13] CR VII, 17.

[14] "ist darauf gehandelt worden, — ob die Theologi leiden könnten, daß ihre, der Theologen, gesetzte Wort alle behalten würden, und dasjenige, so die Bischoffe darinnen haben wollten, mit eingeleibt würde…" (CR VII, 121). *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen*, Volume 4, ed. Johannes Hermann and Günther Wartenberg. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992), no. 75, 122.

The original version read: "God allows the weak beginning obedience in this miserable, fragile, impure nature to come to pass in the faithful for the sake of his Son." The revised version appended the bishops version to the front: "the human being can achieve justification with works through the renewal of the Holy Spirit."[15] This addition had not actually been written by the bishops themselves, but Christoph von Karlowitz, the Catholic humanist and diplomat who served Maurice of Saxony and had been crucial in brokering the duke's alliance with the emperor prior to the outbreak of the Schmalkaldic War.[16] Upon inspection, the bishops granted that this new statement conformed to the statement on justification in the Augsburg Interim.

It was this remark that triggered an outburst from Melanchthon, who made it clear to the bishops that he never wished to suggest that this new formulation on justification in any way resembled or conformed to what had been written at the "Armored Diet" of Augsburg. Taken aback by this claim, the bishops withdrew and explained that the entire procedure was an empty gesture, seeing as that they did not have the authority to alter the Interim.[17] It had been their understanding that this whole discussion was aimed at finding a way at implementing the Interim, but the Saxon theologians seemed to have something else in mind. Julius Pflug must have guessed that Maurice was playing for time with the emperor, and made the suggestion that instead of reporting back to Charles that doctrinal discord prevented a successful compromise, they indicate instead that it was the issue of recognizing married priests without the necessary papal indulgence.[18]

Maurice's courtiers found this suggestion unhelpful, and a new strategy surfaced: emphasizing to the Protestant theologians that compromise in non-binding external practices

[15] Cf. Ißleib, 541 and CR VII, 120 – 2
[16] PKMS 4, no. 74, 121. fn. 27.
[17] Ißleib, 542
[18] Ibid.; PKMS 4, no. 76, 123

would be sufficient to appease the emperor.[19] That is to say, rather than actually compromise with the Catholics or take on the Augsburg Interim, they would merely do enough to give the appearance of compliance. An example of this comes from a slip of paper (author unknown) in the records of Maurice's political correspondence that puts very clearly what they were up to. What matters is that the old Interim was "reformed" and "that it keeps the name Interim…so that the emperor shall be satisfied and not draw his sword." In order to bring about this appeasement and preserve the purity of the doctrine of justification, the Protestants would have to give way on ceremonies.[20] Ceremonies, whether practiced or simply referenced in diplomatic correspondence, would cover the intact Protestant doctrinal fundamentals like a cloak. But it was precisely this obscurantist use of religious language and practice for political ends that began to enrage other Evangelical theologians. Olson reports that the negotiations at Pegau were an important moment for the development of Flacius's negative stance toward his former teachers and colleagues at Wittenberg. He was made aware of these negotiations because Melanchthon had asked him to make a fair copy of the protocols.[21]

It is striking that the idea that Melanchthon and the Saxon theologians weren't trying to introduce the Interim struck both this most ardent Evangelical and the Catholic bishops Pflug and Maltitz as preposterous. To further confuse matters, even as Melanchthon objected to the idea that this article on justification conformed to the one contained in the Augsburg Interim, it was true that the Catholics and the Protestants had managed to come together on a statement on justification. Indeed, the fact of this "unification" was used as a pretext for silencing local preachers for critiquing either the Saxon religious policy or the Augsburg Interim, even if it

[19] Wartenberg, 73; eg. PKMS 4, no. 127, 167
[20] Ibid., no. 144, 189.
[21] Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 99 – 100.

never appeared in a legally binding church ordinance![22] On the other hand, Melanchthon's outburst sidetracked the negotiations with the Catholic bishops and prevented them from gaining traction. Not long after the negotiation at Pegua, Melanchthon writes in a letter to the reformer of Merseburg, George of Anhalt, that he would rather die than see the Augsburg Interim brought to Saxony, and that his distrust of the political counselors (such as Fachs and Karlowitz) was constantly growing.[23] Indeed, it had been Fachs who had fought Melanchthon to the point of exhaustion about compromising on the "eingeleibt" clauses noted above. One might understand Melanchthon's confusing actions as part of a covert struggle that manifested itself in very qualified agreements and efforts to stall. He understood the political situation very well—the elector had to at least appear to be trying to enforce the Interim—and Maurice knew that the theologians needed to grant some approval, however grudging. Courtiers such as Fachs and Karlowitz saw the theologians as simply being in the way. The next month, Melanchthon reports to Anhalt that he overheard a counselor saying that the Interim ought to be put into effect, even if some silly theologians need be knocked out of the way to get the job done.[24] This sense of being at cross purposes with the politicians contextualizes Melanchthon's apparent willingness to compromise. He was brow-beaten into "giving up" justification, but then managed to sabotage the process of negotiation through his rejection of the bishops' assumption that their conversation was intended to conform to the Interim's position on that topic.

[22] Hermann, 171.
[23] CR VII, 136; *Melanchthons Briefwechsel – Regesten Online*, edited by Heinz Scheible and Christine Mundhenk, last modified December 17, 2014, MBW no. 5286, http://www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/melanchthon/home/index.php
[24] CR VII, 169

II. Torgau, Altzella, Jüterbog, late Fall 1548

Ambiguous language was a key part of Melanchthon's tactics for passively resisting the imposition of the Interim. For example, when a few months later, the Saxon theologians were being pressured by Maurice's counselors to approve a version of the Interim at a meeting in Torgau, especially the articles pertaining to the authority of bishops within the Church, Melanchthon replied that he and his colleagues are always ready to obey upright people who occupy that office and do not oppress the Church.[25] He is thus simultaneously signaled that yes, they were willing to allow for some system of episcopal church governance, but only under the condition that the Gospel is preached correctly, without abuse. There is a deliberate ambiguity, but also a condition that makes it practically impossible for a Catholic bishop to qualify. Also ambiguous is the language around *adiaphora*. The language of Melanchthon and his colleagues about the acceptability of taking back old practices from "the others," that is, the Catholics, contains that the qualification that they must conform to scripture and not be "against divine teaching."[26]

One of the chief ceremonies that was held by these thinkers to be "against divine teaching" was the Canon of the Mass, the set of silently chanted prayers at the center of the late medieval Catholic ritual that conservatives such as Julius Pflug saw as not open to negotiation.[27] Maurice's

[25] PKMS 4, no. 129, 168

[26] Ibid. and CR VII, 174: "was noch im Brauch ist bei den andern, das Adiaphoron ist und göttlicher Lehre nicht zuwider, das wollten wir auch halten."

[27] The Canon is compromised of the verses 'Te igitur,' 'Memento [vivorum,]' 'Communicantes,' 'Hanc Igitur,' 'Quam Oblationem,' 'Qui Pridie,' 'Unde de memores,' 'Supra Quae,' 'Supplices Te Rogamus,' 'Memento [defunctorum,]' Nobis Quoque Peccatoribus,' and 'Per Quem Haec Omnia.' Cf. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church,* s.v. "Canon of the Mass." The language that must exercised Melanchthon and his colleagues pertained to the mystery of the priest's sacrifice,

political counselors were pressing the theologians to consider whether this prayer and other Catholic practices such as private Masses were permissible. The theologians replied by both voicing their disapproval and stalling once again—a disputation with the bishops should be convened to re-establish that the Mass was not a sacrifice for sins, as indicated in the Augsburg Interim. They also dismissed any notion that festival processions for Corpus Christi would be readmitted to Evangelical services, though they were willing to tolerate the observance of the feast day through preaching on the sacrament for the present.[28]

This provides, I think, a good perspective on what it meant to compromise on *adiaphora* for the Saxon theologians. It meant speaking about *adiaphora* in a vague way, but then rejecting most of the ceremonies that their political counterparts held up as bargaining chips for the emperor and the bishops. This was the defensive approach of "bend but not break." Even scholars sympathetic to their ends have questioned the ethics of these tactics: "The Wittenbergers showed a deviousness in counselling [sic] a "go slow" policy and particularly a deception, such as this, all of this raised ethical questions about their behavior in addition to showing their desperate frame of mind."[29] And yet it does not seem to be so incomprehensible or even indefensible that in a time of intensely politicized Christianity, political and procedural tactics came ready at hand.

On November 19, 1548 at the mostly-abandoned convent of Altzella, just outside Dresden, Maurice's political counselors pressed for more concessions from the theologians regarding

---

which was linked to the sacrifices offered by Abraham and Melchizedek, respectively. In the time of the Interim, humanist bishop Michael Helding published defenses of the Canon of the Mass in pubications such as *Sacri Canonis Missae Paraphrastica Explication, Cum Declaratione Ceremoniarum* (Augsburg: Philipp Ulhart, 1550).

[28] PKMS 4, no. 129, 168 – 9

[29] Luther D. Peterson, "The Philippist Theologians and the Interims of 1548: Soteriological, Ecclesiastical, and Liturgical Compromises and Controversies within German Lutheranism." Phd Dissertation, The University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1974, 365.

ceremonies such as priestly ordination, the use of chrism for anointment, vigils, processions, the Canon of the Mass, and the enforcement of church discipline.[30] With regard to the Canon, Maurice had been encouraged in a letter from another Evangelical prince Joachim II of Brandenburg, to ignore the theologians' punctiliousness in this matter.[31] Maurice's imperial ambassadors, von Osse and Schönberg, had returned from Vienna previous to this and informed the elector that the emperor's brother, King Frederick, wanted the Interim imposed without any further delay—the elector appeared to the imperials as trying to avoid doing his duty and was risking the emperor's wrath.[32] So the counselors put a fine point on it for the theologians: compromise in ceremonies, or Saxony will be invaded and the churches destroyed. After grudgingly approving things such as processions, the theologians and pastors dug in their heals when it came to the Canon of the Mass and chrism. These represented "the limit of their pliability [*Nachgiebigkeit.*]"[33] Their justification for refusing these rituals in particular has to do with the impurity of the language contained by the blessings. "In the prayer of the oil, the chrism, and in in the Canon, there is such manifestly incorrect (or unjust) speech [*offentliche unrechte Reden*] that one cannot grant approval." These theologians went on to assure the counselors that this was not a "mere war of words or petty things," [*nicht der Streit von Worten oder geringen Sachen*] even if impure language was the very issue at hand: "In such high worship one should not mix in false speech [*falsche Reden mit einmengen*,] because this serves to confirm gross error and is manifestly against the first and second commandment and also against the teaching of the grace of Christ and justification." [34] Despite the "rumors of war," the theologians continued to

[30] Olson, 116.
[31] Hermann, 99.
[32] Ißleib, 553
[33] Hermann, 99.
[34] PKMS 4, p. 225, no. 180; also, CR VII, 214 for the original text.

bend, while refusing to break when it came to the ceremonies that pertained to essential matters of faith: the Eucharist, magical power in blessings, and justification. As far Maurice's counselors were concerned, this set the stage for a diplomatic advance. They even reported to the elector that they were "completely in agreement" with the proposals of the theologians and forwarded the protocols for his perusal. The two parties remained at cross purposes, yet for the time being, the cracks in the foundation were out of view.[35]

It is important to note here the rationale for this limit to compromise. False language, as it is bound to specific gestures and practices, contaminates ritual space and distorts the souls of the faithful. The genres of language associated with this corruption in the controversy are theological positions expressed through priestly blessings as well as legal codes that stipulate a particular form of religious observance, such as the Augsburg Interim, or later, the Excerpt [*Außtzug*] from the Leipzig Diet of 1548. In the former, the presence (or some sort of residue) of idolatry persists through corrupt language, whereas in the latter, the intention of the person who institutes the ritual is the source of the problem.[36] With regard to the power of distorted language to contaminate objects, spaces, and bodies, the "Adiaphorists" and their opponents are actually in agreement, as I will demonstrate especially with regard to the latter in chapters three and four below. Where they disagree, however, is on how effectively contaminated language can be washed away from the practices themselves. For the dissidents, some part of what they considered to be the "old abuses" always remains.

Melanchthon and his cohort had agreed in previous meetings to have it out with Bishop Julius Pflug concerning the deformities found in the Canon of the Mass. As we have seen, the

[35] Hermann, 100.
[36] For the importance of intention and language see below, Chapter II, section II and Chapter III, section III.

problems with the contaminated language of the Canon had been an issue that allowed the theologians to put an asterisk next to any concessions they made—no service of worship could contain the silent or mumbled prayers of oblation that were essential to the action of the late medieval Mass. The meeting in which they finally had to stand firm on this point took place at Jüterbog, a village in Brandenburg. Jüterbog was the meeting place for the elector Maurice and the elector Joachim II of Brandenburg. Joachim was taking a "middle road" between Rome and Wittenberg in his attempts to reform electoral Brandenburg; his court pastor, Johann Agricola, had been one of the co-authors of the Augsburg Interim along with Julius Pflug and Michael Helding.[37]

The electors decided amongst themselves that they would be in a better position to appear in compliance with the emperor while maintaining their own agendas if they agreed to enforce an identical form of the Interim. In this age, uniformity was a living sign of good order and uprightness. Joachim II in particular was of the opinion that the theologians could only be relied on to a certain point when it came to reforming Christianity—after all, had they not brought much disagreement and chaos to otherwise peaceful lands?[38] It was time for the princes to take matters into their own hands and serve as true *Landesväter* to their loyal Christian subjects. Maurice recognized the utility of uniformity with Brandenburg, yet privately found his partner's zeal for the Interim in poor taste, apparently referring to the rather rotund Joachim as the "Fat Interim."[39]

Clearly aware that the theologians had been using the issue of the Canon of the Mass to freeze up the liturgical compromises necessary for finalizing the "reformed" Interim, Joachim II

[37] Olson, 118.
[38] PKMS 4, no. 152, 196.
[39] Ißleib, 219, fn. 48: "Später nannte Mortiz den Korfürsten von Brandeburg gern „das Dicke Interim"."

writes in a letter to Maurice that he had "emended the Canon" so that it complied with the doctrine set forth in Augsburg Interim regarding the necessity of sacrifice, yet without alienating Protestant doctrine in the process.[40] This claim would be put to the test when Melanchthon and his colleagues met with Julius Pflug and Johann Agricola at Jüterbog. Melanchthon, for his part, went into this meeting with great trepidation, anticipating that the princes and counselors would put enormous pressure on the Protestant theologians to give way for the sake of imperial concord.[41] Yet even a critic of Melanchthon as severe as Oliver K. Olson concedes that he held firm in this matter: "Melanchthon was convinced that by preventing the use of the Eucharistic prayer he had saved the Reformation."[42] Olson is not convinced this was sufficient for "saving the Reformation," but the evidence is clear that Melanchthon used all of his talents to fight off Pflug's arguments that Christ's original sacrifice "was continued" through the hands of the priest.[43] Composing a lengthy rebuttal to Pflug's claims about the centrality of sacrifice to Christian understandings of the Eucharist, Melanchthon incorporates philological, historical, and theological evidence to argue against the authenticity of the Canon as a legitimate part of the rite.[44] Taking issue with the intercessory prayers, he drives home the point that the Canon would enable the celebrant to perform a sacrifice on behalf of others, which detracts from the efficacy of Christ's single act of sacrifice.[45] Melanchthon's categorical rejection of compromise in the liturgy of the Eucharist meant the termination of any meaningful exchange with Catholic leaders such as Pflug. Even the most liturgically conservative Protestant, George of Anhalt, argued

[40] PKMS 4, no. 152, 198.
[41] Consult the letters from December 11, 1548, shortly before Jüterbog meeting, CR VII 232 – 4.
[42] Olson, 123.
[43] Ibid., 102.
[44] CR VII, 244-5. This was adapted from an earlier treatise, *De sacramento et missa*, 1541. Cf. Hermann, 102.
[45] Ibid., 246 – 7

vehemently against the positions on the Mass put forward by Joachim II—there would be no consensus between Saxony and quasi-Protestant Brandenburg, let alone between Saxony and Rome.[46]

In spite of the lingering disagreement on the Mass, on December 17, 1548 Maurice and Joachim agreed to implement the same version of the Interim under the condition that they receive the approval of their subjects.[47] The wording of the agreement is ambiguous, conceding their inability to find any real solution for the disagreements on the Mass, while also hoping that the effort to do so will provide a good example of uniformity and obedience to other territories in the empire (CR VII, 248-9). Indeed, what this agreement does show is how difficult it was for secular princes to manage their theologians, and by extension, the practice of religion in their territories. This fact ought to be kept in mind when pondering the role of early modern Christianities in the enforcement of "social discipline" for the sake of propping up absolutist states.

Adding to the tensions between the politicians and the pastors was the fact that many of the secret documents from these proceedings kept finding their way to the printing presses of Magdeburg. For example, the negotiations between Joachim and Maurice were mysteriously forwarded to Flacius, who had them published under the title *Hertzogs Moritzen zu Sachsen und des Margrafen zu Brandenburg, beyder Churfuersten, Vereinigung des Interims halben*.[48] Other documents, such as Melanchthon's first appraisal of the Augsburg Interim and the gathering of the Protestant theologians at Meißen in late July 1548, were reproduced and distributed on a

[46] Hermann, 103.
[47] Ißleib, 557
[48] Olson, 122

large scale without the approval of the participants or authors.[49] The intention of these publications was to bring the corruption of the Reformation under popular scrutiny, but it also brought the stalling tactics of Maurice into focus for Charles V and his brother King Ferdinand of Austria. In almost every case, it was external pressure from the imperial courts that brought about a fresh summit meeting on the Interim. Instead of blaming the theologians and betraying that such stubborn spirits could not be governed even by princely power, Maurice would often explain the delays as a consideration of the religious sensibilities of his Saxon subjects taken as a whole.[50]

III. Landtag at Leipzig, Christmas 1548

After acquiring the pledge for uniform enforcement from Joachim II, and gathering together the articles from the meetings at Pegau, Torgau, and Zella respectively, Maurice sought to gain approval from the Saxon regional diet [*Landtag*] for his religious ordinances. The deliberations took place in front of the general assembly at Leipzig right before Christmas, 1548. Interpretations of the debates around this proceeding vary in the historiography. What is clear is that no legally binding order of worship emerged from the diet. Indeed, from the perspective of the theologians, the discussions leading up to the diet were not supposed to culminate in an order of worship that would be an adaptation of the Interim. Instead, they interpreted all of the debates to concern first and foremost "what must be maintained and what *can* be altered."[51] That is to say, they were concerned with articulating the limits of obedience to the emperor, not with

[49] Cf. Thomas Kaufman's index of published works from Magdeburg, *Das Ende der Reformation: Magdeburgs "Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1548-1551/2.)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 494 – 503.
[50] Ißleib, 544, 567.
[51] PKMS 4, no. 213, 261. Emphasis mine.

implementing a new ritual code.[52] After the articles on justification, church governance, and *adiaphora* were presented to the diet, there were objections from the estates about the risks to the Christian religion in taking on these alterations. Most vocal were the Saxon knights in rejecting the reintroduction of practices such as the use of chrism, the possibility of private Masses, confirmation [*Firmung*], Corpus Christi, and festival celebrations for Mary. Their strongest critique was reserved for the return of the Catholic bishops and their authority to ordain ministers—how would such men uphold the preaching of the Gospel (Ißleib, 558)?

Historians have been unclear as to whether the knights were struggling against the theologians or working in tandem with them.[53] In any case, the theologians were able to assuage the fears of the knights by assuring them on a number of crucial points:

1) It was to be hoped for and indeed urgently necessary [*Nothdurft ist*] that pious, solid [*tüchtig*] men would be called to be bishops.

2) Confirmation was useful for the cultivation of Christian youth.

3) Regarding Chrism, the article was being tabled for the moment [*aufgeschoben*] because there needed to be further negotiation with the bishops.

4) With respect to anointing the sick [*Oelung*], it must be emphasized that "all of the superstitious pieces will be removed."[54]

5) In the Eucharist, there would be no private Masses but the sacrament will be distributed.

---

[52] Hermann, 109.

[53] Compare Olson, 125 with Wartenberg, 75.

[54] This seems to be another example of the consequence of holding the view that corrupted language corrupts practice. Only for the Albertine Saxon theologians, this meant that once the offending linguistic detritus was scraped away, the practice was theoretically usable. As we will see below, the dissidents in Magdeburg and Hamburg take the opposite position.

6) No processions would be performed during the feast day for Corpus Christi. Instead, the preachers would instruct their communities on the proper use and benefits of the sacrament.

7) The *Confiteor* prayer in the Eucharist would not include a petition to the saints. [Note again: offending language is what corrupts a ritual. Once this language is gone, the ritual may be rehabilitated.]

8) Such adaptations as these would be useful for ensuring peace in the region.

9) The article in the Leipzig articles on fasting and the right times to eat meat were merely there to make the sovereign's prerogatives clear with regard to instilling civil discipline and restraint, and to differentiate this sort of exercise from divine worship.[55]

These clarifications were satisfying enough for the knights and the representatives of the various Saxon cities. However, they refused to allow for the formation of a private committee to settle the question of how to return to episcopal governance—this would have to be done before the entire assembly in order to insure good will and trust.[56] The reply by bishops Pflug and Maltitiz to these conditions, and to the entire set of "Leipzig articles," culled from the proceeding committee meetings of the past months, was not encouraging. Plfug and Maltitz balked at the idea that either a special committee or the assembly was in any position to adjudicate on the topic of episcopal governance; this was a church matter. Furthermore, the new articles submitted for the approval of the Landtag were too ambiguous, departing from the original text of the Augsburg Interim to such an extent as to prevent the bishops from negotiating any further. Their tone was haughty and dismissive, so much as so as to lead Olson to the incorrect judgment that

[55] CR VII, 267 – 9.
[56] Ißleib, 559.

Melanchthon and the theologians fell silent before their judgment out of miserable cowardice: "The fact that there was no pained outcry but only silence from the Wittenberg theologians meant that the bishops' interpretation had been accepted."[57] A more plausible interpretation is that Melanchthon and his fellow theologians understood that this farce had run its course, and passive resistance had blocked the plans of Maurice's counselors who were now sulking and discouraged.[58] There was simply nothing more to be said, at least for the time being.

Even if the bishops were not going to support the measures proposed at the diet, they were willing to report to the emperor that the elector was working hard to try to implement the Interim in Saxony and that he and his theologians were "entirely willing and inclined to obedience, tranquility, peace, and accord [*ainigkeit*.]"[59] Pflug and Maltitz also remark that Maurice's attempts to implement the Interim were restricted by the Evangelical convictions (and prejudices) of his subjects, and that the bishops would continue to work together with the theologians to find a solution to the disagreements about the Canon and the Chrism.[60] Nevertheless, a papal dispensation would be necessary regarding communion in both kinds and married clergy.[61] Given the overly optimistic representation of the diet's proceedings, one would suspect that the bishops were also interested in avoiding an imperial invasion of Saxony and

---

[57] Olson, 126.
[58] Wartenberg, 76.
[59] "Souiel allergenedigstr Keiser vnd her, habenn wir auff der vorgedachten versammlung gehort, vernhommen vnnd vermarckt, vnd befinden, das vnnser genediger her hertzog Moritz, Chorfurst, seinen vonn Ewer Key. Mt. entpfangenen bevelch trewlich vnnd fleissig ausgerichtet, sich auch die hern Theologi vnnd ditz landes Einwhoner gantz underthenig erbotten vnd also vornhemen lassen, das wir nicht anders konnen vormercken dann das sie zu gehorsam, ruhe, friedenn vnnd ainigkeit gentz geneigt vnnd willig seint" (*Julius Pflug Correspondance.* Vol. III, ed. J.V. Pollet, O.P. (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 684 – 5.)
[60] Ibid., 683; 685.
[61] Ibid., 685.

destroying class and kinship ties with Maurice's family.[62] At the closing address of the diet on January 1, 1549, Maurice declared to the assembled diet that a reformed order of worship would eventually emerge from these articles, but no specifics about how or when were forthcoming. He also assured the representatives that the disputed articles on the Mass, Chrism, and episcopal jurisdiction would be negotiated in the presence of the theologians, a sign that they were considered watchdogs for the Protestant cause.[63] Besides, with the reports of the bishops and the other estates being forwarded to the emperor, the impression had been made that something resembling compliance was in the works, and this took the imperial pressure off of Maurice for the time being.[64]

IV. Georgsagenda , Spring 1549

Eventually it became clear that no order of worship could be automatically generated out of the Leipzig articles, and so during the Spring of 1549 a new direction emerged in the politics of ritual in Saxony. On March 18, 1549, George II of Anhalt wrote to Maurice and proposed that he would revise the order of service prepared for Maurice's father, Henry, by Justus Jonas at the beginning of the Reformation in Albertine (ducal) Saxony in 1539.[65] Maurice was ready for a new option, having just returned from southern Germany, where he saw the destructive effects of the full implementation of the Augsburg Interim.[66] George of Anhalt claimed the support of the theological authorities of the region (i.e., Melanchthon) and promised that this new order of

[62] Friedrich Albert von Langenn, *Christoph von Carlowitz: Eine Darstellung aus dem XVI. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: J.C. Heinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1854) 1 – 8.
[63] PKMS 4, no. 233, 274.
[64] Hermann, 116.
[65] Peterson, 328 – 32.
[66] Ißleib, 563.

service would honor God, preserve Christian teaching and peace in the land and moreover offer up "whatever possible in external *adiaphora* [*mitteldingen*]" thereby demonstrating sufficient obedience to the emperor and king until the time when a general church council could rule on the current confusion.[67] However, George's new order of services, nicknamed the *Georgagenda*, was so expansive in liturgical detail that it was unwieldy as a political device. Maurice's counselors refused to offer an assessment of it, feeling that it was beyond their competence.[68] Perhaps they had finally been humbled by their failures in administering religious matters leading up to the Leipzig regional diet of 1548. They saw the Agenda's size (circa 300 manuscript pages) as providing more opportunities for critique and controversy.[69] George's agenda was also rejected by Bishop Pflug, who saw it as a step backward even from what had previously been negotiated.[70] Even though he helped George to revise it, Melanchthon found the presence of the Corpus Christi feast to be idolatrous and later refused to assist in yet another re-working of the Agenda.[71] In short, even after the considerable labors of its creator, the Agenda remained a dead letter, unpublished until the second half of the 19th century, when it was rediscovered by Emil Friedberg.[72] This in spite of the assertions of theologians such as Pfeffinger that merely printing the Agenda would have stopped the *adiaphora* controversy in its tracks by demonstrating the legitimate Christian prerogative to institute rites that link the Reformation back to late antique and medieval traditions.[73] Despite its inoperability, the Agenda is significant

---

[67] PKMS 4, no. 305, 352.
[68] Wartenberg, 76-7.
[69] Ißleib, 564.
[70] PKMS 4, no. 337, 386.
[71] Peterson, 364
[72] *Agenda, wie es In des | Churfürsten zu Sachsen | Landen In den kirchen gehalten wirdt*: *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Interims*. Ed. Emil Friedberg (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1869.)
[73] Ißleib, 568; Peterson, 389, 406 – 7. Pfeffinger would essentially do this in his book *Von den Traditionibus, Ceremoniis, Oder Mitteldingen* (Frankfurt an der Oder: Nikolaus Wolrab, 1550).

for this account because it was intended to be an actual order of worship as opposed to a list of theoretically acceptable articles. To all of the Saxon theologians involved, it was preferable to what has been negotiated with Maurice's counselors.

The latest meeting between the counselors and the Saxon theologians took place in the town of Torgau in early April, 1549. The tabling of George's Agenda may have been influenced by hostile preaching against the Interim delivered at that time by an elderly colleague of Luther, Gabriel Didymus (or Zwilling) the pastor of Torgau.[74] In a letter to George of Anhalt, Didymus writes that the recent decree at Torgau that restricts the sale of meat is a precursor to more papist recidivism in Saxony, and he urges George to refuse his support for this re-Catholicization.[75] The discussions of George's Agenda occurring in March — May of 1549 also incensed Flacius enough to prompt him to quit Wittenberg for good. Melanchthon writes to George that Flacius's stated reason was that he did not wish to be a helpless spectator while their sacred rites were being disfigured.[76] Melanchthon comments laconically that it is likely that Flacius will be looking for a place where can he slander them with greater ease and security, and then goes on to consider who ought to fill the new vacancy in the lectureship for biblical Hebrew.

VI. Critiquing the pretensions of prophetic exile: Bernhard Ziegler's *Oratio*

Theologians and pastors who felt loyal to Wittenberg interpreted self-imposed exiles such as Flacius and Amsdorf as having abandoned their churches both in word and deed. I turn now to an oration delivered in Leipzig during Easter of 1549 delivered and published at the same time as the debates about the usefulness of George's proposed order of worship. Its title is *Oration on the*

[74] Wartenberg 76; Albert Chalybaeus, *Die Durchführung des Leipziger Interims*, Phd dissertation, Universität Leipzig, 1904. 49, fn. 1.
[75] PKMS 4, no. 331, 381.
[76] CR VII 356: "Illyricus hinc abiit, aperte causam hanc dicens, se nolle spectatorem esse mutationis rituum."

fellowship and unity of Christians against unnecessary separations and destructive rivalries.[77] As evident from the title, this oration takes issue with the claim that critics such as a Flacius were acting responsibly when they exiled themselves from Wittenberg and argues instead for the conservation of the Wittenberg reform movement through remaining physically present in one's home church.

The Oration was authored and presumably delivered by Bernhard Ziegler, a learned Hebraist at the University of Leipzig who was consulted more than once by Melanchthon in the course of interpreting the Hebrew Bible. Not much else is known about Ziegler. His activity must have been most pronounced in his teaching, since, according to one biographical sketch, he broke his right hand in a childhood accident and as a result it remained disabled for the rest of his life. Thus his writing and publishing career was restricted with the noteworthy exceptions of this oration and a treatise against bishop Michael Helding's position on the Mass.[78]

Ziegler's thesis throughout the oration is that careless, mocking speech damages the community especially when it is used to discredit adiaphoric ritual practices. His epigraph from 1 Peter 3 10-11 anticipates this argument: "Those who desire life / and desire to see good days, / let them keep their tongues from evil [τὴν γλῶσσαν ἀπὸ κακοῦ] / and their lips from speaking deceit; let them turn away from evil and do good; / let them seek peace and pursue it." Mockery and satire were a mainstay for the Chancery of God in Magdeburg from the beginning. In such texts such as *Das Interim Illuminiert* (1548), they used satirical margin notes to "illuminate" the evils contained by the new law. The presses of Magdeburg also churned out satirical songs

[77] *Oratio De Coniunctione Et Unitate Christianorum, contra non necessarias separationes, & aemultationes peruersas recitata in tempplo collegij Paulini…Feriis secundis paschalibus* (Leipzig: Valentin Bapst, 1549).

[78] Helding was one of the authors of the Augsburg Interim. For the entry on Ziegler, consult Christian Gottlieb Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon.* Volume 4, 1751. Accessed through the De Gruyter World Biographical Information System, December 15, 2015, http://db.saur.de.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/WBIS/welcome.jsf.

mocking the Interim and Maurice of Saxony, as well as exaggerated woodcut images. Ziegler seemingly rejects this pose with his call for peace, tolerance, and patience, patience which takes the form of calming speech instead of slander. The main test Ziegler faces in this oration, however, is whether he can critique mockery without being seduced by it.

Ziegler takes John 20 as the scriptural starting point for his remarks. In this chapter, the apostles are huddled in a house, gathered together in spite of the dangers they face from their enemies in Jerusalem. Ziegler suggests that this image of remaining together in the face of oppression is crucial for understanding Christ's miraculous appearance and his message "peace be with you." The lesson to be learned here is that these men strengthened their piety by remaining together. Christ's greeting of peace actually reflects the spirit that kept the apostles together in the first place: "they came together and assembled the Church instead of laying waste to it by desertion or discord."[79] This is important first of all because Christ would only display himself to his own (*non n. uenire Christus ad alienos…sed suis tantum et Ecclesiae*) and not to "outsiders" or "defectors" (ibid.).

Second, the atmosphere of peace and devotion depends on the physical presence of the church members :"If we wish to feel the presence of Christ, let us gather together and be joined together in his own Church."[80] In the Gospel story, the assembled bodies of the faithful invite Christ's miraculous physical presence. Building on this, Ziegler focuses the attention of his

---

[79] "tamen conuentus, ut ita dicam, habet, et Ecclesiam colligit, neque uastatur desertione aut dißidio" (A 3[r]). Throughout the dissertation, I will use the pagination found in early modern books and manuscripts. The notation [r] refers to the recto or "right" side of a page and [v] to the verso side or "turned" side of the leaf of paper. "In some erarly books the signatures consisted of folios—one large sheet folded once. Each folio thus had two sheets, or four pages. The sheets were numbered only on the front, or recto, side" (*The Chicago Manual of Style Online*, 16th edition, "14.162 Folio editions," accessed May 6, 2016, www.chicagomanualofstyle.org). Thus, A 3 [r] – A 3 [v] would indicate that the quoted text spans both sides of the leaf.

[80] "Primum igitur est, si praesentiam Christi sentire volumus, ut conveniamus et coniungamur in Ecclesia ipsius" (A 3 [v]).

audience on the mundane gatherings in churches rather than the invisible, mystical Church as essential sites of worship and communion.[81] Thus the Church is comprised by these smaller communities, who safeguard the sacred and draw Christ's presence into the world. In this way, Ziegler works up to defending the unity and fellowship of the Evangelical churches in Saxony.

Ziegler attempts to clarify the relationship between the Church and a threatening, distracting world through the image of a unicorn. The unicorn stands erect in the midst of a multitude of different beasts, including boars, elephants, panthers, "and monsters whose names are no longer extant." It does not budge in the face of these roaring beasts. This is the perfect image of the Church, Ziegler tells his audience, because it stands up for itself (the truth of Christian doctrine), in the midst of the fray, without being drawn into the bleating and roaring: instead, it stares down its pursuers with discipline and gravity (A 8 ^{v} – B 1 ^{r}). Even as he wants to hold up the importance of physical gatherings in the visible churches, the orator is also working with a particular concept about how the true Church teaches and defends herself. The virtues at play are steadfastness, courage, and prudence, which manifests in moderate speech: the Church does not answer the *obstreptentes*, the roarers. To join that maddening crowd is to opt out of Christian fellowship.

In valorizing unity, peace, and order, the orator is compelled to enter into the dialectic between harmony, justice, and critique. This dialectic is embodied by figures such as Socrates and Christ who disrupted the complacency of their communities. Ziegler acknowledges the suffering experienced by members of the Church who are undergoing periods of divine purgation "of the fields and vineyards" (A 5 ^{r}). God demands disruption of communities for the sake of

[81] "Non dico nunc hoc tantum, ut fit communitas fidei atque confeßionis, et illa unitas maxima…Sed de conuentibus et coetibus Ecclesiasticis loquor, quos haberi & celebrari necesse est in terris, a Christianis et fidelibus, cum ob doctrinae usum, tum propter precum et adorationis, et laudum ac gratiarum actionis, et mysteriorum sacra peragenda, secundum mandatum Christi, et institutionem Apostolicam" (A 3 ^{v} – 4 ^{r}).

reformation. During these moments, God and his servants make visible the line between justice and impiety that has been obscured through the dusty grind of human affairs. To this effect, Ziegler quotes a biblical passage that was the battle cry of the Chancery of God, his opponents in Magdeburg: "what agreement does Christ have with Belial?" (2 Cor. 6.15). In the periodic reformations demanded by divine justice, those who uncover the boundary between the sacred and the profane always appear as deserters and disrupters of the community.[82] And what's worse, they also seem to be innovators, fanatics, and those who abandon the Church to wander far and wide (A 6 ^{r}). This discussion of desertion is another reference to the exiles in Magdeburg who abandoned their cities and churches in order to avoid the "abominations" of the Interim. Ziegler demonstrates that he understands the roles they have assigned themselves: prophetic misfits.

The object of the oration, however, is to unmask the clowns who have usurped such serious parts. Ziegler takes back precisely what he seemed to be granting the dissidents: the legitimacy of their desertion. For the prophets, Christ, and the apostles did not desert their communities, but instead *they had been deserted*. They did not agitate the community, but were agitated by it.[83] Their exile from these communities was not sought after; rather, it was a "miserable and inevitable necessity."[84] The question that drives the remainder of the oration is "what kind of necessity is that?" [*Quae autem illa est neceßitas?*] (A 6 ^{r} – ^{v}). What is the proper way to speak about the relationship between the necessary and the unnecessary? In this way, Ziegler is moving toward a discussion of the ethics of *adiaphora*.

---

[82] "Itaque non potuit factum illorum aliam habere speciem quam seditionis, cum eo ipso ordinariam potestatem, et leges et mores, denique statum praesentem damnare et reijcere uiderentur" (A 6 ^{r}).

[83] "Non autem sunt revera hi desertores, sed ipsi deseruntur. Non turbant Ecclesiam, sed ipsi commouentur et conturbantur. Non faciunt secessionem, sed desistentes in confessione veritatis relinquuntur" (B 1 ^{r} -- ^{v}).

[84] "Cum autem pij et boni ad hanc secessionem non sponte sua properent, sed compellantur, et non sit hoc studium quoddam illorum, sed misera et inevitabilis neceßitas" (A 6 ^{r}).

Determining the relationship between the necessary and the unnecessary is crucial for knowing how to offer criticism and determine when a break from the community is appropriate in times of crisis and reform. Mistaken judgment or pride in this matter can lead one to "fabricate a hollow form of religion" that cheats souls "with an unnecessary necessity."[85] The only true justification for being excised from the latter is participating in divinely guided reformations of the community: "For those who fear God and the pious it is necessary to be driven out across the world and to be afflicted …However it will not be better to have sought after [*procuratam*] hostility and destruction. For in the judgment of God, those who have sought after [*procurauerint*] this, will be called to account for the Church's confusion" (B 2 ^{r}). For Ziegler, the necessity of confession, the famous *causus confessionis* appealed to by his opponents in Magdeburg and later codified in the Book of Concord, must overtake the confessor, and not be rushed into. To chase after the crisis is to cause chaos and deform speech. Ziegler expresses his concern that the "exaggeration of our sins" in the pamphlet assault will prevent a "placid change of views" from ever taking place.[86] The repetition of exaggerated, distorted images and catchphrases about "what needs to be done" in this situation interrupts real discussion by continuously offending the slandered and re-enforcing the skewed opinions of their attackers. Thus the reputation of godly practices, leaders, and religion itself are damaged, perhaps irreparably. Abusive language disguised as wit or critique "slashes the jugular" of true Christianity.[87]

At the end of his oration, Bernhard laments the mockery from the Magdeburg presses to abuse free, adiaphoric practices. Some of the people behind this "scurrilous clamor" are clever

[85] "Ne fallite vos inani specie Religionis, neque fingite animis non necessariam necessitatem" (C 1 ^{r}).
[86] "ut uereor, conuersionem placidam admittet" (B 2 ^{v}).
[87] "linguae facilitate iugulare eum, qui ut una uobiscum redemtus est sunaguine Christi" (B 5 ^{r})

like weasels, changing location ten times per day, assembling and publishing stitched together texts without any rhyme or reason except to make the most scandalous hodgepodge possible. This comparison to the crafty weasel calls back to Ziegler's acknowledgment that the true members of the Church are forced to wander about in times of persecution and reformation. The refugees and exiles such as Flacius, Gallus, and Amsdorf imitate cunning beasts instead of righteous prophets. Comparisons to animals do not cease there. He goes on to liken the controversialists to snails feeding on their own slime, who immerse themselves so much in the filth of mockery that they become embalmed [*condiunt*] in it (C 5 ^{r}). In his eagerness to reveal consequences of mockery, doesn't Ziegler slip into the same muck?

VII. Amsdorf's "Simple Answer" to a Complicated Problem

One problem facing Ziegler as he attempts to defend adiaphoric practices and moderate speech is the obstinacy of his opponents and their insistence that the cause for debate does not actually pertain to genuine *adiaphora*, but *pseudo-adiaphora*. They lay claim to what was the central premise of Ziegler's argument, expressed in Basil the Great's admonition to "not to cheat souls with an unnecessary necessity" (C 1 ^{r}). It is precisely this premise that Nicholas Amsdorf exploits in his response to Ziegler's oration, *Auff die Künstliche Spöttische und Bitterhönische ORATION…Beurische und einfeltige antwort*, or "On the artificial, mocking, and bitter-honeyed Oration given by Ziegler." The subtitle, "peasant" [*beurisch*, or *baurisch*] and simple answer references the sort of straight-talking earthiness one would receive when bargaining with a peasant farmer on the price of livestock. This dichotomy between the studied, artificial tone of the humanist orator and the direct truth-telling of the peasant-theologian remains operative for the whole pamphlet and exemplifies the rhetorical posture of the dissident theologians during the

Interim. Amsdorf was perhaps the most brutal polemicist of the "Chancery of God," composing short, crude, and bitterly sarcastic tracts against his enemies. He also was capable of paraphrasing Luther's prophetic tone, and using apocalyptic warnings from the Hebrew Bible to threaten the unrepentant Germans of his time for their sins against the Reformation. The most important literary work associated with Amsdorf is the *Magdeburg Confession*, which he probably co-authored with Flacius and Gallus.[88]

Amsdorf was born in Torgau in 1483 into a Thuringian noble family and studied theology in Leipzig and Wittenberg. He was a colleague of Luther's at Wittenberg, an early and vocal supporter, frequently involved in controversies with the likes of Erasmus or Johann Agricola. In mid-career he was established as bishop of Magdeburg and in large part facilitated the reformation of the churches and schools there. In 1541 John Frederick of Saxony established Amsdorf as bishop of Naumburg, an old ecclesiastical province whose legitimate heir was the Catholic humanist Julius Pflug. After the defeat of the Protestants in the Schmalkadic War, Pflug recovered Naumburg and Amsdorf was forced to flee to Magdeburg. After participating in the propaganda campaign against the Interim, and following the release of his patron John Frederick of Saxony, he helped establish the college at Jena that would come to rival Wittenberg as the center of Lutheran pedagogy and scholarship, especially with regard to their chronological critical edition of Luther's writings ,which stood in contrast to the more topically-organized Wittenberg edition. Amsdorf died in Eisenach in 1565, active even at the end of his life in theological controversies.[89]

---

[88] David M. Whitford, *Tyranny and Resistance: The Magdeburg Confession and the Lutheran Tradition* (St. Louis: Concorida, 2001).

[89] Cf. the biographical entry at *Controversia et Confessio, Amsdorf (Amsdorff), Nikolaus*, in: Controversia et Confessio Digital. Edited by Irene Dingel, accessed January 18, 2016, http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/f0a069af-3b2f-4c5e-a93e-99be23108286.

Amsdorf's life and career represent the importance of theological polemic for the period. Whole lives were devoted to it. For figures such as Melanchthon, the waves of controversies that flooded across their writings were a by-product of their scholarship; for figures like Amsdorf, the mockery of pseudo-Christians was a calling. This is not to imply that Amsdorf was capable of nothing constructive or cooperative. The contrary is clear from his leadership in Magdeburg in the early years of the Reformation. But Amsdorf's drive to provoke indicates that mockery was serious business for many Christian writers because it was important tool in unmasking the pseudo-piety and sophistic defenses of anti-religion.[90] Mockery and satire might be used deliberately to deepen the battle trenches between rival communities, but at the same time, these authors were convinced that done properly, this language also could be used to speak the truth about an opponent. [91] It could shock listeners out of their complacency by stripping wolves of sheep's clothing as well as shaming the object of mockery into contrition.

This faith in the power of harsh speech to disclose the truth and shock the reader back into submission to the truth is fully on display in Amsdorf's "peasant's answer." Of course Amsdorf was no peasant, yet he deliberately revels in crudeness: this directness is not simply the most persuasive tone (one might think of the put-on rural accents of American presidential candidates.) Coarse speech also contains the sufficient vocabulary for truth-telling. Anything beyond the language of the common people abstracts away from the direct message of the Gospel. Even celebrated humanists such as Erasmus critiqued scholastic jargon according to this assumption.[92] Amsdorf, however, uses it to discredit Ziegler's oration by calling the link between

[90] "Invective and Discernment in Martin Luther, D. Erasmus, and Thomas More," *Harvard Theological Review* 98 (2005): 469 – 88, at 488.
[91] Ibid..
[92] Michael A. Screech, *Laughter at the Foot of the Cross*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015) 176-185.

veracity and humanist sophistication into question, something that would have horrified Erasmus not to mention Melanchthon. For Amsdorf, the erudition and eloquence of the humanists participates fully in the blindness of all human wisdom.

The problem with human eloquence and wisdom is that they camouflage or seem to apologize for the true intentions of their speaker. Amsdorf emphasizes a bitter irony that beautiful words and elaborate rationalizations can be used to condemn honest Christians. The erstwhile bishop of Naumburg eagerly points out that while Ziegler claims the topic of fellowship for his oration, he is in fact calumniating and dishonoring his Christian brothers.[93] On the matter of uniformity in ceremonies "the fine oration recited according to the art of eloquence by Dr. Ziegler in Leipzig at Easter does us great violence and injustice."[94] In his rush to fend off criticism of his faction, Ziegler uses rhetoric to disguise the fact that he and the dissident theologians are essentially in agreement on the point that uniformity in "human traditions" and ceremonies ought not to be enforced, lest a "snare of souls" [*laqueus animarum*] be lain in such a requirement.[95] Seduced by "human wisdom," or else driven by worldly anxieties, Bernhard Ziegler fails to make a critical distinction: between merely bickering over differences in ceremonies and refusing to submit to alien rites in a time of persecution. The dissidents did not object to diversity, but rather to the kind of enforced uniformity demanded by the Interim.

Compromise with the political servants of the Roman Antichrist transforms the Church from divine temple to *Teuffels Sinagoga* [n.b.] (C i ^{r}) because the new practices "block out" the Gospel message of free grace by simultaneously referencing rituals of priestly sacrifice and by

---

[93] "Derhalben straffen wir nicht das vns vnbekand vnd vnbewust ist / wie jhr vns aus Christlicher liebe schmehet vnd schendet…" (B i ^{r}).

[94] "Darumb thut uns die schöne Oration zu Leipzigk in Ostern von D. Ziegler gerecitiert und nach der kunst des wolrederns gemacht / grosse gewalt unnd unrecht" (A iiij ^{r} – ^{v}).

[95] Aiiij ^{r}.

being observed as a kind of legal necessity—Amsdorf links the legal necessity of imperial policy to the kind of obligation imposed by the Mosaic law (ibid.). As I will discuss in greater detail below in Chapter Three, thinkers like Amsdorf dismiss the old-new Catholic observances as useless outward show and spectacle [*ein kirchengeprenge*] while simultaneously fearing that their physical presence corrupts and excludes authentic Christian doctrine (A iij ^{r}). It's as if religious concepts literally colonize space through specific ceremonies: "wherever human doctrines hold sway, there God's word can find no place nor space."[96]

Amsdorf uses this threat of colonized liturgical space to turn the tables on Ziegler's elaborate critique of those would desert the Church out of the misguided desire to save it: "we do not hold ourselves back and separate ourselves from you, but rather you hold back and separate yourselves from us," through the desecration of liturgical space formerly shared.[97] Both through the act of allowing their churches to revert to pre-Reformation norms and through a rhetorical attack that mixes the gall of slander with the honey of eloquence [*spöttisch und hönisch reden*], Bernhard Ziegler and his friends are revealed as the true deserters of the Church (A iiij ^{v}). Desertion is spiritual in terms of perverted intention, and physical in terms of corrupted practices; both lead to abandoning the self and the community. Flight becomes the only way for the loyal Christian to remain in the true Church.

Human frailty and fickleness holds the key to understanding this problem for Amsdorf; it's not coincidence that false speech and superstitious ritual are of human provenance. They become even more tightly entwined when those "wise in the ways of the world" seek to "plant, build, and govern the churches of Christ through the reasonable word of human wisdom (B ii ^{v}). This reference to the wisdom of the world refers to the unscrupulous counselors in Meißen and their

[96] "Denn wo menschen lere regieren / da kan GOTTes wort kein stat noch raum haben" (C ii ^{v}).
[97] "Wir sündern und trennen uns nicht von ihnen / sondern sie trennen und sundern sich von uns" (A iij ^{v}).

"Maurician theologians," as the dissidents liked to call their old colleagues. It indicts those who would use divine things like the liturgy to make political deals with Catholic authorities. Such men ought not to be permitted to meddle in Church affairs through the pretense of *adiaphora*.

Had God wished to reform the churches in such a way, "he would not have selected the unlearned Doctor Martin," but instead humanist luminaries such as Petrus Bembus, Guillaume Budé, and Erasmus of Roterdam.[98] Indeed, he quotes Erasmus's quip that Luther is someone "who hardly attains our literary learning." Amsdorf seems conveniently to forget that Luther was a doctor of theology, learned in biblical languages by the standards of his day, not to mention the celebrated translator of the vernacular German Bible. And yet it is this last point that explains this "forgetful" representation, for it is no accident that God selected "unlearned fishermen to be his dear apostles" (B iiij ^{r}), and so the linguistic skills of the translation restore a simple, direct message. Luther's learning transcends mere erudition and tumbles straight into divine foolishness.[99] To rely on human invention leaves one with practices that have nothing to do with the divine commands or promises, as recorded in scripture. Such worldly foolishness requires elaborate oral defenses that swing wildly between flattery, fantasy, and mockery. Thus Amsdorf redirects Ziegler's message about the abuse of language leading to the abuse of religious practice.

Even as thinkers such as Melanchthon objected to the distortion of language that made certain rituals unusable in an Evangelical context, others, whether allies like Ziegler or critics like Amsdorf dealt with the limits of human language to persuade fellow Christians. "Plausible

---

[98] "Also auch het GOTT seine kirche durch menschliche weisheit / kunst vnnd Philosophia reformieren wollen / so hett er Bembum / Budeum vnd Erasmum *lumina mundi,* wie sie sich vntereindander schelten / vnd nicht den ungelerten Doctor Martinum darzu erwelet / *qui uix, ut Erasmus inquit, nostras litteras attigit*. Aber der heilige Paulus/ will nicht das CHristus *persuasibilibus humaniae sapientiae uerbis* [1 Cor. 2.4] soll geprediget werden…" (B iiij ^{r}).

[99] For a discussion of the appeal to the Pauline notion of divine foolishness in this period, consult Screech, *Laughter at the Foot of the Cross*, 124 – 126.

words of wisdom" in counsels of patience and tolerance were not having the intended effect.[100] As Melanchthon began to realize the extent of this failure of persuasion, he realized that the rhetoric of ritual was getting out of control. Responding to a letter from Ziegler about the best way to respond to Amsdorf's "Simple Answer," Melanchthon cautiously assesses the situation: private quarrels must not bring about greater crises.[101] This caution informed the way he imagined the latest order of worship being proposed in the wake of George's failure.

VIII. "The Außtzug," Summer 1549

From the Spring of 1549 on, Melanchthon resumed his role as the main theological advisor in Saxony's special path during the imperial Interim. In contrast to colleagues such as Pfeffinger or George of Anhalt who understood clarity, descriptiveness, and openness as crucial to rehabilitating the Maurice's religious policy, Melanchthon realized that the less said about the matter, the better. Already there had been too many documents generated from the various committee meetings to feed the Magdeburg propaganda machine. In an appraisal to counselor Ulrich Mordeisen at the end May, 1549, Melanchthon makes the link between the paper trail of the Interim negotiations and the "scurrilous clamor" [*vnfletig geschrey*] of innuendo, rumor, and slander in the form of tracts, sermons, songs, and images streaming out of Magdeburg.[102] Their ruined reputation and the paranoid atmosphere was even keeping the people away from the Saxon churches and communion. For this reason, the elector should refrain from publishing anything touching this matter that is too extensive ["*so ist weiter mein vnterthenig bedenken, vnd vnterrhenige bitt, vnser gnedigster herr wolle nit weirleuftig schrifften davon ausgehen*

[100] Perhaps this was appropriate for the members of a movement that prided themselves in their emulation of Paul's admonition to the Corinthians: "My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God" (1 Cor. 2.4 – 5).
[101] Letter dated October 17, 1549. MBW no. 5652.
[102] PKMS 4, no. 394, 447; Emil Friedberg, 6.

lassen."][103] Instead, he should publish an eight point list of articles that seek unity and peace among the churches. These points include: 1. that feast days be observed, as described in the Agenda, but without the "superstitious" Corpus Christi. 2. "Old Christian songs" would accompany the Mass as long as there were enough people there to receive communion.[104] 3. The order of the Mass should be held as described in the Agenda. 4. Clerical vestments [*Kirchenkleider*] should be worn in the same customary way as before, relative to a given community. 5. No one shall be admitted to communion without first having confessed and received absolution. 6. The preacher shall instruct the children and villagers in the catechism. 7. Public sinners and sins shall be seriously punished. 8. Burials shall take place with ministers [*Priester*], Christian songs, prayers, and alms.[105] Also relevant to the diminished length of the excerpt was the speed in which it could be assembled and disseminated. Time was of the essence for Maurice, who was under significant pressure from King Ferdinand of Austria to implement the Interim in Saxony.[106] The respite he had won at the Leipzig diet was coming to an end. His counselor, Ludwig Fachs, urged the introduction of "external observances" [*äusserliche Gebräuche*] in order to appease the imperials.[107] This emphasis on the "external" explains in large part the content of Maurice's latest abbreviated church ordinance.

Even though Melanchthon was consulted about what such an excerpt should contain, one might see the published version of the *Außtzug* as the revenge of the counselors and courtiers, who depart from Melanchthon's eight point list by shifting away from the Georgsagenda and returning to the liturgical articles proposed at the Leipzig diet. Thus their official version

---

[103] Ibid..
[104] Ibid..
[105] Ibid..
[106] Wartenberg, 77; Ißleib, 568. From the correspondence, see PKMS 4, no. 332, 382 – 3.
[107] Johannes Hermann, 167.

includes Corpus Christi and anointment, in spite of Melanchthon's protest.[108] It is also much more pointed on the matter of vestments. Melanchthon wrote that whatever was customary in a given community should be observed, while the *Außtzug* reasons that good order in society must be maintained by a distinction in the worldly and spiritual estates through vestments "priestly and honorable."[109] In this way, and without explicitly being named, the alb, or *Chorrock*, is understood to now be part of all Protestant church services in Saxony. This adaptation of the ritual protocols from the Leipzig articles reflects the contrast in the way these articles were viewed by the theologians and politicians: for the former, they represented a conceptual articulation of the sheer limit of compromise, while for the latter, they ought to be understood as a binding order of worship in their own right.[110]

A certain vagueness pervades the *Außtzug*. For example, regarding the Mass, the *Außtzug* decrees that "in these lands the Mass shall be held, with bells, candles, receptacles, songs, vestments, and ceremonies."[111]The Confiteor should be spoken aloud, and with the singing of the Introitum, Kyrieleyson, Gloria in excelsis Deo, and the Et in terra, Dominus vobiscum, collects, and an readings from the epistles, all in Latin, and then with the epistle being read to the people in German. Then the gradual, alleluia, and sequence. The Gospel will be treated in the same way as the epistle reading, followed by the Credo in unum Deum, and the creeds. The *Außtzug* indicates that variations specific to the liturgical calendar will be permitted in and outside of the episcopal territories. Following the sermon, the prayers Dominus vobiscum, Oremus,

---

[108] PKMS 4 no. 397, 452 – 3.

[109] Ibid..

[110] Hermann, 94.

[111] "Die Messe sol in diesen Landen gehalte(n) werden, mit Leuten, Lichten, gefessen, gesengen, kleidungen, vnd Ceremonien" (PKMS 4, no. 397, 451). "Ceremonies" often appears in the document when the authors do not want to state explicitly "anointment" or consecration. This applies for the article on baptism.

Offertorium, prefatio, Sanctus, Consecratio, the Our Father in German, Agnus Dei will be recited, followed by communion and distribution of the sacraments, then collects and the benediction.

Notably absent is anything touching on the authority of the bishops or justification, the key doctrinal components of the previous documents. These absences document the failure of ecumenical compromise and point to the political use of ceremonies for signaling imperial obedience with minimal offense to Evangelical doctrine[112].

It took time for this "excerpt" to come into circulation. It became legally binding with the elector's mandate of July 4, but was only made public on September 27. Seeing that many irresponsible preachers and calumniators were spreading rumors that the elector was bent on "re-establishing the old abuses [*die alten Misbräuche wieder aufrichten*] in his land and oppressing God's word until better circumstances allowed for another course," Maurice makes it clear in the mandate authorizing the "excerpt" that "he has no intention of letting in [*einlassen*] any abuse which is against God, his sacred word, and the Christian religion."[113] Establishing his Evangelical credentials as best he can, Maurice then explains that he is drawing out certain articles from the recent diet (December 1548) in order to establish order and discipline in Saxony. In a telling phrase, Maurice shifts the meaning of complying with the emperor's demands from implementation of the Augsburg Interim itself to the deliberations of the Leipzig diet "which took place in obedience to the emperor."[114] Maurice would have it that an attempt to

[112] Wartenberg, 77.

[113] PKMS 4, no. 396, 449. Even the elector's way of expressing himself when it comes to Christian (or anti-Christian) practices relies on a certain logic of containment and separation of the pure from the impure religion. See chapters three and four below.

[114] Ibid.. "der dem Ks. zu Gehorsam geschehen ist."

conform to the spirit of the Interim is more important than adhering to the literal wording of the declaration.

One important question that may be drawn out of this heap of committee meeting notes and failed church ordinances is whether the Interim every really came into effect in Saxony between its promulgation at Augsburg in May 1548 and its suspension as a result of the Princes' Rebellion and the Treaty of Passau. This question has divided historians for centuries, indeed, from the very beginning. For historians such as Günther Wartenberg, it would be a mistake to claim that the Interim ever had legal force in Saxony—what we have instead is a train of paperwork, articles proposed with the tacit understanding that they were only fulfilling a provisional function in the negotiations between the emperor and the elector. For Wartenberg, the diplomatic aspect of the Leipzig articles takes them out of the sphere of theology, and in this way, he accepts the arguments made by his sources. Pure Evangelical doctrine was never compromised. In a dissertation written at Leipzig in the first decade of the twentieth century, a village pastor named Albert Chalybaeus shows through archival research the extent to which the *Außtzug* was enforced. In contrast to Wartenberg, Chalybaeus basically accepts the premises of the *adiaphora* dissidents; the *Außtzug* was a mutated form of the Interim, but it still remained a part of the Interim project of pacifying Evangelical resistance.[115] The degree to which the *Außtzug* was implemented depended on how much a given municipality was dependent upon the good will of the elector. That meant that more of the provisions appear to have been adhered to in Pirna, Dresden, Meissen, Chemnitz, Leipzig, Zwickau, and Torgau.[116] In other areas, such as

[115] *Die Durchführung des Leipziger Interims*, 6-7, 71-2.
[116] Ibid..

Wittenberg, there seem to have been little or not alterations to church practice; in other areas, the Interim era practices quickly fell out of use.[117]

Given that one of the authors of the Augsburg Interim, Julius Pflug, rejected the Leipzig Articles and the *Georgsagenda* as deviating from the letter and spirit of the original, and given the amount of work necessary to "adapt" the Interim for the Saxon context, it seems incorrect to equate the *Außtzug* with the imperial policy on religion. But it was certainly an effect of it. The most productive moments of the process were motivated chiefly by visits from imperial ambassadors or terse exchanges with King Ferdinand. Whether or not the Interim was ever "really" implemented, the use of ambiguous compromises regarding ceremonies as bargaining chips did as much to ignite the controversy as any alleged backsliding to crypto-Catholicism. It sent the signal that certain aspects of religious life were fungible, specifically those "external" aspects that had the most to do with local Germanic culture, such as vernacular hymns. With these concessions, the spirit of defiance seemed to have fled the official representatives of German Protestantism, and that more compromises might be forthcoming now that Luther was gone.

For historians who view Melanchthon sympathetically or critically, it appears that for him the ritual life of the Church was of secondary importance.[118] Over the course of the debates and deliberations about liturgical and doctrinal compromises, ritual functions more as political camouflage than as something vital to the shared life of a Christian community. At the same time, it is manifestly false to claim, with Olson, that Melanchthon sees liturgy as being of relatively little importance in comparison with doctrine. For Melanchthon and the rest of the

[117] CR VII, 478; Chalybaeus, 15.
[118] Olson, 117 Wartenberg, 81.

theological writers dealt with here, liturgy and doctrine are of one piece. Melanchthon's resistance to the Canon of the Mass at Jüterbog and in his correspondence with Julius Pflug in late autumn of 1548 ought to reveal how liturgy and doctrine bleed together. It cannot be denied that the *Außtzug* was delivered for expediency's sake rather than proper reformation, but nevertheless, Melanchthon made his mark on the rituals he recommend for the excerpt: Corpus Christi is gone along with the blessings of anointment; there is no mention of the Canon of the Mass. In the end, the counselor Ludwig Fachs reinserted these without Melanchthon's consent.[119] If doctrine has any preponderance over praxis here, it only arrives in Melanchthon's assumption that if offensive language in specific prayers and blessings would be simply erased from the order of worship, then idolatrous pollution would be cleansed for good. This is evident, for example, in the theologians' assurance to the knights at the Leipzig regional diet in 1548 regarding the anointing of the sick: "all of the superstitious pieces have been removed."[120]

The real irony of Melanchthon's stance is that while he sees the pollution of ritual to reside in the doctrinal content of prayers or blessings (petitions to the saints; the language of sacrifice in the Canon), it was simultaneously his pragmatic stance that raised the fear that the theologians of Saxony were too subtle with their language, too predisposed to bend meanings in the name of diplomacy. For example, in one of the first pamphlets published under his own name, *Wider den Auszug des Leipsischen Interims* (Fall 1549.)[121] Flacius comments on the dangers of mixing ambiguous language with ritual ordinances: "baptism is maintained, and maintained just as it was ordered in the article [from the Leipzig diet], and through this dodgy language [*zweiffelhafftige rede*] of "other Christian ceremonies" (28). Flacius implies not so subtly that the Saxon

[119] PKMS 4, no. 397, 452, fn. 14.
[120] CR VII, 267-9.
[121] Quotations from *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548–1560),* ed. Irene Dingel. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 16 – 37.

theologians have not so much deleted "all of the superstitious pieces" but instead left out any mention of them. All the more practical for re-introducing them in secret! According to this point of view, the Interim introduced at Augsburg mutates its form each time it encounters a difficulty, adorning itself afresh as the "angel of light" foreseen by Paul in 2 Corinthians 11. When the Augsburg Interim failed, "the Devil began with the Leipzig, Märkisch, Frankish, and other Godless Interims…when the mask [of the "middle things"] was removed, he hewed out of the large Leipzig Interim a small Qur'an [*ein klein Alcoran,*] in which he established what had been in use before, and gradually mixed in some portion of the yeast of the Antichrist" (27-28). The very title of this pamphlet put the notion and name of the "Leipzig Interim" into currency, a name that implies continuity with the original imperial "antichristian" project.

Given the lengths to which Melanchthon went to refute Pflug's opinions on the Canon of the Mass, Flacius's interpretation of the religious politics of Saxony must have not only seemed harsh, but deliberately misleading. Regarding the Canon, Melanchthonian ambiguity allows for the bleakest interpretation: "in place of the word "Canon" they put in "consecration" which signifies the Antichristian Canon much better than it can the words of institution. If this is accepted by the Church, then the adulterated divine truth will draw in this sort of sophistical language [*die verfelscher Göttlicher warheit solche Sophistische reden dahin ziehen*,] as it best serves them [the Saxon theologians] since I know that it was vehemently desired by the theologians that they concede the Canon" (31). Flacius seems to have interpreted Melanchthon's anxieties about warding off the inclusion of the Canon in the religious negotiations as the necessary precursor to yielding. Given the sources analyzed above, it is hard to understand how Flacius can write that he knows that these theologians were bent on re-Catholicizing the prayers of the Eucharist. In the pamphlet, he testifies "as God is my witness" that Melanchthon

complained that the new Saxon court was inclined toward reestablishing the papacy in order to govern more effectively in the empire (34). What he refuses to understand is that Melanchthon used the delays and the endless re-appraisals to resist the plans of the Machiavellian counselors from Meißen.

Flacius shares with Melanchthon the belief that "sophistical language" corrupts rituals by bringing entire doctrinal and ecclesiastical systems to life: "they know that the entire papacy resides in the Canon" [*in dem Canon das gantze Bapstumb stehet*] (ibid.). Yet the problem highlighted by this pamphlet is with the reputation of the Church as confessing subject. False, unjust, sophistical language was not only damaging to ritual, but also to the authority of the institution that safeguarded and proclaimed divine teaching.

In contrast to Flacius's paranoid representation of the negotiations, one should recognize the pragmatic tactics of agents working from a disadvantageous, weak, and stressful position. Because this sort of resistance was not the clarion cry of refusal and condemnation ("let your words be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more comes from the evil one."), Melanchthon and his colleagues could not claim the rhetorical legacy of Luther, even if they honestly believed that had gotten him right when it came to "Christian freedom."[122] The question of how Luther's theology related to his combative rhetoric and what this means for citing him as an authority in theological controversy will be taken up in the next chapter.

[122] Matthew 5.37. For Luther's treatise on Christian Freedom, consult WA 7, 39 – 73.

Chapter II: Listening for Luther

Editing Luther's Corpus and Representing his Legacy in the *Adiaphora* Controversy

"When I heard him…my heart burned in my body with great joy."
Veit Dietrich, Letter to Melanchthon at the Diet of Augsburg, 1530

Introduction:

An influential scholar of the controversies that broke out among the followers of Luther before the Formula of Concord asserts that the *adiaphora* controversy was never really about ceremonies, but instead, essentially pertained to the necessity of a definitive *Lutheran* confession in the face of political and theological challenges.[1] Yet a quick glance at the titles of anthologies from this period such as *The opinions of the revered man Dr. Martin Luther of blessed memory regarding adiaphora* or the pamphlet *That Dr. Martin was no Adiaphorist* ought to call such a thesis into question. What they suggest instead is that anxieties around confessional and liturgical continuity were bound up together with the memory, authority, and persona of the Wittenberg reformer. Much of the controversy revolved around the nature of an *adiaphoron* and in particular how Luther addressed this topic across his writings.[2] Needless to say, both sides were interested in claiming Luther's voice to bolster their own authority. Yet this involved more than simply a

[1] "Der "adiaphoristische Streit" war…nie ein Streit über Definition und Gebrauch von Mitteldingen in der Kirche. Von Anfang an ging es vielmehr um die Notwendigkeit eines klaren Glaubensbekenntnisses, um die Wahrung der christlichen Freiheit, um die Integrität der Kirche gegenüber der weltlichen Obrigkeit" (Robert Kolb, "Controversia Perpetua," *Politik und Bekenntnis: Reaktionen auf das Interim von 1548*, ed. Irene Dingel and Günther Wartenberg [Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2006] 191).

[2] This is not to claim that the controversy did not deal with issues of confession, liberty, and ecclesiology, but rather to avoid losing sight of the fact that the practices and ceremonial objects materialized the theological issues Kolb indicates. Kolb himself grants a similar point in this very essay: "Flacius und Gallus haben in allen ihren Wortmeldungen die Einheit von Predigt und Ritus als bedeutsamen Bestandteil der öffentlichen Verkündigung betont" (208).

struggle over inheritance and prestige, but also an attempt to select the writings and personas that expressed the essence of Luther's whole project of reformation. This problem of circumscribing and encapsulating the Wittenberg reformation transcends one theological controversy, yet nascent efforts to do just that can be seen as an important byproduct of the debates about *adiaphora*.[3]

In this chapter, I argue that the opposing sides of the controversy use Luther's language and image in contradictory ways. The "Adiaphorists" describe and quote Luther as a conservative guardian of social order, open to compromise in ceremonies for the sake of peace, while the dissidents show Luther to be a tough-talking prophet who rejected compromise with his Catholic opponents in adiaphoric ceremonies. This contradiction expresses their respective understandings of the utility of ceremonies for the Church and society as well as a major tension in Luther's thought.

Even if Charles V, upon taking possession of Wittenberg in 1546, refused to desecrate the corpse of the reformer, the integrity of Luther's theological remains was very much in question.[4] Both the safety of Luther's physical remains and the integrity of his legacy were intertwined in a unique way. Lyndal Roper argues that "Luther's body, omnipresent in Lutheran visual culture long after his death, was central to the character of Lutheran devotional culture."[5] This devotional culture developed because of the way in which Luther's physical robustness emerged

[3] Thomas Kaufman, "Wie die Bücher und Schrifften…Lutheri nützlich zu lesen." Joachim Mörlins Anweisung zum Lutherstudium von 1565 und ihr historischer Kontext," *Konfession und Kultur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006) 67 –111, at 77: "Im Unterscheif zu Amsdorfs thematischem Lutherflorilegium…, leistete Westphal [in his florilegium of Luther opinions on *adiaphora*] einen ersten substantiellen Beitrag zu der Frage, wie mit der Autorität Luthers und seiner Schriften differenziert umzugehen möglich war, ohne die Kontextualität und Kontingenz dieser Texte zu ignorieren."

[4] Charles is reported to have said "I do not make war on dead men," in Martin Marty, *Martin Luther*: *A Life* (New York: Penguin, 2004) 188.

[5] "Martin Luther's Body: "The Stout Doctor" and His Biographers," *American Historical Review* 115 (2010): 351 – 384, at 354.

as a central element in his charisma, which Roper sees as essential for holding the Lutheran confession together in its formative years (383). To control his written corpus, to be the party that distilled their true essence through authoritative interpretation, meant being one of the guardian of his remains. This connection is why Melanchthon's memorial orations were delivered "over the bones of Luther" in the Wittenberg castle church.[6] At the same time, the faculty of the university of Wittenberg was assiduously editing and publishing authoritative editions of Luther's writings based on a *loci communes* model, organized by theological topic.[7] Yet the authoritative critical edition of Luther's writings of the 19th and 20th centuries, the *Weimarer Ausgabe*, follows the chronology of the reformer's biography, charting his intellectual development. This edition is a descendent of the edition begun at Jena by the Gnesio-Lutheran critics who understood Wittenberg to be betraying Luther's legacy through the *adiaphora* compromises.[8] Their chronological edition sought to counter the flattening approach of the topical model. One might venture that while the Wittenberg professors took the scattered shards of Luther's writings and attempted to reincorporate them into a monolithic form, their Gnesio-Lutheran rivals at Jena sought to present Luther's ideas as developing according to the narrative of his conversion to the truth.

In the *adiaphora* controversy, one finds the desire to engage with the character of Luther

---

[6] For more on Melanchthon's oration, Thomas Kaufman, *Das Ende der Reformation* 316 and below section IV.

[7] "Ein corpus sollt enstehen, in dem zu jedem Problem der geistlichen oder weltlichen Ordnung authentische Aussagen zu einem Ersatz für kuriale Entscheidungen und päpstliche Rechtsbücher warden," Eike Wolgast, *Die Wittenberger Luther-Ausgabe. Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Werke Luthers, im 16. Jahrhundert*, (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1971) 38.

[8] Ibid., 47. An early clue to the desirability of a new critical edition came in the middle of the controversy, when Amsdorf indicated in a pamphlet that the Wittenberg Edition had left out key passages from *Dass diese Worte Christi "Das ist mein leib etc" noch feststehen* (*Das die zu Wittenberg im andern teil der bucher Doctoris Martini im buch das diese wort…mehr den ein blat vier gantzer Paragraphos vorsetzlich aussgelassen haben wie folget* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549).

expressed by different means, namely florilegia, or anthologies of authoritative quotations. In a pioneering article, Ernst Koch explains that such anthologies served to render the "entire form" of Luther's persona open to a broader reading public while emphasizing the practical and existential benefits to be gleaned from his singular theology of experience.[9] While Koch prioritizes these holistic florilegia in contrast to those that employ Luther as an authority in theological controversy, it should be granted that for both sides of the *adiaphora* debate, Luther's opinion on ceremonies was a crucial indicator of his entire theological message. The dissidents in particular attempted through their editions of Luther's writings and letters to reanimate the reformer himself by channeling his prophetic voice in all of its original rawness.[10]

Although both sides were interested in creating ties with Luther's charisma, they worked to make him present in different ways. This is appropriate to Luther's own multi-faceted identity. From the beginning of his career, he was disparaged by his critics for his shifting roles in public life, starting off as a humble monk and transforming into a fanatic and usurper of ecclesiastical power. The most famous representation of this criticism is the wood-cut image of the "seven heads of Luther," illustrated by Hans Brosamer with captions by Johannes Cochlaeus.[11] Aligning themselves with the image of Luther as combatant [*Hercules Germanicus*] and as thundering prophet ["Third Elijah"], the dissidents tended to reproduce Luther's language at its coarsest and most polemical, treating their appropriation of its crudeness as an index of their inheritance of Luther's teaching. While the dissidents engaged in a rhetoric of purity most often, that is, to treat

[9] "Lutherflorilegien zwischen 1550 und 1600: Zum Lutherbild der ersten nachreformatorischen Generation," *Theologische Versuche* XVI (1986): 105 – 117, esp. 105 and 111.

[10] Thomas Kaufman writers that Magdeburg dissidents labored hard through the editing and republishing of Luther's work at the "vivification" [*Verlebendigung*] of the dead reformer (*Das Ende der Reformation, Magdeburgs "Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1548-1551/2)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 367).

[11] *Sieben Köpfe Martini Luthers Vom Hochwirdigen Sacrament des Altars / Durch Doctor J. Cocleus* (1529).

the obsolete ceremonies of the Interim as a stain upon the Gospel, the "Adiaphorists" attempted to sanitize Luther's message by organizing it topically and steering clear of its polemical extremes. Both sides seemed to grasp the importance of the physical charisma of Luther, as indicated by Roper, yet the dissidents were the ones who sought to render him irascibly present in all of his flatulence and bile, whereas the Adiaphorists stripped Luther's teaching down and made it abstract, reducing it to the same message delivered by the prophets, apostles, and martyrs who proclaimed God's message in every age.[12] In this chapter, I argue that these opposing approaches for citing and representing Luther have important consequences for the debate about the nature of ritual in the early modern period. The alternatives images of Luther, i.e., the bitter theological polemicist versus the father-figure of doctrinal and social stability correspond to conflicting concepts of how ceremonies benefit social groups: on the one side, the dissidents imagine an embattled remnant of the Church, purified from noxious human traditions, while on the other, the Adiaphorists conceive of an entire empire, solidified through the ritual discipline of a unified Church.

In the first half of this chapter (sections I-II), I cover the editing and quotation of Luther's political correspondence by two rivals (Johann Pfeffinger and Matthias Flacius) to show how it could be used as evidence in support of diametrically opposed ideologies. This section not only shows the complications around appealing to Luther as "an Adiaphorist" or "an Anti-Adiaphorist," but also how the different stances he took with regard to ceremonies were situated in shifting political contexts. Thus Luther was deeply critical of compromise in the face of imperial courtiers and cardinals at Augsburg in 1530, but open to a gradualist adjustment to

[12] For the importance of doctrinal continuity in the thought of Melanchthon cf. Peter Fraenkel, *Testimonia Patrum*: *The Function of the Patristic Argument in the Theology of Philipp Melanchthon* (Geneva: Librairie E. Droz, 1961) 162 – 205.

worship in newly-reformed Ducal (Albertine) Saxony in the early 1540s. Both sets of letters, however, reflect an unresolved tension in his understanding of the degree to which secular rulers should be involved in the administration of religion. In the second half (III – IV), I turn to the representation of Luther's theological legacy through world-historical narrative (Philipp Melanchthon) in contrast to the use of anthology (Joachim Westphal.) Here I show that the dissident's concern to reproduce Luther's language verbatim in quotation (and stylistic emulation) reveals their understanding of the role of polemic and "rhetorical excess" in the purification of ritual and religion, a role that is downplayed in the Melanchthonian narration of Luther's place in sacred and world history.

I. Pfeffinger and the intensification of the *adiaphora* controversy

Johann Pfeffinger, the superintendent of Leipzig, published his *Gründlicher und Wahrhaftiger Bericht* (1550) in order to refute the charges that the theologians supporting the new regime in Saxony were attempting to subvert the Reformation. This book was the follow-up to his *Von Traditionibus, Ceremoniis, oder Mitteldingen*, which pertained to the relationship between the sacraments and "beneficial traditions" and even included rubrics for worship based on the *Georgsagenda* described in the previous chapter. Whereas the first book simply puts forward a tradition-oriented version of Evangelical worship, the second narrates a historical sequence of events in order to explain the current religious situation in Saxony and the empire, while polemicizing against those, like Flacius and Gallus, who were criticizing the Interim.

Pfeffinger was born in Wasserburg am Inn in southern Bavaria (1493), and educated far away from home at a distinguished Latin school in Annaberg in Saxony, the part of Germany where he would be most active in his mature years. Ordained as a priest at a young age, and working in Passau, Pfeffinger was obliged to abandon his post and flee to Wittenberg because of

suspicions that he had been corrupted by the new Lutheran heresy. After receiving training at the university, Pfeffinger worked as a parish minister on the border of Catholic ducal Saxony, luring those with Evangelical sensibilities across the border from Leipzig to Kloster Eicha. Again, he was obliged to retreat from this post on account of the animus of Duke George, who resented this outpost of heresy at his doorstep. After the death of the duke, Pfeffinger spearheaded the reformation of ducal Saxony, preaching some of the very important first Evangelical sermons in Leipzig.[13] Like many other theological figures of this period, Pfeffinger experienced the wrath of princes and yearned for some semblance of social stability, which finds expression in his valorization of religious ceremonies as a means of disciplining the population and solidifying social ties through an embodied form of theological pedagogy. Moreover, Pfeffinger considered both the sacraments and adiaphoric traditions to be subsumed under the category of "tradition," indicative of a more conservative ecclesiology than the reformers exhibited in Ernestine Saxony.[14]

Pfeffinger's attempts to legitimize compromise in ritual matters by three chief means: first, by associating the Saxon interim with the spirit and doctrine of the Augsburg Confession of 1530; second, by quoting extensively from Luther's correspondence, in order to represent the reformer as open-minded toward compromise in "middling things," and finally, by attacking the dissenters with the accusation that they are disloyal to the teachers who instructed them at

[13] Entry for Johann Pfeffinger, *Controversia et Confessio Digital*. Ed. Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/c52dcd8c-d73f-48a7-b3c3-fae006af962a Accessed May 1, 2015; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* vol. 25 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldtm 1887) 624 – 630.

[14] Johann Pfeffinger, "Gründlicher und Wahrhafftiger Bericht," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* ed. Irene Dingel (*Controversia et Confessio* vol. 2, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 715. Cf. Luther D. Peterson, *The Philippist Theologians and the Interims of 1548: Soteriological, Ecclesiastical, and Liturgical Compromises and Controversies within German Lutheranism*, Ph.D. Diss. University of Wisconsin 1974. 312 – 447, esp. 381.

Wittenberg.[15] The anti-Adiaphorists would adhere to these three topics when attempting to refute Pfeffinger's argument and his charges against them. Indeed, by putting the debate on *adiaphora* in the context of loyalty, Pfeffinger tacitly accepts the terms put forward by the dissidents, i.e., that the debate really is about which side was persevering in the spirit of Luther. Melanchthon never wanted to argue from those premises, or much at all about this matter, since he sensed the unsavory political calculation motivating the elector's arguments for "obedience in *adiaphora*."[16] By taking the bait, Pfeffinger simply gave his opponents more material to write on, something else Melanchthon was trying to avoid.

The title of the piece refers to a "true report" of all of the events pertaining to the negotiations in adiaphoric ceremonies. Pfeffinger does not claim to be the author of this report—he composes the preface, a section that answers the calumnies of Nicholas Gallus and Matthias Flacius, and a conclusion. Jan Martin Lies and Hans-Otto Schneider, the editors of the edition of *Wahrhafftiger Bericht* I will cite here, hypothesize that Pfeffinger disassociates himself from the content of the report because it reveals many details that were only known by a few, and so he was trying to protect his reputation for discretion among the government ministers and other power brokers (650). Flacius believed that the Wittenberg theologian Georg Major was responsible for the composition of the report, because of similarities in content between it and another "epicurean book" that he had seen written in Major's hand (649).

---

[15] He also makes arguments about the nature of the adiaphoron and the prerogative of the political sovereign to govern it, 716. In both of his "adiaphoristic" works, Pfeffinger refers to an assessment of Luther's from the Diet of Augsburg that he takes to be of decisive importance for his cause, which Flacius supposedly left out of his edition of the letters from this period. Yet the authenticity of the text in question is dubious. Cf. Kaufman "Wie die Bücher und Schrifften…Lutheri nützlich zu lesen." Joachim Mörlins Anweisung zum Lutherstudium von 1565 und ihr historischer Kontext, "*Konfession und Kultur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck) 74, fn. 32.

[16] Peterson, 363 – 365.

The author of the report, whether Pfeffinger or not, works hard to integrate Luther's voice into its account of and apology for the religious settlement at Leipzig. It foregrounds the reformer's abiding tendency toward conservatism in liturgical matters when faced with more radical Evangelical communities, such as the Zwickau Prophets or Andreas Boden von Karlstadt. Its citations of the reformer begin at the height of his career, when Luther wrote to a sympathetic pastor in Zwickau in 1523. Here Luther states that in his new revision of the Mass, he abolished the Canon of the Mass and all other "impious prayers" and left everything else as it was because "it is not possible to live without ceremonies in the Church of God."[17] This statement pertains to both anthropology and theology—human beings need their activities to be structured and habituated in order to accomplish them in an optimal way; divinity demands order, and more particularly, an order that reflects the harmony with which God creates and governs the trajectory of world history. On the other hand, God does not intend consciences to be bound by ceremonial laws, and thus ceremonies may be altered for the common good. It is from this premise that the author reasons that compromise is permitted when it may lead to reconciliation between the splintered factions of the Catholic church.[18]

Such a liberality is described in the *Bericht* as having reigned over the 1530 Diet of Augsburg during the time of the Protestants' proclamation of their confession to the napping Charles V. The presentation of the Confession at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530 was an important

[17] "Nam reliquos ritus, una cum Vestibus, et Altaribus et Vasis, non uideo cur mutemus, cum in his pius esse possit usus, et absque Ceremonijs uiui in Ecclesia Dei non possit" (662). Quoted from WA.Br. 3, 183f. He explicitly includes the wearing of vestments as a useful ceremonial practice.

[18] Here he draws on a preface Luther wrote for a volume by Erasmus Sarcerius from 1534: "Alia est enim concordia Fidei alia Charitas, secundum charitatem nihil est ex parte nostra unquam omissum quod non sit plenissima uolantate oblatum pro pace et concordia uel seruenda uel resarcienda" in QVATENUS EXPEDIAT AEDITAM RECENS ERASMI DE SARCIENda Ecclesiae concordia, A 2 ^{r} – A 3 ^{v}. This distinction between concord in faith and concord in love is important to develop later perhaps. *Bericht*, 689.

moment in the development of Protestant politics, as it became a rallying point for a number of communities undergoing reformation of the churches, and was thus the first step in the development of Lutheran confessional identity.[19] For the author of this report it is extremely important that the recent negotiations over *adiaphora* in Saxony had venerable precedent.[20] Yet rather than continuing to explain the nature of the compromises that supposedly transpired at the diet, the author instead points to the way in which the *Augustana* emphasizes continuity in worship with the Catholic side, how the Mass remains in Protestant worship, and how adiaphoric ceremonies remain in order to "instruct the people:" "all ceremonies shall serve to educate the people as to what is necessary from Christ," i.e., non-essential ceremonies somehow indicate or embody essential points of doctrine (664).

Thus the Reporter wishes to present this foundational moment in the Reformation not as a radical break with the rest of the churches of the empire, but instead shows that much remains in common with regard to ritual, and the hope persists that this will be a starting point for converting the traditional churches to the Evangelical position (689). Indeed, for the author, the discipline achieved through uniformity in liturgical life would forestall Catholic oppression, and even more importantly, serve as a sign of the truthfulness of the Evangelical way to churches abroad, which in turn may be converted to the pure Gospel (689, 714). Here one may observe the conceptual importance of Pfeffinger's valorization of tradition in worship. The true religion has been "handed down" from the time of the apostles, and thus there ought to be traces of genuine piety and devotion among some members of the old church. Moreover, the uniformity in ceremonies orders society in such a way as to embody the truth and efficacy of the Evangelical

[19] Helmar Junghans, "Augsburg Confession," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, vol. 1 (New York, Oxrod: Oxford University Press, 1996) 93 – 97.

[20] He makes this clear in one of his margin notes: "Nota: Dazumal sind Ceremonien bereit Adiaphora genant, vnd wie ietzund dauon geredt, vnd erbietung geschehen" (665).

movement.

The author of the report wishes to highlight Luther's liberality in liturgical matters. However, the conservative pragmatism that Luther displayed in such questions also had a lot to do with the form of stubbornness idealized by Westphal and the other writers in Magdeburg. Luther would often explain that he remained conservative in order to spite the "*Schwärmer*" who were making adiaphoric practices and materials into conscience-binding articles of faith.[21] This an important point to keep in mind while appraising the rest of Pfeffinger's Luther-citations. Instead of recognizing the dynamic, or perhaps more accurately, the reactive approach Luther took regarding worship, the Reporter presents the conservative moments of Luther's thought as reified and static. Additionally, he skips over Luther's anxiety that Melanchthon had ceded too much to the Catholics during the Diet of Augsburg in 1530. The diet is held up as a moment of negotiation and compromise with the old Church, just as Melanchthon endeavored, instead of the grudging performance of a duty to provide the representatives of the imperial estates with a concise formulation of the fundamentals of the Evangelical faith, as Luther understood it.[22]

For the author or authors of the *Bericht*, Luther's conservative stance also extends into the political sphere, grounded on his reading of Romans 13 and Christ's admonition to "give unto Caesar what is Caesar's." The question is whether his readiness for obedience extends to ecclesiastical and liturgical matters. It was on this point that the "Anti-adiaphorists" held fast, declaring that the state had no right to adjudicate in so-called "church adiaphora." In so doing, they appealed to the Luther who wrote against the interference of secular leaders in the churchly

[21] Flacius makes this point in *Widder die neue Reformation Pfeffingers*. After claiming that "the German songs of Luther have been stolen," he goes on to explain Luther's conservatism as being maintained to spite "Carelstads schwermerey" (D iij [r]).

[22] Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: Zweiter Band* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1986) 374 – 383.

domain.[23] On the other hand, Luther had grudgingly made the state an active partner in the project of reformation by the mid 1520s, with the first visitations in electoral Saxony. Indeed, he also supported the young reformation taking place in Albertine Saxony in the 1540s after the ascent of Duke Heinrich, shortly before the start of the Schmalkaldic War. These efforts were stalled "by our sins," writes the anonymous reporter, which provoked the wrath of God in the form of "the horrible war," i.e., the Schmalkaldic War (670). The author represents Luther as having approved of the project to unify the Albertine churches under an Evangelical liturgy (the *Heinrichsagenda*) through the operation of a state-run consistory, and uses this approval to link him to the post-war efforts to carry out this project via the Saxon adaptation of the Augsburg Interim.

Thus the historical section of this book presents the post-war religious settlement as a continuation of a previous attempt at reformation, as well as an act of obedience to the emperor. From the point of view of the anonymous reporter, the emperor's war expresses the same sort of organizational project that motivated the first visitations in Ernestine Saxony: unifying the different regions under one rule and containing abuses in religion that detract from civic order.[24] Strangely enough, in spite of Luther's skepticism about the legitimacy of obedience to this "godless" emperor, the author of the report would have his readers understand them both to be engaged in similar projects of reform—one theological, one political, with a large degree of

[23] For example, in a letter to Melanchthon during the Diet of Augsburg from August 4, 1530; Flacius, *Etliche Brieffe, des Ehrwirdigen Herrn. D. Martini Luthers seliger gedechtnis, an die Theologos auff den Reichstag zu Augspurg geschrieben, Anno M.D.XXX* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550) D iiij [v]; WA.Br. 5, 525. "Quare cum neque principes neque episcopi potestatem habeant traditiones in Ecclesia statuendi…"

[24] 671 – 672, especially: "Darzu denn Key. May. fürnemlich bewögen, weil sie die gross vnordnung zu Augspurg gesehen vnd fürgefallenen vngleichheit hin vnd wider vermerckt, in zuuersicht, das durch solch mittel [i.e., the Interim and the Council of Trent] dem allen solte abgeholffen sein…"

overlap between the two domains.[25] Worldly power always had a role to play in the life of the Church—its defense and promotion, especially in the silencing of those who would calumny it.[26]

The overlapping relationship between political and spiritual life becomes all the more complicated when one considers that frequently in the early modern period, secular and ecclesiastical elites were often one in the same. Clerical administrators were almost exclusively of noble or royal stock, and during the Reformation, princes could play a leading role as religious administrators, appointing clergy as they saw fit. George III of Anhalt is a prominent example of both phenomena. Born a prince in Anhalt-Dessau, the devout George became a Canon and priest in his youth, then co-inherited (with his brothers) sovereignty over the principality. Allying with the Protestants after the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, George was appointed spiritual coadjutor of Merseburg Cathedral by Maurice of Saxony. He continued to rule over Anhalt districts of Warmsdorf, Plötzkau, Harzgerode, and Günthersberge.[27] Thus even as George performed secular and ecclesiastical duties, his spiritual role in Merseburg was instituted by secular power. Nonetheless, George insisted upon being ordained formally by Luther in the Merseburg cathedral in 1544, a most unusual occurrence in the history of the German reformations. This quick overview of the middle of Anhalt's career evinces the deep co-imbrication of political and ecclesiastical authority during the Reformation.

Anhalt was a vital part of the Reformation in Albertine Saxony. After the death of the

---

[25] For a provocative set of theses about Luther's thought in relation to worldly authority, cf. Heiko Oberman, "Thesen zur Zwei-Reiche-Lehre," in *Luther und die politische Welt*, ed. Erwin Iserloh and Gerhard Müller (Stuttgart: F Steiner Verlag, 1983) 27 – 34.

[26] WA.Br. 5 611 – 617. Cf. Niklaus Largier, "Mysticism, Modernity, and the Invention of Aesthetic Experience," *Representations* 105 (2009): 37 – 60, esp. 42.

[27] *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* volume 8, 595 – 596. "Georg III. von Anhalt („der Gottselige") *Controversia et Confessio Digital*. Ed. Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/af1739c8-68b3-4645-be18-f2237d0f0036.

staunchly Catholic Duke George, his Evangelical brother Heinrich stood next in line to rule the duchy, and introduced liturgical innovations based on Luther's changes. Anhalt was the intellectual force behind adapting Luther's revisions, having designed a ritually conservative church ordinance for Joachim II in Brandenburg shortly before the evangelization of Albertine Saxony.[28] The Reporter's concern is with showing Luther's unqualified support for this project, and to this effect, he quotes a letter that Luther wrote to the prince in response to a request for an opinion on the operation of the Latin schools supervised by Georg III (*Bericht* 667). George had not sought out this counsel, but rather a school teacher suspicious of the singing of Latin songs at the expense of "discipline." Luther sent his opinion to Anhalt instead of the teacher, one Joachim Greff, whom Luther regarded with suspicion. The part of the letter quoted by Pfeffinger asserts that the prince should not allow any hot-heads to "turn that which is neutral into what is damnable," and furthermore, that he ought to assert his superiority in social rank and learning in order to prevent the enthusiasm of mid-level actors from getting out of hand.[29]

It is important to note that although this letter does evince Luther's conservatism in ritual as well as social-hierarchical matters, it also applies to a context that has more to do with pedagogy than worship. Nevertheless, these two forms of human activity are never far from one another in Luther's thought.[30] The importance of this letter for Pfeffinger's cause rests in Luther's rejection of attempts to "turn *neutralia* into *damnibilia*," the kind of transformation that is crucial for the accusation of certain observances being "pseudo-*adiaphora*." For Pfeffinger, this advice to Anhalt constitutes the epitome of Luther's teachings on the freedom of the Christian, and represents the quintessence of his legacy, which makes him "ein rechter

[28] Luther D. Peterson, 333; 341 – 342; 349 – 352.
[29] WA.Br 10, 284 –286
[30] See below for Westphal's citation of *De liberate christiana* in section IV.

Adiaphorista" (722). To ignore this counsel is to run the risk of artificially turning non-essential matters such as the alb into conscience-binding concerns, in short, to become legalistic. With great sarcasm, he dismisses all of the criticisms of his opponents, who scream out to the world that they are the true disciples of Luther, and yet cannot seem to grasp the simple truth of his doctrine.[31]

In his *Confutation of the Sophists*, written in reaction to Pfeffinger, Joachim Westphal addresses this point with some pregnant language about the relationship between *neutralia* or *adiaphora* and impious, idolatrous acts and elements: "what a dreadful calumny to claim that neutral things are condemned by us. For we do not condemn neutral things or *adiaphora*, but we reject the bad appendices [or: associations—*appendices malas*], the impious opinions, compulsion by force in these matters, the denials [*infidias*] of liberty, and the scandals." Rather it is the "Interimists" who make these things damnable by enforcing them and thereby enabling the papist agenda.[32] This quotation deserves to be flagged, as it constitutes the heart of the arguments against compromise in *adiaphora*. Neither the existence of the category, nor the use of non-binding ceremonies are under attack, but the return of practices and materials that have been stained and polluted by idolatry and thereby function to index idolatry back into the spaces of Evangelical worship, as well as to trouble the consciences of those unschooled in the finer points of theology.

This decisive point arises in the context of debating a quotation from Luther's

[31] "Ey, wie schöne Jünger sein diese D. Martinii, die Doctrinam de Adiaphojris gantz verdammen vnd eitel Necessaria daraus machen, rhümen vnd schreien sehr, das sie seine Jünger sein, aber wie fein folgen sie seiner Lehre?" (722).

[32] "Atrox est calumnia, neutralia a nobis damnari. Non enim Neutralia, seu adiaphora damnaus, sed improbamus appendices malas, impias opiniones, coactiones, infidias liberatatis, scandala" (*CONFVTATIO SOPHISTICI ADIAphoristarum scripti Lyps* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter)B 5 ^{r}). The German rendering of *appendices* in the vernacular version is *die Gottlosen anhenge* (*Verlegung des Gründlichen Berichts der Adiaphoristen* [Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1551] D iij ^{r}.

correspondence, and at the same time, it signals a departure from Luther's understanding of the material realm. While lecturing on Genesis 13.2, a passage describing Abraham's acquisition of riches, Luther delves into the meaning of materiality in scripture. He takes issue with rabbinic, monastic, and especially philosophical conceptions of the material realm, observing that for the Stoics, evil dwells in materials and not the human soul. For Luther, this signals a misunderstanding of how God governs the world: "A thing is possessed insofar as it is composed [*condita*] by God. However the possessor [of said thing] is something other than this thing which God has composed. Thus the vice [*vicium*] is not in the thing, but in the possessor [*non in re, sed in possessore*]."[33] Compare this with the way Westphal speaks of the *appendices* that cling to the material paraphernalia of Catholic ritual, and Flacius lamenting such attachments as the stain of idolatry. Interpreting the meaning of this turn toward pollution-rhetoric is one of the chief tasks of this dissertation, and will be further developed in the following chapters. For now, it suffices to point the conceptual and literary challenges the authors in this controversy experienced while attempting to articulate their positions. Even while attempting to keep the Evangelical churches "purely Lutheran," the dissidents were obliged to take materials and practices seriously as substantial bearers of doctrine or idolatry than he ever did.

The gap between Westphal's urgent scrutiny of the materials and practices of ceremony and Luther's position can be discerned in a letter from the start of the reformation in Albertine Saxony, one not quoted by Pfeffinger, which is nonetheless relevant to his appeal to the reformer. It is addressed to the superintendent of Pirna, Anton Lauterbach. Here, Luther expresses a certain optimism about the progress the Evangelicals are making in a district that had

[33] WA 42, 495. Cf. Reimund Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst: Studien zur Genealogie ästhetischen Denkens* (Tübingen: Max Niedermeyer, 2005) 106. Rendering *vicium* as vice or *vitium* and not the genitive plural of *vicis*.

been until recently pressed into the service of idolatry. Nevertheless, according to Luther, where the Word of God rules in its purity, everything else will come swiftly— "what are ceremonies without the Word?"[34] In this letter, Luther weighs-in on the permissibility of the elevation of the sacrament, an issue that was dividing the participants in the new reformation.[35] He explains that "we did dismantle the practice of elevation for no better reason than that we showed ourselves to be the Lords of Ceremonies, not the slaves."[36]

Pfeffinger quotes a similar line from a letter to George of Anhalt: it is "the ceremonies are subject to us, not we to the ceremonies, except where it promotes love, to which we are subject."[37] The message in both passages seems to replicate the teaching from *Tractatus de libertate christiana*, i.e., that because human salvation does not depend upon ceremonial practices, Christians are free to structure worship as they see fit. Yet there is a crucial ambiguity in both passages regarding the human subject to whom ceremonies are subject, and indeed, placed into bondage. Humanity, or better yet, the Church, seems to be the sovereign subject, yet what does this entail in concrete practice? Who speaks for the Church? Who administrates the ceremonies? In the context of these letters, Luther is writing to two clerics who serve at the pleasure of a secular government. Earlier on, faced with no dependable structure for church government and "increasingly depressed at the mass of unregenerate humanity around him," Luther elevated the princes to the status of "emergency bishops" [*Notbischöfe*] who were to

---

[34] "De Ceremoniis cudendis mihi nulla spes [est], nec ferendum, ut impii nobis leges praefigant, qui ipsi nulla lege tenentur. Si primum verbi puritas ubique regnaret, de Ceremoniis facile esset consilium. Quid Ceremoniae sine verbo?" (WA Br.10 283 – 284).

[35] Günther Wartenberg, *Landesherrschaft und Reformation: Moritz von Sachsen und die albertinische Kirchenpolitik bis 1546* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus Gerd Mohn, 1988) 217 – 226.

[36] "Nos hic elevationem sacramenti deposuimus, nulla potiore causa, quam ut esse nos Dominos Ceremoniarum, non servos ostenderemus" (284).

[37] "Denn die Ceremonien seindt vns vnterworffen vnd nicht wie den Ceremonien, ohne wo es die Liebe fordert, der wir vnterworffen sein etc" (Luther to Prince George of Anhalt June 26, 1542, WA.Br. 10, 85 – 88, esp. 86, quoted by Pfeffinger on 699).

shepherd their flocks in secular as well as spiritual affairs.[38] Even though Luther did not regard this "emergency" situation as ideal for the norm of ecclesiastical governance, "in practice the Elector's action set the pattern for monarchical Protestant churches all over Europe in the future."[39] Did this imply, then, that "the love to which we are subject" amounted to a command of obedience to the paternalistic political sovereign in matters that were not essential for salvation? Such an opinion does not appear in black and white, yet the ambiguities in Luther's thought concerning the personhood of the "free Christian" does allow for the kind of reading offered by the "Adiaphorists." Pfeffinger uses the example of the visitations conducted by secular power to his advantage on this point, arguing form the precedent set in electoral and ducal Saxony, as well as from biblical precedent, referring to the reforms instituted by King Jehosophat in 2 Chr. 17 (719-720).

On the other hand, specifically in the Lauterbach letter, there is language concerning ceremonies that better suits the anxieties of the dissidents. In declaring ceremonies subject to human interests, Luther affirms the liberty of the Christian in instituting or suspending liturgical acts such as the elevation of the sacrament during the consecration. He explains that either institution or suspension must reflect the imperative of liberty through divine grace—otherwise, the Devil is waiting to infiltrate either the affirmation or the denial of the *adiaphoron*. The Reformer identifies the domain of ceremonial observances as dangerous territory, littered with pitfalls. The Devil attacks the soul through the abuse of ceremonies, attempting to lead it back into servitude to the Law (or its false image), in order to derail it from the path to salvation.[40]

---

[38] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490 – 1700* (London: Allen Lane, 2003) 165.

[39] Ibid..

[40] "Simul ut aliis Ecclesiis Saxoniae similes essemus, parati rursus erigere et omnia facere pro usu Ecclessiarum et pro libertate conscientiae defendenda, quam semper et ubique per ceremonias

Ceremonies are always and everywhere the site of this sort of temptation. Humanity needs them to worship God, and this dependency represents a key opening to the diabolical subversion of religion. By describing the dangers of ceremonies in these terms, Luther reveals his anxiety that any of the contingent observances of church life could take on the appearance of being necessary components of religious existence. His followers in Magdeburg and Hamburg seized upon this anxiety about the association between legality and ceremony when they polemicized against the religious laws that were taking shape across the empire. It did not matter to them that the proponents and apologists of the Saxon version of the religious settlement defined "servitude in *adiaphora*" as a matter of secular obedience—the imperative grammar, the legal idiom, of the religious settlements gave them an idolatrous power over the souls of those subject to the Interim. Thus both sides could accuse the other of burdening consciences, either by promulgating laws that made ceremonial conformity a dangerous necessity, or by forgetting the core teaching on Christian freedom in a climate of paranoia.

II. Earthly anxiety and divine critique at Augsburg, 1530

One of Pfeffinger's goals was to align the politics of ritual in Saxony with the legacy of the Augsburg Confession. According to his account of things, both Luther and Melanchthon represented a united front, offering compromise in *adiaphora* in exchange for peace in the empire and potential unity in doctrine. This, along with the image of Luther as the representative of toleration among the weaker in faith, would be attacked by the dissidents. Instead of presenting the negotiations at the imperial diet of 1530 as a scene of moderation and concord, Flacius would try to reveal division, intrigue, and the roots of later betrayals in the correspondence between Luther and Melanchthon. Flacius gathered together the most desperate

---

insidiossime Satan petivit, tentavit et saepius in servitutem lege ipsa graviorem redegit" (WA.Br. 10, 284).

letters written by Luther from the Coburg fortress, where the reformer was forced to sit-out the negotiations, on account of the imperial ban placed on him in 1521 at the Edict of Worms. Despite depicting such a lurid chain of events at Augsburg, the Flacius and the rest of the dissidents would, like Pfeffinger, claim the Augsburg Confession as their own.[41] In this section, I show how Flacius uses these letters to contrast Luther's prophetic power with Melanchthon's human weakness, generate an account of "pure worship," and present Luther as figure of emulation.

The collection of letters sent by Luther during the Diet of Augsburg 1530 performs much conceptual and rhetorical work for the dissidents opposing the *adiaphora*-compromises twenty years later. One of the most important rhetorical tasks was to contrast the figure of Luther with that of Melanchthon, the thundering prophet placed side by side with the weak-willed academic. This is expressly the claim of Flacius's preface to the German edition, in which he explains that one of the chief aims of this collection is for his readers to see the murky "spring" of Philipp's opinions on compromise in ritual matters—and accordingly to observe the debased quality of this "font" of wisdom in comparison to the heavenly clarity of Luther's advice on these questions.[42] Despite offering this rationale, Flacius does not quote a single letter written by Melanchthon from this period, but chooses only to provide Luther's side of the correspondence.[43] Melanchthon is thus rendered mute during one of the most important moments

---

[41] *Bekenntnis Untericht vnd vermanung der Pfarrhern vnd Prediger der Christlichen Kirchen zu Magdeburgk* (A v^{v} – B i ^{r}). Cf. Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520-1620* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999) 57.

[42] *Etliche Brieffe, des Ehrwirdigen Herrn. D. Martini Luthers seliger gedechtnis, an die Theologos auff den Reichstag zu Augspurg geschrieben, Anno M.D.XXX*, A ij ^{r}.

[43] Flacius is credited with giving these letters their preeminence. Also, in many instances, the editors of the WA follow his printed versions. Early in the 20th century, Johannes Haußleiter argued that the German editions were Luther's original copies instead of the Latin, reasoning that Flacius did not possess sufficient fluency in German to render them effectively. Yet the WA editors print the Latin copies in their

of his career. Flacius's first mention of Melanchthon does not even contain his full name—simply the single initial "P" (A ij [r]). Scholars of early-modern German bureaucracy have noted how the composers of official records used specific formulas and abbreviations to keep descriptions of polluting activities at a distance in their reports.[44] Remaining pure in terms of one's person and honor demanded even linguistic precautions and boundaries—this helps explain why the rhetoric of purity encompasses such a wide semantic range for these actors. At the same time, letters of this period were flooded with abbreviations for titles and honors, religious and secular, tokens of language used to recognize and embody power and reputation.[45] Flacius's refusal to allow Melanchthon to talk back to Luther, as well as his hesitancy to even breathe his name, seems to evince a strange mixture of these forms of disgust and reverence for his former teacher.

The "P" that stands for Philipp may just as well stand for *Praeceptor* [instructor], Philipp's unofficial title for the second generation of the Wittenberg reformation. Flacius uses this academic prestige against Melanchthon, quoting some of Luther's musings about the drawbacks of Philipp's diplomatic approach to suggest the impotence of an effete intellectual. All the worse is that this over-intellectualization of the process of negotiation and confession at the imperial diet leaves Phillip numb to the divinely inspired counsel of his partner. To amplify this, Flacius concludes his collection of letters with a "prophecy" attributed obscurely to Luther: "the

---

critical edition, relying on archival evidence. Cf. "Matthias Flacius als Herausgeber von Luthers Koburger Briefen und Trostsprüchen (1530)," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 28 (1917): 149 –187.

[44] Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 45-46 and David Sabean, "Soziale Distanzierungen. Ritualisierte Gestik in deutscher bürokratischer Prosa der Frühen Neuzeit," *Historische Anthropologie* 4 (1996): 216 – 233.

[45] David Sabean: "Die Handlung, die unscheinbaren Initialen „c.v." [cum venia] in alle möglichen Texte einzubringen, sollte deshalb als ein Politikum angesehen werden, als eine Geste, die in einer Herschaftspraxis verwurzelt war" (233).

Christian religion comes to ruin in these ways: by forgetting the benefits of the Gospel, next by complacency, which reigns everywhere already, and lastly by the wisdom of this world, which desires to redirect everything toward order and the common peace through the help of godless counsels."[46] All of these traps designed to destroy Christianity snagged Melanchthon as he attempted to avert a war at Augsburg in 1530.

However Luther's own criticisms of his colleague in the letters reflect sympathy as much as impatience. At the end of the diet, in a letter dated September 11, Luther comforts his burned out colleague and instructs him to ignore those back home and abroad who claimed he had ceded too much to the Catholics.[47] Needless to say, this letter does not make it into Flacius's anthology. Luther even addresses Melanchthon as a martyr throughout the period when the messengers were carrying their letters between Augsburg and the Coburg— "why do you eat away at yourself [*te maceras*] without ceasing? If the matter is unjust, let them call us out on it; if not, why do we make God, with all of his great promises, into a liar?"[48] There is more than a hint of irony in this epithet, since the martyrdom Philipp is undergoing has been brought on by his own anxieties and not the will of God. Luther urges his friend to turn to the Lord in prayer and to break away from his philosophy: "I beseech you for God's sake…struggle against yourself, since you are your own worst enemy" (C iiij ^{v}). In a similar way, he requests Johannes Brenz, the influential Swabian reformer present at the diet, to persuade Philipp to desist from "becoming the ruler [*rector*] of the world, which is to say, from crucifying himself" (D i ^{v}).[49] By being too absorbed

---

[46] *Aliquot Epistolae Reverendi Patris Piae Memoriae D. Martini Lutheri* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549) D3 ^{v} – D 4 ^{r}.

[47] "Sed, quod paene praeterieram, obsecro te, mi Philippe, ne te maceres ex illorum iudiciis, qui vel dicunt vel sribunt, vos nimium cessisse paistis" (WA Br. 5, 618).

[48] *Etliche Brieffe, des Ehrwirdigen Herrn. D. Martini Luthers seliger gedechtnis, an die Theologos auff den Reichstag zu Augspurg geschrieben, Anno M.D.XXX* C iiij ^{r}; WA.Br. 5, 399, June 27, 1530.

[49] WA.Br. 5, 418. Dated June 30, 1530.

in the conceptual details of the debate, Luther sees Melanchthon as playing into the strategy of the godless and thus putting his own soul at risk. The dialectical subtleties and rhetorical bravado of the negotiations have nothing to do with God, according to Luther. To rely on them in this time of trial is to attempt to drag the *deus absconditus* from out of the shadows, a project doomed to failure because it is grounded in the sin of pride, the desire to be God.[50] Melanchthon's anxiety for political stability betrays his lack of trust in providence and the divine love for the Wittenberg cause. Too much anxiety prevents one from being attuned to this divine plan and acting decisively: "if Moses had striven to understand the way by which he would evade the destruction threatened by Pharaoh, perhaps Israel would still be in Egypt this very day."[51]

In a letter to Brenz, Luther writes rather bitterly that he is failing to dissuade Melanchthon from solving all of the political problems of the empire through compromise: "On my own, I have in different ways sought to change Phillip's mind, who believers that I am just a human and accordingly my words are merely human words, and he is thus less affected by them, yet he may be moved by all of you, whom he is compelled to regard as godly men."[52] The frustration Luther expresses here also suggests wounded feelings as his inability to influence his friend in a positive way. Melanchthon appears in Luther's letter not as an incompetent colleague, as opposed to Flacius depiction, but rather someone whom he saw as a "troubled [*angefochtenen*] Christian brother" in need of having his faith revived.[53]

---

[50] *Aliquot Epistolae* A 4 ^{v}.

[51] "Deus posuit eam in locum quendam communem, quem in rhetorica tua non baes nec in philopsophia tua… Si Moses comprehendere studuisset finem, quo evadaret excercitum Pharaonis, Israël adhuc hodie fortassis esset in Aegypto. Dominus adaugeat tibi et nobis omnibus fidem" (B 6 ^{v}; WA.Br. 5, 406).

[52] "Nisi quod uarie tentare uolui si Philippus, qui me hominem & uerba mea hominis esse credit, ac ita minus afficitur, per uos saltem quos cogitur credere esse uiros Dei, moueri queat" (B 4^{v} – B 5 ^{r} WA.Br. 5, 418).

[53] Martin Brecht*, Luther* II, 382.

For the dissidents, it was of great significance that Luther voices his frustration that Philipp considered his words "merely human." After all, his counsel was charged with the power of the Spirit and constituted something akin to an ongoing revelation. The florilegium pursues this point from the outset, showing, in letters written to elector's counselor Gregor Brück, how Luther had two visions pertaining to appearances of danger and security in faith: in one case, a vision the heavens, hovering steadily above the world, free of pillars and supports—yet there are men searching for those pillars, terrified that the sky would tumble down should they be unable to lay hands upon them. The heavenly vault holds together all the same without human intervention (B iiij ^{v}).[54] In another letter, from Veit Dietrich to Melanchthon, Veit relays how he came upon Luther in feverish prayer, pleading with God to "eradicate the persecutors of your children," while expressing his recognition that the matter lay exclusively in divine hands. Veit recounts that "when I heard him from afar praying with such a strong voice, my heart burned in my body with great joy [*ardebat mihi quoque; brand mirs hertz im leib vor grosser freud*] because of hearing him speak with God in such a friendly and devoted way. Above all though, because he bore down upon the promises contained in the Psalms, as if he were certain that everything must come to pass as he desired" (C i^{v} - C ij^{r}).[55] Here the reader sees Luther as a visionary as well as an intimate of the almighty. His faith is powerful enough to render the act of prayer into conversation with God, perhaps even a chance at persuasion. How could such a person speak only in narrow human terms?

Beyond this exaggerated dichotomy set up between Luther and Melanchthon (human vs. divine wisdom) are opinions that provide the foundation for the content and style of the dissidents' theological response to the problem of the so-called pseudo-*adiaphora*. The

[54] Ibid., 387.

[55] For critical editions, consult WA.B. 5, 419, CR II, 158-160, MBW 4, no. 949.

conceptual hurdles for compromise and reconciliation faced by Melanchthon at the diet in 1530 anticipated those he would see again in twenty years. Was it possible to win some goodwill by pledging conformity in certain traditional rituals and admitting the legitimacy of episcopal church governance? Did the German Evangelicals possess the correct understanding of divine law? Melanchthon faced heavy criticism from conservative theologians such as Girolamo Aleandro, Johann Cochlaeus, and Johann Eck, who claimed that Lutheran doctrine and worship fomented popular unrest and destabilized the religious, ritual core of society in the empire.[56] This was criticism Melanchthon took very seriously, and continuously sought out Luther's opinions during his period of activity at the diet. Response to this criticism also contributed to the simultaneously conservative and conciliatory tone of the Augsburg Confession—Melanchthon represented the genuine Evangelical stance on ceremonies as benefitting discipline and common feeling among the parishioners, thereby distancing himself from the more thoroughgoing renovations to ritual and the sacraments in upper Germany and Switzerland.

His concilitatory position with regard to ceremonies brought Melanchthon into conflict with Luther's hardline stance. In a letter dated August 4, 1530, Luther addresses a question put to him by Philipp: what do the Evangelicals consider to the be the final cause of ceremonial worship? Luther balks at the scholastic-Aristotelean vocabulary being used to analyze worship: "God doesn't care if humans say that the final cause of the ceremonies is [to do] what is pious, to do what is permitted, to perform an exercise, to be centered the Eucharist, or done for the sake of discipline. God doesn't ask after any of this, but rather he wants his commandments to be

[56] For Eck, see his dedicatory letter to the 404 Theses; this same charge was repeated by Coachleaus in 1543, see *Defensio Ceremoniarum Ecclesiae aduersus errores & calumnias* D 2 ^{v}. Cf. Helmar Junghans, "Augsburg Confession," *Encyclopedia of the Reformation*.

kept."[57] Even if his resistance to Aristotelean metaphysics is famous, Luther elects to explain the nature of worship to Melanchthon in terms that may translate into that discourse: it is the efficient cause, or what gets translated into German as *der Stifter* [the founder] that matters most—i.e., it is the one who founds and commands the observance that matters for determining the nature and purpose of worship.[58] It is important to observe that this excludes any functionalist account of the purpose of ritual in the Church, the sort of account favored by the authors of the Augsburg Interim as well as the Leipzig articles.[59]

In line with this attention to the efficient cause or creator of the service of worship as that which determines its final cause, Luther refuses the terms of the debate pertaining to which traditional practices may be changed or adopted for worship. God has already provided the Church with the necessary components of worship—none of these, i.e., the sacraments and the preaching of the Word, may be forgone or altered in any way. Criticizing Melanchthon's Catholic interlocutors, Luther charges them with usurping the divine service by piling on other requirements and practices to the pure cult.[60] Ironically, he fortifies his own position by appealing to the extra-scriptural authority of Bernard of Clairvaux, referring to an obscure passage in which the austere monastic thinker declares that he has no say in selecting or naming the divine service—this has all been given by God.[61] At the same time, Luther recognizes the

---

[57] B 1 ^{v}; WA.Br. 5, 525.

[58] "Ego puto in omnibus hic sufficere Causam efficientem…Alioqui cultus ipse & finalis caussa per sese esset sancta, si Verbo Dei mandaretur, hoc est, mea opinione, fieret Causa efficiente vere sancta" (527). *Aliquot Epistolae Reverendi Patris Memoriae*, B 3 ^{r}.

[59] Cf. Nathan Rein, *The Chancery of God: Protestant print, polemic, and propaganda against the empire, Magdeburg, 1546 – 1551* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 106 – 107.

[60] B 2 ^{r}. WA. Br. 5, 525 – 526.

[61] A 8 ^{r}; WA. Br. 5, 523.

contingent "material" aspects of worship as the domain of Christian liberty.[62] The fact that the same materials may contribute to liberty or idolatry foreshadows the position later adopted by the dissidents, i.e., that *adiaphora* may change their nature in accordance with historical context. Joachim Westphal in particular adopts Luther's reliance on the efficient cause in order to critique *adiaphora* commanded by the emperor for the sake of placating the pope as impure by virtue of the intent of their founders.[63]

Finally, the vision of Luther provided in this collection offers a model of resistance, a resistance to secular powers that can be pursued in good faith. This is at least as important as the other elements I have been discussing here, such as the constructed contrast between Philipp's fallen humanity and Luther's divinized superhumanity, and Luther's strict reliance on the author of revelation for establishing the nature and end of ritual worship. This last element provides the dissidents with an ethos as well as style for their polemic. Where Melanchthon offers careful wording, subtle hints, and diplomatic maneuver, Luther accepts only defiance as the correct attitude of the Christian who is confronted by the foes of the Gospel. In a striking letter from June 30, Luther expresses astonishment that Melanchthon is still seeking points of compromise with the papists. Enough had already been ceded in the Augsburg Confession, unless a different reading of the documents in question could be brought to bear. Luther admits that he has been mulling over the possibility of compromise: "day and night I work through this matter thinking, turning it over, and disputing, reviewing the entire scripture, and steadily my conviction [πληροφορία in Luther's original letter] in our doctrine increases, and from day to day I am encouraged. For the sake of God, I will not allow anything else to be taken, let the chips fall

[62] "At hęc predictamenta accidentium in operibus suis Deus voluit esse libera et vere accidentia, neququam vero substantiam" (B 2 ^{r}; WA Br. 5. 526).
[63] Consult Chapter III, Section III, below.

where they may."[64] Thus Luther appears as the man who will risk much to avoid compromising his commitment to God.

If this defiance should cost him his life, so be it. Luther urges Melanchthon to take heart in an authentic form of self-sacrifice, as opposed to the dangerous martyrdom he has been undergoing in the negotiations: "[the devil] has sworn death to me, that is clear. Yet he will have not rest until he has eaten [*gefressen*] me— should he eat me up, he shall be eating a laxative [*Purgatio*] that makes his gut and ass too tight—what does it matter?" ["*Was gilt's?*"][65] Luther wishes his own famous constipation upon the devil, though it is unclear why the body of the Christian makes for such a poor laxative! With his scatological bravado regarding the possibility of his own death, Luther's words provide a paradigm to the style of the dissenters, who will often use crude imagery to get their point across.[66] The devil and his kingdom, the theology of compromise, and the ceremonies it re-instantiates, are all composed of muck and filth, a blot upon the purity of the Gospel. Therefore this foulness must be called by its name, with the same sort of lyrics sung by the "nightingale of Wittenberg." Luther's cavalier stance toward self-sacrifice also bespeaks ambivalence about the human condition—in this world of sin, the Christian is just waiting to preyed upon, devoured, and digested. If alive, the body of the dissident theologian is simply the prologue to being a pile of feces, why not use the power of

[64] "Ego dies et noctes in ista causa versor, cogitans, volvens, disputans et totam Scripturam lustrans, et augescit mihi assidue ipsa πληροφορία in ista doctrina nostra, et confirmor magis ac magis, *daß ich mir (ob Gott will) nu nichts mehr werd nehmen lassen, es gehe drüber, wie es wolle*" (WA.Br 5. 405).

[65] *Aliquot Epistolae* B 6 [r]; WA. Br. 5 406.

[66] For Gabriel Didymus, whose career was cut short because of his opposition to Maurice's policies, Luther's satires and polemical imagery have the power to unmask evil, "durch Veranschaulichung:" "Zum dritten mith viellen Bilder, darunter auch einer der Bapst geburt antzeiget, wie ehr dem Teuffel aus dem Hinden fellet" (*Kurtzer Bericht vnd Antwort auff die ietzige Neue Krichenordnung dieses 49 Jars,* 44[r], Dr. Loc. 10298 / 2).

filthiness against the predators? *Was gilt's*?[67]

In spite of all this valorization of the pure reception of Luther's teachings, Flacius's collection betrays its partisan quality as well its particular political context. All of the quotations given above pertain to Luther's hard-headed refusal to yield one hair's breadth in sacred matters with the Catholics and his embrace of self-sacrifice, which "must be suffered for anyone who wants to have Christ."[68] Luther emerges as a fighter against all takers, yet this persona is artificially amplified when Flacius excises one sentence in particular: "it amazes me, when you seek after what and how much should be granted to the papists. *With the regard to the prince* [presumably Elector John]*, it is another question about what ought to be conceded, if danger does arise*."[69] This is then followed by Luther's declaration, quoted above, that he is finally relieved and confident to assert that they can concede no more. But to whom does he mean? In complete context, it seems plausible to read Luther as saying that the Elector John has a free hand in compromising on secular issues in order to forestall war. However, Luther would soon come to view the emperor as the Antichrist's puppet, using secular power to further religious oppression.[70] Yet even the brief moment of hesitation cannot be tolerated by Flacius—he needs his prophet to stay on-message, especially over a decade later, with the elector in prison on account of his resistance against the emperor. Any hint that Luther might have countenanced a compromise with the emperor detracted from the justification of the Magdeburgers to resist the

---

[67] Cf. Heiko Oberman, "Teufelsdreck: Eschatology and Scatology in the "Old" Luther,"" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* (1988) 435 – 450 and Robert Scribner, "Demons, Defecation and Monsters: Luther's 'Depiction of the Papacy' (1545)," *Poplar Culture and Poplar Movements in Reformation Germany* (London; Ronceverte, WV: Hambeldon, 1987) 277 – 300.

[68] *Aliquot Epistolae* B 6[r]; WA. Br. 5 406.

[69] "De Principe est alia quaestio, quid illi concendendum sit, si huic periculum impendeat" (405). Compare with *Aliquot Epistolae,* B 5 [v]; *Etliche Brieffe,* D ij [v]. Cf. Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther* II, 381.

[70] WA 39 II 34 – 91 for "Die Zirkulardisputation über das Recht des Widerstandsgegen den Kaiser (Matth. 19, 21)."

imperial religious program in the late forties and early fifties.[71]

In addition to editing the reformer's voice in order to reanimate his presence, Flacius also shows himself to be in proper emulation of Luther's role as custodian of the Church. In both the Latin and German version of this anthology, he prints a letter sent to George of Anhalt from November 1548 during a meeting of the theologians and counselors at Altzella that was instrumental in the formation of the Leipzig articles.[72] Flacius indicates to Anhalt that he has been forwarded some of the documents from this meeting of Catholic and Evangelical leaders by an unknown informant and is sorely displeased with the evasiveness and passivity he detects in the records of this meeting. He contrasts the conduct of the theologians to the "manful" perseverance [*bestendigkeit vnnd mannheit*] demonstrated by Luther in similar situations (*Ettliche Briefe,* H i ^{r}).[73] Luther speaks as one with the Psalmist on this matter for Flacius: "O by what wisdom do you accommodate yourselves to the ears of profane men and forget the ears of God almighty? How entirely have you all forgotten what was sung by David and Luther: "I will also speak your decrees before kings, / and shall not be put to shame.""[74] The vocation of the theologian demands simple, blunt speech, even when one's audience is a crass bunch of princes and courtiers who love nothing more than for these theological inconveniences to vanish. The point is not to express a mere opinion, but to oppose impiety with the pure simplicity of the divine statute (C 5 ^{v}). Without such keenness, theology is doomed in times of oppression. Like

[71] It seems unlikely that this elision had anything to do with different versions of the letter in circulation, given the fact that every other letter used by Flacius in this collection matched up word-for-word with the edited versions in the *Weimarer Ausgabe*.

[72] See above Chapter I, Section II. and below in this chapter, Section III.

[73] C 7 ^{v}; D 1 ^{r}.

[74] C 7 ^{r}, quoting Psalm 119.46. This strong link between David and Luther is strong counter-evidence to Robert Kolb's argument that the dissidents did not use Luther as a source of prophetic authority during this period. *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520-1620* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999) 44.

David, Luther's language reveals his joyous acceptance of theological combat, yet in his absence, the learned epigone stand craven before the princes, unable to continue the struggle: "it wouldn't matter if we had ten times the understanding of the truth as Luther; with our cravenness, we would never have dared to undertake to greet this battle with such piety in the way that this man keenly undertook it, steadfastly fought in it, and happily conquered in the end."[75] By inserting this letter of theological activism into his anthology of Luther's correspondence from the Coburg Veste, Flacius allows his own discourse to mingle with the pure spring of Luther's counsel.[76] Being oriented by Luther's pugnacious rhetoric about ceremonies offers the only antidote for the poison of worldly wisdom.

III. Melanchthon: the tension between the legacy and the personality of Luther

Flacius hopes to show Melanchthon as the chief victim of worldly wisdom in comparison to Luther's inspired divine counsel. However, Melanchthon was himself committed to affirming Luther's prophetic role and locates him in a sacred genealogy that stretches back to the patriarchs of Genesis. At the same time, by associating Luther's ministry with the supernatural, Melanchthon also tacitly discourages the emulation of Luther's harsh rhetoric and mercurial persona, since these could only be harnessed and directed by God's special providence.

An oration held "over the bones of Luther" in the Wittenberg castle church from November 8, 1548 suggests a concerted effort to institute memorial observances in commemoration of the dead reformer.[77] While the text itself was composed by Philipp Melanchthon, it was declaimed

---

[75] "Profecto si nos decies tantum cognitionis ueritatis haberemus, quantum Lutherus, cum hac nostra ὀλιγοπίσία nunquam hoc salutare piis certamen suscipere ausi fuissemus, quod ille alacriter suscepit, constanter certauit, et foelicitier tandem uicit" (D 1 ^{r}).

[76] This letter also makes it into Flacius' *Omnia Latina Scripta…hactenus sparsim contra Adiaphoricas fraudes & errores aedita* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550) D 4 ^{v} – E 3 ^{v}.

[77] Thomas Kaufman, *Das Ende der Reformation,* 316

by the theologian Georg Major. The title commonly given to this oration is "Luther and the Ages of the Church," which reveals a desire to place the events of the day in the continuum of world history and divine providence. Despite this grandiosity, it begins rather personally, even hauntingly: "When deliberating the argument of this oration two days before Luther's birthday, many difficult things burdened my heart with sadness…and on account of his birthday, Luther constantly appeared before my eyes, and I was so grieved by our bereavement that I was unable to compose any other argument" (CR XI, 783). Melanchthon then ventures that had Luther lived longer, the Schmalkaldic War, the war that set the stage for the implementation of the Augsburg Interim and the *adiaphora* controversy itself, would never have broken out. The bereavement of Melanchthon, Major, and his listeners is thus conditioned by personal and historical factors. Luther's shade must have lingered close by Melanchthon for much of the months of November and December of 1548, given the negotiations he was taking part in, which I discussed in the last chapter, the same negotiations alluded to by Flacius in his letter to George of Anhalt. Especially at this moment, in the ritualized commemoration of the reformer's career, Melanchthon expresses his mistrust for these overtures of compromise, pointing out how the Catholic "zealots" [*Eceboli*] demand the reintroduction of "perverse rites" which "numb the power to pray so that one finds oneself always in doubt;" these rites thus "produce in many an Epicurean contempt for God and for all religion."[78] Such a state of the soul is labeled by Melanchthon as a "sickness" that "infects hearts"—the heart for him is the treasury where the riches of true doctrine must be guarded (ibid., 784). He invokes the apostle Paul's command to Timothy to

[78] "Nunc cum aliis iudicium, aliis autoritas desit, nec sit monitor unus par illi, et multi vel errore, vel adsentatione, fuosa pro veris recipiant, distrahuntur Ecclesiae, sparguntur corruptelae rerum antea recte traditarum, stabiliuntur pravi ritus, pariterin omnibus languefit invocatio, ut semper fit in dubitatione: deinde in multis dubitatio parit Epicureum contemptum Dei, et omnium religionum" (783). For more on this of "Epicureanism" in religion thanks to insincere ritual praxis, see below in Chapter III for my reading of Wolfgang Musculus's *Proscaerus*, Section V.

safeguard this treasure, a message recovered by Luther for "the fifth age of the church."[79]

Secular and religious opponents recommend the abrogated ceremonies as a means of keeping the peace across the empire, yet for Melanchthon sound doctrine is the only way for stabilizing sacred and secular society; without it, discord "is about to slice apart" the commonweal.[80] Doctrine thus provides for the intactness of a society conceptualized in corporeal terms. It is the spirit animating the body politic.[81] In the pre-history of the Church, the patriarchs from the book of Genesis recognized that ceremonies, in the best of circumstances, were "truly the necessary signs for teaching doctrine," while their followers forgot the true relationship between the sign and the signified promise, and fell into idolatry (785). Given this understanding of the sacramental sign, dependent on Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, it is appropriate that Melanchthon identifies the third age of the Church as the era of the Augustinian revival of true doctrine, "the period of repurgation," followed by the "dark age of the monks." For Melanchthon, idolatrous ceremonies and pseudo-philosophy are errors of the same substance, always occurring simultaneously.[82] With Luther's advent in the fifth age, the pure Pauline doctrine of justification through grace by faith reemerged, and thus the ceremonial and sacramental aspects of religion were restored to their pristine state. This assessment reveals something of Melanchthon's understanding of the nature of religion—the pronouncement of the true doctrine has a transformative effect on the bodily practice of religion as well as the moral

[79] 2 Timothy 1: 13-14.

[80] "Nec obscurum est, si veras sententias abiiceremus, secuturas esse in populo maiores discordias, et maiora odia adversus religionem" (784).

[81] This echoes the comparison made by John Calvin in his *Supplex Exhortatio* to Charles V about the importance of doctrine with respect to the Church (*Omnia Opera* vol. 6, ed. Edouard Cunitz, Johann-Wilhelm Baum, and Eduard Wilhelm Eugen Reuss [Brunswick: C.A. Schwetschke, 1867)] 459 – 460).

[82] "Nec novum exemplum est, rebus recte traditis, postea fingi corruptelas. Ludit hoc modo diabolus non in Ecclesia tantum, sed etiam in artibus" (784 –785). This assumption informs his refusal of the idolatrous prayers of the Canon of the Mass, as detailed in the previous chapter.

life of society in general. Correct understanding of this doctrine brought correct understanding of ceremonial life to the fore, and a logical extension of this position is that some the "ceremonial signs" that persisted before the Reformation may be retained, provided they are performed with the correct theological orientation and are thus purged of the "corrupt, incorrect" language of previous ages. Melanchthon tends to see their retention as a kind of "servitude" suffered by the Church in order to keep the peace in the empire.[83]

By 1560, the battle lines between Luther's followers became all the more deeply entrenched, and Flacius would reprint and comment on a letter Philipp wrote to Maurice of Saxony's chief courtier in April 1548, Christoph von Karlowitz, a letter taken by Flacius to be the smoking gun of Melanchthon's ingratitude and treachery toward the person and legacy of Luther. This letter has remained up to the present as the proof of Melanchthon's softness and even his fundamental opposition to Luther's vision. What is most notorious about the letter is Melanchthon's claim that he is different in nature from Luther and that during the reformer's career at Wittenberg, Melanchthon put with an "almost [*paene*] debasing servitude" as a way of coping with Luther's excesses.[84]

Recently, however, the letter has been reevaluated by Melanchthon scholar Timothy Wengert, who argues that Philipp's purpose in writing the letter was to signal, however subtly, his readiness to resist impiety imposed in the name of political expediency. Even more important for Wengert is disputing the charge that Melanchthon is in any way casting aspersion on the personality of his former colleague and mentor. His whole argument turns on Melanchthon's use of the concept of *philoneikia*, i.e., contentiousness, love of strife, and his claim that he is "not by

[83] CR VII, 479.

[84] "Tuli etiam antea servitutem paene deformem, cum saepe *Lutherus* magis suae naturae, in qua φιλονεικία erat non exigua, quam vel personae suae, vel utilitati communi serviret" (CR VI, col. 880).

nature *philoneikos*," or a man of strife. In the context of the letter, Melanchthon is writing that Luther would have never been able to bear keeping silent about the abuses of the Interim because he partook in no small way of the quality of contentiousness. Melanchthon is made of different stuff, yet according to Wengert, Melanchthon is showing von Karlowitz that he cannot be bullied into vocally supporting the Interim. Maurice's courtier had leverage on Melanchthon—the emperor's arrest warrant had just been lifted through Maurice's efforts, and thus some gratitude and obedience was in order. Because he is not *philoneikos*, Melanchthon is willing to retreat into silence, but not to support the diplomatic abuse of the true religion. He attempts to walk the tightrope between obedience to his sovereign and obedience to his conscience. By associating Luther with *philoneikia*, Philipp is actually making reference to the superhuman qualities, granted by God through a "singular divine impetus," that allowed Luther to carry out the project of reformation.[85] Melanchthon never claims such power for himself.

Even if Melanchthon is not directly rejecting Luther's superhuman temper, he does appear to be bracketing it with respect to the virtues one can learn from the reformer. After all, if *philoneikia* in the service of the truth is God-given, it cannot be reproduced in others simply by borrowing the coarse and brutal language Luther used to berate and humiliate his opponents. Melanchthon makes careful mention of this tendency when explaining to von Karlowitz that he did not initiate the "controversies that distract the empire," controversies sparked, he seems to suggest, by Luther's aggressive rhetorical style: "And although in the beginning the author [Luther] mixed in some uncouth [or: blunt (*horridiores*)] things, nevertheless I did not think that other true and necessary things ought to be rejected. Since I embraced these select things, little

[85] Wengert, "Not by Nature Philoneikos," *Politik und Bekenntnis: Reaktionen auf das Interim von 1548*, ed. Irene Dingel and Günther Wartenberg (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2006) 33 – 50, at 39; CR XVI, 57.

by little I either suffered or smoothed over some absurd opinions."[86] Melanchthon did not just express this gentle criticism of Luther in private correspondence, to placate an unscrupulous courtier. Rather, he alluded to Luther's harshness even in his funeral sermon for the dead reformer in 1546, referring to the necessity of divine grace "to guide lofty [*excelsos*] and ardent spirits like Luther's."[87] Recognizing that these "spirits" were controversial, even among those who were liable to be sympathetic to the project of reformation, Melanchthon offers an explanation from an unlikely source: "But some, who are not evil, have nevertheless asked whether Luther was harsher than he had to be. I dispute neither side, but I answer with what Erasmus often said: God gave this last age a harsh doctor [*acrem medicam*] on account of the magnitude of its ills."[88] Again and again, Philipp apologizes for this harshness by associating it with a singular divine gift. This suggests that it cannot be easily duplicated, and that the presumption to do so would ruin the reputation of the Gospel. It was this judgment of Luther's rhetoric, above all other things, that set him in opposition to Flacius and the dissidents.

IV. Westphal's Luther anthology and the distillation of the reformer's message

If Flacius sought to disrupt Pfeffinger's narrative of continuity between Augsburg 1530 and Leipzig 1548 through the publication and commentary of Luther's correspondence, then his Hamburg colleague, Joachim Westphal, works to shatter the image of Luther as being mild and tolerant with regard to compromise in rituals by drawing together some key *loci* from across the reformer's major published works. This concerted approach yields some clear advantages for

[86] CR VI, 880 – 881, translated by Wengert on 42 – 43.
[87] "Eulogy for Luther," *A Melanchthon Reader*, trans. Ralph Keene (New York: Peter Lang, 1988) 93; CR XI, 731. Translation emended.
[88] "Eulogy," 92.

their polemic, since they thereby reveal Luther's private objections and opinions while bolstering this personal voice with the authority of his literary interventions. Westphal's task is actually more complicated than presenting a compilation of Luther citations concerning ceremonies, because he needs to present the reformer's voice in a different tone from the conciliatory quotations offered up by Pfeffinger. Instead of a voice that instructs how "it is better to bear servitude" in adiaphoric matters than to offend consciences, Westphal portrays a reformer interested in purging worship in order to strike back against the papal enemy.[89] Revision to the rituals of the Wittenberg church are not the "home front" in a war of words and ideas, but is instead one of the chief theaters of spiritual warfare. That is, ritual in this context is not a means of bolstering the social solidarity in the empire, nor a diplomatic convenience for negotiation, but a scene of struggle, a pedagogy of confrontation.[90] Therefore, Luther's discourse on ritual, a discourse Westphal holds responsible for purifying the churches, is shown to be rough, uncouth, and uncivil, an abrasive instrument for scrubbing the dirt away. This stands in sharp contrast to the understanding of Luther offered by Melanchthon, who would filter out this gritty rhetorical sediment from the pure vintage of Luther's doctrine. Westphal shows Luther succeeding at his task through the roughness of his speech, not in spite of it.[91]

The florilegium (anthology) may be disdained as a "proof-texting" handbook that offers little substantive engagement with the sources it excerpts and collects. Recently, scholars of religion have begun to take this form more seriously, as an important instance of the creative uses of textual and institutional power. These scholars take their cues from the groundbreaking

---

[89] "solten wir lieber die Seruitut tragen" (Pfeffinger, 722).

[90] Eike Wolgast, "Biographie als Autoritätsstiftung," *Biographie Zwischen Renaissance Und Barock : Zwölf Studien*, ed. Walter Berschin (Heidelberg: Mattes, 1993) 47.

[91] For more on the sociological and epistemological values of insult in early modern polemic, cf. Constance Furey, "Invective and Discernment in Martin Luther, D. Erasmus, and Thomas More," *Harvard Theological Review* 98 (2005): 469 – 488.

work of Ludwig Fleck and his sociological exploration of the "genesis of a scientific fact," in which Fleck points to "handbook science" as a special product of knowledge inflected by the structure of power in a thought-community.[92] In his analysis of the knowledge production specific to Neo-Confucianist literary culture, Thomas Wilson comments on the dynamics of this power in a way that is applicable to the sources I am discussing:

> If an anthology is widely read and used as a repository of the most exemplary texts of a particular literary tradition, it gains cultural clout as an authority that prescribes a judgment not only on the texts it includes but also on those that it excludes. Anthologists thus come to possess immense power without even seeking it, because they need not explicitly announce their presence as the real authors of every passage they anthologize. Anthologists speak ever so quietly to the reader by appropriating the voices of the true poets of the tradition (148).[93]

While none of the dissidents could be described as publishing in a "quiet" way, it is crucially important for them that Luther's voice blares the loudest. In the case of Westphal's anthology, *Sententia Reverendi Viri D. M. Luth. Sanctae memoriae de Adiaphoris* (1549) the power to judge and exclude does not pertain to different poets in a tradition, but different items in the reformer's vast corpus.[94] Anne Blair treats this phenomenon of textual over-abundance in the early modern period and explains some of the methods humanists used to construct their personal archives, namely in systems of notation, commonplace books, and the physical

---

[92] *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979) 119 – 122. In the context of the *adiaphora* controversy, the handbook, vademecum, or florilegium did not serve as much as a site of consensus but rather of disagreement.

[93] *Genealogy of the Way*: *The Construction and Uses of the Confucian Tradition in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995) 147 – 252.

[94] The German title is *Des Ehrwirdigen vnd tewren Mans Doct. Marti. Luthers seliger gedechtnis meinung / von den Mitteldingen* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550).

breakdown and reordering of books and manuscripts.[95] The commonplace book, whether personal or published, possessed the pedigree of classical rhetoric (Cicero, Quintilian) and functioned in every branch of academic knowledge to present the fundamental structure of truth.[96] Commonplaces could be both important quotations or more abstract formulae derived from a Canon, as in the case of Melanchthon's *Loci communes*.[97] Westphal thus employs this method, which hinges upon the personal judgment of the anthologist to extract the most important items from a body of work, in order to put forward the fundamental conclusions reached by Luther on the subject of ceremonies and compromise.

Yet Westphal does not seem intent on having his anthology eclipse the primary sources in terms of importance and influence, as may have been the case for Wilson's sources. In his Luther-florilegium of 1549, the Hamburg theologian and pastor does not offer up his collection in order that his readers would rely simply on his cutting and pasting. Rather, with an extensive index of cited works at the back of his book, he enables his readers to seek out the original texts, while providing them with a new orientation toward the essential message of Luther's ministry. Even though the Gnesio-Lutherans favored a chronological critical edition of Luther's works, they were not above using "ceremonies" as the chief subject for organizing his writings during times of controversies. Furthermore, as Kaufman observes, Westphal's collection proceeds roughly in chronological order itself, anticipating the later approach.[98]

---

[95] "Humanist methods in natural philosophy: the commonplace book," *Journal of the History of Ideas* (1992) 53: 541 – 551; "Reading strategies for coping with information-overload ca. 1550 – 1700," *Journal of the History of Ideas* (2003) 64: 11 – 28.

[96] "Humanist methods in natural philosophy: the commonplace book," 541 – 542.

[97] Cf. J. Schneider, *Philipp Melanchthon's Rhetorical Construal of Biblical Authority: Oratio Sacra.*

[98] "Wie die Bücher und Schrifften…Lutheri nützlich zu lesen." Joachim Mörlins Anweisung zum Lutherstudium von 1565 und ihr historischer Kontext, "*Konfession und Kultur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck) 67 – 111, at 77.

Westphal provides a guiding image of Luther's relationship to these questions by foregrounding the sacred agency operating in his writings: "there remain many distinguished monuments from that man of blessed memory Dr. Martin Luther, by which the kingdom of the Antichrist was overturned, the kingdom of Christ was restored, and the Church was purified of impious cults and superstitious ceremonies."[99] In the German translation, these *praeclara monumenta* are more simply called his "distinguished books" [*schöne Bücher*], through which Luther purified the churches. It is striking to observe that Westphal valorizes the acts of writing and publishing as actions that can transform worship, that arguments and authoritative sayings [*Sprüche*, *sententiae*] have a power that clarifies humanity's authentic relationship with the divine. What is clear is that the written word does not obliterate the foundations of embodied devotion, but rather uncovers them. To this effect, Westphal quotes Luther on the Wittenberg Church *Formula Missae* of 1523: "it is not nor has ever been our intent to utterly abolish all worship, but rather to cleanse them of the harmful additions in current usage and thus to bring them into pious usage."[100] The implication here is that in the age of the Antichrist, ritual needs a new discipline provided by biblical theology. This leitmotiv provides a counterexample against theorists of religion who see the valorization of scripture, textuality, and doctrine as coming strictly at the expense of embodied traditions of ritualization.[101] According to Westphal's interpretation, Luther's career represents the correction of ritual and the return to its original

[99] "Extant multa praeclara monimenta Sanctae memoriae uiri D. Martini Lutheri, quibus ille euerso Antichristi regno, restituit regnum Christi, & Ecclesia ab impijs cultibus & superstitiosis caeremonijs repurgata, purum Dei cultum & caeremonias, cum ad eutaxian, tum ad pietatem utiles instaurauit" (A 2 ^{r}).

[100] "In primis itaque profitemur, Non esse nec fuisse unquam in animo nostro, omnem cultum Dei prorsus abolere, sed eum, qui in usu est, a peßimisis additamentis uiciatum repurgare, et usum pium monstrare (B 4 ^{r}; G ij ^{r}; WA 12, 206).

[101] Eg. Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory Ten Studies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Adam Seligman et al. *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Cf. Talal Asad, "The Concept of Ritual," *Genealogies of Religion* (Baltimre: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) 56 – 62 for the pre-modern association between "ritual" and the book used to prescribe a ceremony.

nature and purpose, not its obliteration. The cleansing of the liturgy becomes a moment of ritual purification or even a community's rite of passage into an authentic Christian existence.[102]

In the context of *Sententia Reverendi Viri D. M. Luth.*, the act of cleansing is done with words that restructure the relationship between the soul of the believer and the practice of religion. Luther's words are meant to stand fast against this latest contamination brought on by the Interim. The editor seems to believe that their true impact for his moment is best grasped by juxtaposing them with a bitter commentary on the situation at hand, as he observes "having been cleansed of the worst additions, now the religious rites are being mixed back together [*commiscentur*; *vermischt*] with them" (B 4 ^{r}). If Luther purified worship with his polemical writings, then the marginal commentary serves to amplify their impact in the face of the challenge brought on by the Interim.

Westphal's marginal gloss appears next to Luther's assurance to this readers that he has no intention of destroying the cult altogether. The necessity for such a remark not only comes in the wake of the riots and iconoclasm in Wittenberg while Luther was being kept hidden in the Wartburg after the threat to his life from the imperial ban (1521-1522), but also in order, perhaps, to clarify certain incendiary opinions he voiced just a few years earlier in *Tractatus de libertate christiana* (1520). The slip from purification into iconoclastic furor appears as a risk in nearly all of the opinions on ceremonies collected here. Westphal himself veers from speaking of the purified cult to disparaging ceremonial praxis altogether. This problem of "overdoing it" is encapsulated in the excerpt from *De libertate christiana*, in which Luther explains that just as poverty is put to the test [*periclitatur*] in the midst of wealth, or chastity amid self-indulgence, so

[102] Robert Scribner, "Ritual and Reformation," *Poplar Culture and Poplar Movements in Reformation Germany* (London; Ronceverte, WV: Hambeldon, 1987) 103 – 122, esp. 120-122. Scribner is here concerned with popular ritual practices, but there is no reason to disconnect this process with elite literary practices. Both express ambivalence about past customs while re-appropriating key signifiers.

"faith is put at risk in ceremonies."[103] All the same, ceremonies are to be conserved as a temporary framework for piety, and when piety itself is perfected, they may be torn down [*deponuntur*]: "these never existed to be the true and permanent structure, and thus we scorn neither works nor ceremonies; truly, we strive to implement them in their best form."[104] Luther works with extremes here, pointing to the dangers and the proximate benefits of ritual; they may "put faith to the test," but in their proper application, they build it up. This ambivalence represents Luther's views before his exile in the Wartburg and subsequent return to Wittenberg to put an end to the iconoclastic excesses of Karlstadt and Didymus. It also comes before his experiences during the first Ernestine visitations, when he was appalled at the rampant ignorance and impiety of the common folk. Thus, his remarks about ceremonies as a "temporary framework" would seem to be qualified by the exigency of the condition of worship in Saxony—this framework would need to be kept in place for a long time.

There is little question that Westphal was well aware of these developments in Luther's thought and experience—after all, some of his other favorite citations come from *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, the 1525 work written against Karlstadt and other "sacramentarians." Nonetheless, the excerpt from *De libertate* is presented as if it contained the quintessence of Luther's estimation of ceremonies. Even as Luther would consistently caution against offending those weak in faith, in this quotation, he also advises deliberately scandalizing those who tenaciously cling to idolatrous superstitions in order to defy their false religiosity, as well as to prevent others from falling victim to the same fraud.[105] First and foremost, those who support

---

[103] B 6 ^{r}; WA 7, 72.

[104] "Quia nemo existimat haec esse ueram et permanentem structuram, ita non caeremonias nec opera contemnimus, imo maxime quaerimus" B 6 ^{v}; WA 7, 72.

[105] "His oportet resister, contraria facere, & ea fortiter scandalizare, ne opinione ista impia plurimos secum fallant" (B 6 ^{v}; WA 7, 70).

false cults are to be resisted. Second, even in the best of circumstances, it is important for the ministers and the clergy to avoid confusing the *adiaphora* (the temporary framing) for the substance of worship: "these are not erected as a finished work or something that would abide, but as that without which nothing could either be erected or established."[106] Westphal adds his own gloss in the marginal note for this passage, sarcastically stating that "our little saints place [*nostri sanctuli…collocant*] the greatest part of piety and salvation in ceremonies."[107] Ever mindful of figurative resonance, Westphal continues with Luther's construction metaphors of "up-building," using the verb *colloco* with all of its associations with establishing, positioning, and positing, as if to suggest that the Adiaphorists have conceptually built up the most disposable part of religious life.

Because the entire florilegium revolves around the question of "human ceremonies," the position and role of the human being is of consistent importance throughout the collection. Westphal's collage of citations figures the human as constantly producing useless ceremonies and inventions, externalizing the idolatry that corrupts the heart, while yearning for an eternally valid set of practices. Thus Luther's thesis about ceremonies as pedagogically necessary yet historically contingent seeks to balance these two impulses. At certain moments, as we have seen in the letters quoted by Pfeffinger, Luther could see human traditions as beneficial for the discipline of the faith. Yet they always remained linked to the realm of human affairs, which Luther grounds in a rather pessimistic anthropology. In an exposition on the heavenly and earthly kingdoms from the early 1520s, Luther names court jesters [*moriones*] as the proper analogue of church ceremonies, while the secular prince corresponds to Christ and the citizens of the republic

[106] "[Q]uae non in hoc parantur, ut aliquid sint aut maneant, sed quod sine ijs aedificari aut fieri nihil poßit" (ibid.).
[107] Ibid..

correspond to the members of the Church, Christ's body.[108] On the surface, this might appear to be merely Luther mocking overzealousness in ritual matters. Yet Luther imagines these "residents" of the "spiritual city" to be members of a permanent estate within it, necessary because post-lapsarian humanity need routines and sensory experiences in order to commune with the sacred.[109]

The interest in this analogy also lies in the hierarchy—the court jesters do not get to make the laws, except perhaps in moments of the carnivalesque described by Bakhtin. Luther's critique of ritual, therefore, is not a rejection of the embodied experience and habitus of religious life, as it is often interpreted, but rather fundamentally a rejection of any legal mandate that would make ceremonies into "snares" [*laquei*] for the human conscience.[110] The court jester ought never to command the power over life and death, as do the magistrates or executioners. This is a vital strand of thought for dissidents such as a Westphal, which leads them to represent the Interim as a conscience-burdening ordinance that coerces the Evangelical churches into re-instituting the old ceremonies. As shown in the previous chapter, language and speech acts in and around ritual practice are critical for determining whether they are pure or polluted.

What are the implications of compromise in ceremonies, given this understanding of hierarchy in Christian practice? This question is decided in the excerpt from Luther's 1535 Galatians Commentary, the heart of Westphal's florilegium, and a text that brought the dialectical tensions of Luther's theology of law and grace into greatest relief. This one section

---

[108] WA 9, 457 – 458 and Reimund Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 94.

[109] Yet even as we need our senses for worship, Luther also considers the world of sensory experience to be under demonic influences. Cf. Susan Schreiner, *Are You Alone Wise?: The Search for Certainty in the Early Modern Era* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 328.

[110] E.g. Thomas Lentes, "Andacht und Gebärde. Das religiöse Ausdrucksverhalten," *Kulturelle Reformation. Sinnformationen im Umbruch*, ed. Berhard Jussen and Craig Koslofsky, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1999) 29 – 68.

makes up a tenth of the entire collection at seven pages. It is illustrating to pause for a moment and compare how Westphal excerpts this text in contrast to 20th century editors, who are attempting to provide modern readers with an overview of the significant phases in the development of Luther's theology. In the short preface to the translation of Galatians, the editor of *Martin Luther: Selections from his Writings*, John Dillenberger, reveals something of how he edits this particular text: "While much of the material is polemical, Luther's fully developed thought on Law and Gospel clearly comes into focus in this commentary."[111] This as if to say, despite being cluttered with polemical excess, Luther's lectures still hold much value for an appraisal of his intellectual achievements. Indeed, the edited version Dillenberger trims away much of the polemical side of the commentary, whereas for Westphal, the polemical edge is its essential substance and the most useful contribution for understanding the controversy over ceremonies. Luther himself understood his career and a biography to be driven by conflicts. At the same time, he also acknowledged that the rawness of his work [*quoddam rude et indigestum cahos*] rendered it an unfit source for becoming a Canonized source of theological knowledge—he would always point to Philipp's *Loci communes* and his biblical translations as being most useful for theological training.[112] Eike Wolgast points to the reformer's suspicion of the project of editing his works, lest they overshadow the true sources of theological knowledge, yet at the same time, he understood his career as a model for theological combat.[113]

In the passage excerpted for Westphal's florilegium, Luther addresses the possibility that some sort of compromise might be reached with the Roman church in "external matters." Luther explains that the Evangelical community would gladly fast, observe dietary restrictions in Lent,

---

[111] *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings,* ed. John Dillenberg (Garden City NJ: Anchor, 1961) 99.
[112] Eike Wolgast, "Biographie als Autoritätsstiftung," 51, quoting WA 54, 186,9.
[113] Wolgast, 44 – 51.

and celebrate in the same way as the Catholics, provided it would all be done freely and without the threat of those words that have compelled consciences hitherto: "we cleanse, we oppress, we re-oppress, we excommunicate."[114] Since the Roman church refuses to yield such matters to "Christian freedom" and insists on their role in the "formation of faith by charity" [*fides formata charitate*], no compromise is possible at the level of ceremonies.[115] Indeed, Luther declares that in the name of this freedom, behaving with stubbornness and truculence become a kind of divine service.[116] Contrariness emerges as a virtue in this context, when one must "boast in the Lord" over and against human claims. This attitude of righteous rebellion, and disdain toward any authority that tries to make a claim on "Christ's kingdom" characterizes the moral rhetoric that the controversialists inherit from Luther. Pride transforms from a vice to a virtue as long as it is invested in one's relationship with God, and conversely humility before sinners becomes a most noxious sin.[117] Luther thanks God for his "hard-headedness" [*frons durior fronte omnium*] and his harshness because it is the only way to persevere against the godless. Westphal wastes no time in applying Luther's remarks about this "despicable humility" to the "Adiaphorist" spirit of compromise in his comments: "*Maledicta humilitas Adiaphoristica. Duricies non stoica sed Christiana*" (ibid.). In his organization and appropriation of Luther's works, Westphal demonstrates that for the dissidents, the most profound adherence to Luther's teachings depends upon embracing the rhetoric and ethos as well as the doctrinal content of the reformer. This

[114] "Et istas minaces voces, quibus hactenus conterruerunt et subiecerunt sibi totum orbem, omittant: Mundamus, aggrauamus, reaggramus, excommunicamus." (*Sententiae,* B 7 ^{r}; WA 40 I, 167).
[115] Ibid..
[116] "Pia igitur & sancta est hac in re nostra pertinancia, hoc enim querimus per eam, ut conseruemus libertatem nostram, quam in Christo Iesu habemus" (B 7 ^{v}; WA 40 I, 167 – 168). In the German translation this act of sacred piety is termed "ein heiliger Gottes dienst" (D iij ^{r}). Thus polysemic "worship" can be invoked as a from of right action in a variety of contexts. It is a flexible category.
[117] "Et maledicta sit humilitas, quae hic se demisse gerit. Hic quilibet et sit superbus et pertinax, nisi uelit Christum negare. Quare, Deo dante, mea frons durior erit fronte omnium. Hic durus et esse et haberi uolo, hic gero titulum, cedo nulli, et ex animo guadeo hic rebellis et pertinax dici, hic palam fateor me esse et futurum durum, et ne pilo quidem cedam" (B 8 ^{r}; WA 40 I, 181).

stance pushes them to consider the style of the liturgy itself as expressing and embodying something fundamental about the Evangelical faith, even if human ceremonies remain the "court jesters" of the Christian city.

Conclusion:

Robert Kolb argues that by the late sixteenth century, Luther's role as a prophetic authority fell out of use, at least in part, because there was too much of him to cite: "[L]uther could be cited against himself. Tolerating *adiaphora* as a means of avoiding persecution was both supported and rejected on the basis of Luther's writings."[118] Judging from the material examined in this chapter, Kolb is entirely correct about the complexities of invoking Luther as an authority. For Kolb, Luther does not emerge during the *adiaphora* controversy as a sacred adjudicator of theological disputes, but merely as a historical witness to the inconsistencies of the compromisers.[119] On this point, he is in disagreement with the appraisal of Thomas Kaufman, who observes in the florilegia of the controversy a tendency to vivify Luther's prophetic voice in order to explain the causes of Evangelical suffering in the context of sacred history.[120] Kaufman's observation reveals the problem with attempting to bracket the historical, experiential value of Luther's career—for Flacius and Westphal, not only was the overriding purpose of Luther's career holy, but even his mundane existence was charged with sacred experience that could provide informative or even transformative for their own struggles. While Kolb sees Luther's writings on *adiaphora* as being a web of contradictions and unsuitable for adjudicating

---

[118] *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero,* 66.

[119] Ibid., 44.

[120] "Der Unheilsprophet Luther führte nicht aus der Erfahrung der Trübsal, die den Protestantismus seit 1548 prägte und ihm den Lebensnerv abzuschneiden drohte, heraus. Aber er half, diese Erfahrung zu deuten und zu bearbeiten. Das war der Dienst, den der Tote vom Himmel aus an seinen lieben Deutschen vollbrachte. Die „Herrgottes Kanzlei" stellte die Infrastruktur dafür bereit" (*Das Ende der Reformation,* 381).

confessional norms, Kaufman focuses on the apocalyptic cultural code at work in the citation of the "third Elijah" in order to explain the "mental world" of the dissidents.[121] Both overlook the relationship between the contradicting elements in Luther's appraisal of adiaphoric ceremonies, elements that provided resources for the opposing sides of the debate. As evident from the works of Pfeffinger and Melanchthon, Luther's voice could be used for less radical purposes than those pursued in the northern cities of Magdeburg and Hamburg. Reimund Sdzuj, however, sees the cause of the "two Luthers" in his pastoral ethics, as resting in the position formulated in *Tractatus de libertate christiana*. In the treatise, "two contradictory directives" [*gegensätzliche Direktiven*] appear, one the hand, to treat the simple-minded and weak with consideration, and on the other hand, to provoke those who are stubbornly devoted to human ceremonies.[122] The contradiction was based upon the pastoral imperative articulated in *De libertate christiana* to provide a good example to one's neighbors, according to their needs, even if this meant deeply offending them. The problem for Luther's followers was that these aspects of his teaching disaggregated and polarized even as his body was decomposing in the Wittenberg castle crypt. Lyndal Roper's observation about the importance of the reformer's physical charisma for holding together the churches under his leadership also pertains to what Sdzuj names as the "contradictory directives" in his pastoral rhetoric.

Because of the complications in representing oneself as symbolically bound to Luther's charismatic presence during times of partisan, intra-Protestant strife, political and ecclesiastical leaders of the period began to favor confessional statements, drawing on the precedence and eminence of the Augsburg Confession of 1530, a theo-political trajectory that would culminate in

---

[121] *Das Ende der Reformation,* 367 – 380; 430 – 484.

[122] *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 126. He is drawing on WA 7, 67. The opposing poles are worded as "parcens infirmis ad tempus" vs. "resistens induratis semper."

the Formula of Concord at the end of the sixteenth century.[123] This tendency stands in contrast to the methods and interests of the dissidents during the *adiaphora* controversy, even if they also prized the *Augustana* as a crucial part of their Lutheran inheritance. It was Luther on their reading who had kept the confession pure through his role as epistolary gadfly, as made evident above in Section II. By presenting the various Luther-texts as they do, the dissidents are succumbing to what Jan Assmann refers to as the most alluring illusion of Canonicity, that is, the sense of participating in a timeless dialogue with the dead in order to bring their voices to life in the present.[124] Adiaphorists such as Pfeffinger were willing to engage in a similar sort of citational practice for their own ends, while the intellectuals at Wittenberg preferred to arrange the fragments of Luther's thought into a grand mosaic, to build a solid monumental structure, whose content was simply the repetition of the eternal Gospel.[125] Their preference for the sanitized, monumental version of Luther's texts reflects their confidence in the success of the Reformation, in the inexorable force of progress at work in their recovery of true doctrine. It is this confidence which they used to mask their anxiety about the possible consequences of provoking the emperor.[126] Their critics in the north emphasized the vulnerability of the churches that had subscribed to the Gospel, that is, the fact of spiritual and moral frailty in the face of bewildering circumstances. Faced with such a problem, loyal Evangelicals needed access to the

---

[123] Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero*, 63 – 65. Cf. Irene Dingel, *Concordia Controversia. Die öffentlichen Diskussionen um das lutherische Konkordienwerk am Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 1996). The Formulators would later attempt to explain the relationship between Luther and the *Augstana* by stating that the confession was the *summa* of everything he taught.

[124] *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 80.

[125] And as I have shown, Pfeffinger's use of the letters contributes to a representation of Luther's ministry as part of a larger project of social reformation in addition to spiritual renewal, which is akin to the grand narrative of Wittenberg.

[126] E.g., when Melanchthon claims in his open letter to Flacius in October of 1549 that "nothing has changed." Later, he would admit that the whole affair had been a mistake, yet he also accused Flacius and Gallus of making matters worse. Cf. CR VII, 480. For his concession, and CR VIII, 839 – 844.

prophet who had guided them to the Reformation. Providing a "living dialogue" with the dead reformer through his re-purposed texts could help these Christians find comfort in their affliction, as well as cement the reputation of the dissidents for being the "true Lutherans."

Both sides of this debate were willing to employ the rhetoric of purity, except that in the apologies of the Adiaphorists, the pure Gospel could no longer be stained so long as the official doctrine persisted, while the dissidents considered its purity to be its vulnerability. To this effect, Flacius quotes a postil from Luther on an extra blank sheet at the end of his German translation of *Book of true and false adiaphora*:

> Just as with a fine wine [*Malmasier*; *vinum malmasinum*] or a priceless medicament, the nobler and better it is, the easier it may become corrupted and toxic, even if it is only a single droplet of poison or some unclean thing that comes into contact with it. In the same way, God's word and divine matters can bear no supplement [*zusatz*] alongside themselves. It must be entirely pure and clear, or else it is already corrupted and of no further benefit.[127]

Just like the "leaven of the Pharisees," one drop of "poison or whatever is unclean" would consume the Gospel, its loyal churches, and the souls of those who were exposed to "the abomination" [*grewel*] of papal ritual. But what exactly did the dissidents mean by speaking of certain ceremonies as "polluted," "unclean," and the like? How were these things actually dangerous? And what does this rhetoric of contamination imply for the role of rituals in the Reformation?

---

[127] "Denn gleich wie ein guter Malmasier oder köstlich artzney / je Edler vnd besser sie ist / je leichtlicher sie mag verterbt vnd schedlich werden / wenn auch nur ein tröpflein gifft oder unreines darunter kümpt / Also können Gottes wort und sachen schleicht keinen zusatz neben sich leiden / Es mus gantz rein und lauter sein / oder ist schon verterbet und kein nütz mehr" (*Ein Buch der wahren und falschen Mitteldingen* [Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550] X i ^{v} - X ij ^{r}).

Chapter III: Purity and Pollution in Protestant Ritual Ethics

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?
No one can" (Job 14.4).

I. Introduction: locating pollution in the Protestant imagination

As the past two chapters have evinced, anxieties around purity in ritual were at the center of the rhetoric of the *adiaphora* controversy. At the same time, the theme of purification is also at the center of both Protestant self-understanding and academic interpretations of the Reformation. As a trope, purification pertains to the idea that by returning to the core message of the Gospel, long-abused traditions and ceremonies would be swept away. True confession of a sincere faith would thus supplant hypocritical or superstitious habits. For historians such as Scott Hendrix, the Reformation represented an effort at "recultivating the vineyard" in order to yield a purer, truer version of Christianity, while for scholars such as Webb Keane, this project of purification is representative of an essential leitmotif of modernity itself, which culminates in the valorization of the sovereign subject over and above dumb materiality or thoughtless repetition, signaling a culture of authenticity and sincerity.[1] Yet in order to consider the different implications of purified Christianity, one would benefit from a more precise examination of the representations of *im*purity that were prominent during the sixteenth century. By doing so we may uncover not only the moral stakes of purity, but also locate its proper sites. What constituted pollution, and what were its dangers according to Evangelical sources? Answering this question is not without its difficulties. The image of the idolatrous pollution in the old church is so prevalent and expansive in Evangelical controversy literature that it is easy to find oneself trapped in a circle: the old church was polluted by an idolatry that was caused by the

[1] Scott Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard: The Reformation Agendas of Christianization* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004) and Webb Keane, *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007).

accumulation of polluted human traditions. Replacing the adjective *polluted* with *Catholic* does not add much to our understanding of what was so dangerous about being Catholic, or being close to Catholic rites for these thinkers. Putting terms such as pollution and purification in quotation marks does not solve the problem either, but instead freezes the category and prevents the reader from gaining any conceptual traction.[2] Rather than settling with the conclusion that the motif of a pollution is merely a relatively pervasive cliché of the period, I propose to examine closely some key examples of the rhetoric of ritual pollution from the end of the first generation of the Reformation in order to argue that it functions according to a logic of interpolation.[3] That is to say, pollution expresses Protestant anxieties about the power of materials and practices, designated as Catholic, to suppress the truth of Christianity. If one accepts that the Reformation thinkers are no longer preoccupied with ritual purity in the traditional sense,[4] what was the function of this rhetoric? I argue in this chapter that even as they draw on the language of pollution, Protestant controversialists collapse the distinction between pollution and idolatry. In other words, they represent false doctrine as becoming materially embedded in specific bodies and practices. Unlike other forms of pollution that may be cleansed through processes or ritual or healing, idolatry leaves an indelible stain.

The authors I draw from are writing during a period of crisis in Europe for Evangelicals. They represent Reformed, Lutheran, and "proto-Puritan" concerns about purity and pollution that cut across confessional and doctrinal divisions and were manifest in the Nicodemite,

---

[2] Even the some of the best scholarship is vague on the semantics of pollution. See for example Chris Elwood's discussion of the social implications of the Reformed Lord's Supper in *The Body Broken*: *The Calvinist Doctrine of the Eucharist and the Symbolization of Power in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 155.

[3] What I mean by interpolation is the way in which certain theologically charged materials were considered by Protestants to adulterate their forms of worship. That is, idolatrous ideas were inserted into what was once a doctrinally pure environment. Consult Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "interpolate, *v*."

[4] Susan Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An interpretation of early modern Germany* (Abingdon UK: Routledge, 1997), esp. Chapter Three, "Churching: A Women's Rite," 71 – 88.

Interim, *adiaphora*, and vestment controversies, all of which took place between 1544 – 1551. During this period, French Protestants were under intense pressure to conform in "outward observances" for the sake of their survival, while Charles V was implementing the Augsburg Interim in order to prepare the German Protestant communities to be re-absorbed into the Catholic Church through the reforms to be deliberated at the Council of Trent.[5] For many Protestant theologians, any sort of compromise with the Catholics in ritual observance constituted an abomination. Luther's friend Nicholas Amsdorf names the imperial demand for obedience in *adiaphora*, or inconsequential ceremonial observances, as the call to accept the sign of the Beast prophesied in the Book of Revelation, 13.16.[6] Having fled the Interim and resettled in England, Jan Łaski writes to Martin Bucer that he must abstain from donning the alb in church services because this vestment was "so profusely soaked in the blood of Christ."[7] As a result of this protest against tainted ritual, both Amsdorf and Łaski stood outside of the law, at odds with political regimes that looked to religious and secular ceremonies as means for performing unity and metabolizing conflict.[8] However it was the means of producing imperial unity that was precisely the problem for the theologians concerned with pure worship. Their complaint was not simply that papal teaching was flawed, but also that it somehow remained congealed in the

---

[5] The literature on this subject has grown considerably in the past decade. For an introduction, consult *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaftskrise und Glaubenskonflikt*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte. (Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 2005). Consult Chris Elwood, *The Body Broken*, for an overview of the French situation.

[6] *Das Doctor Martinus kein Adiaphorist gewesen ist* […] (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550), A 4[r].

[7] "Hoc potissimum tempore, quo vestes istiusmodi tanta sanguinis Christiani profusione" appearing edited in Constantin Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1946),165.

[8] Hans Joachim Berbig, "Zur rechtlichen Relevanz von Ritus und Zeremoniell im romisch-deutschen Imperium," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte Stuttgart* 92, (1981): 204-249. Rudolf Hoke, "Ein theologisches Gutachten von staatsrechtlicher Tragweite," *Ex Aequo Et Bono : Willibald M. Plöchl Zum 70. Geburtstag*. Forschungen Zur Rechts- Und Kulturgeschichte ed. Willibald M. Plöchl, Peter Leisching, Franz Pototschnig, and Richard Potz (Innsbruck: Univ.-Verl. Wagner, 1977), 107 – 117; Arno Strohmeyer, "Rituelle Kommunikation in vormodernen Herrschaftsordnungen: Kniefälle des oberösterreichischen und steirischen Adels" *zeitenblicke* 4 (2005): http://www.zeitenblicke.historicum.net/

materials and practices that were now supposed to guarantee imperial stability. But how could material forms prompt such anxiety among the self-avowed enemies of superstition? How did donning vestments or spectating the papal Mass contaminate the Protestant soul? What would result from this pernicious contact?

II. Scholarly narratives of purification in the Reformation

Purification is an important element in popular and academic narratives of the Reformation because it taps into a set of images and metaphors employed by the reformers themselves to describe the work of purging the Church of idolatry. Second, purification is a persistent meta-narrative in accounting for historical change, one that is allied to narratives of rejuvenation, rebirth, the recovery of some lost wellspring of cultural and moral value.[9] In various Christian contexts, it also possesses the meaning of the world being restored to its natural and divine order.[10] Here, I address two rival accounts of the purifying work of the Reformation: Christianization and rationalization. The major proponents of the "Christianization" position are Jean Delumeau and Scott H. Hendrix. Delumeau argues that both sides of the Reformation were attempting to Christianize a largely pagan population through catechetical discipline, ecclesiastical reform, and the spiritualization of religion.[11] In *Recultivating the Vineyard*, Hendrix understands his own argument for Christianization to be a corrective to Delumeau with regard to two points: first, that the purification of the Christian religion was not anti-ritualistic, but instead represented an effort to define and enact authentic Christian praxis (21). Second, that Christianization need not be viewed as the struggle against "paganism" but instead the fulfillment of the project of evangelization begun during the medieval period (22). In this way, the Reformation is not simply a

[9] Robert W. Scribner, "Reformation and Ritual," *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambeldon, 1987) 103 – 122.
[10] Eike Wolgast, "Reformation, Reform" in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland,* Volume 5. Ed. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhard Koselleck, (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1984) 313-360, at 313 – 339.
[11] Jean Delumeau, *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: a new view of the Counter-Reformation*, trans. Jeremy Moiser (London: Burns & Oates, 1977) at 175 – 202.

radical break with the past, but rather the blossoming and reaping done after the planting of the seeds of reform in the middle ages. Hendrix treats purification as the metaphor through which all of the reformers interpreted their own activities, a unifying element between the Protestant and Catholic reforms. At the same time, Hendrix sees a detailed accounting of the "less genuine," earlier, form of Christianity as not particularly important for the Reformation project.[12] Most germane to his argument is that a purer form of Christianity was sought through energetic evangelization, whether by Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, or Anabaptists. Yet it is precisely my contention that during situations such as the Interim, when the reformers were under great pressure to conform to Catholic ritual norms, the need for descriptions of the dangers to "genuine Christianity" became acute. Retaining a purer Christianity in these circumstances thus demanded a real account of the dangers of "mixture" with the old faith. A more complete version of the Christianization research program must accordingly consider these representations of pollution.

Rationalization remains the more dominant paradigm for explaining the cultural transformations of the Reformation. Following in the footsteps of Max Weber and Keith Thomas, the sociologist Philip Gorski identifies three key indicators for rationalization from this period: the valorization of the ethical as opposed to the magical, the individual as opposed to the communal, and the intellectual as opposed to the ritualistic.[13] For cultural historians and anthropologists, rationalization also institutes a form of semiotic purification: the divine, the transcendent is barred from mingling with the material.[14]

---

[12] "Re-rooting the Faith: the Reformation as Re-Christianization," *Church history* 69 (2000): 558 – 577, at 562.

[13] Philip S. Gorski, "Historicizing the Secularization Debate: Church, State, and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, ca. 1300 to 1700," *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000): 138 – 167 at 148 –149. Cf. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London: Routledge, 1992); Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[14] Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), 163 – 201; Webb Keane, *Christian Moderns*, "Introduction" (1 – 34) and "Modern Sincerity," (196 – 222).

According to this line of thinking, rituals, art, and liturgical space becomes signs that point to rather than encompass the sacred. This purification of worship operates according to what Webb Keane labels a "semiotic ideology" that went on to influence how Christian converts under colonial regimes understood and participated in "Christian modernity." The key feature of these accounts of Protestant purification is the hierarchy of doctrine over practice, symbol over presence, representing the notion that ritual acts are simply an expression of religious attitudes and beliefs, the transmission of information rather than a form of life. Antique and medieval notions of bodily purity have been sublimated in favor of a model of purity that keeps the sacred away from any form of material contagion. In spite of the drive for absolute purification, the inevitable materiality of Protestant culture frustrates this impulse while articulating values such as "modern," "Christian," "spiritual," or "autonomous" as being expressed by particular relationships to what is immanent, embodied, and historical.[15]

For scholars of Lutheran ritual and liturgical art, disenchantment and the purification of church ceremonies contribute to the production of the modern subject of social discipline. For example, in *The Reformation of the Image*, Leo Joseph Koerner links Luther's quest for pure religion to the instrumentalization of Christian practice for the sake of stabilizing the social hierarchy. Because the divine needed to be kept clear of human contamination, Luther's sense of purity was "so absolute that it needed to remain hidden."[16] The elimination of the previous representatives of the divine, the Catholic sacerdotal system, created a void in ecclesiastical administration that led to the sanctification of secular power (princes serving as "emergency bishops") or conversely, the secularization of the Church.[17] This, in turn, resulted in secular hierarchies being reproduced and re-enforced in Lutheran liturgical art and

[15] *Christian Moderns*, 80 and 223 – 254.
[16] *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 416 – 18.
[17] Ibid., 418.

church architecture.[18] According to this interpretation, the urge to purify Christianity yields a secularization and confessionalization that makes religious worship a schematic representation of social power structures and thus a pedagogical tool for discipline. Susan Karant-Nunn offers a similar assessment of the efforts to purify the churches and return them to their pristine origins: "In attempting to apply sacral principles to all aspects of creaturely existence, they [the reformers] ran the risk of rendering the sacred so diffuse that it could easily dissipate in the emerging capitalist and rationalist atmosphere."[19] According to her analysis, the purification of miraculous materials and apotropaic customs from the lives of Protestants left them stranded and helpless before an unapproachable God, all the while straining under the yoke of social discipline created by the emergent absolutist state.[20] For both Karant-Nunn and Koerner, the cleansing of the old rituals thus made Protestant religion too rarified, depriving it of its unique substance and relevance and either replacing it with authoritarian political content or simply causing it to "dissipate."

Narratives of rationalization and disenchantment have recently been subjected to critical scrutiny by scholars interested in treating discourses and practices of the supernatural as something more than cultural detritus being swept along by the waves of progress.[21] Nonetheless, the meta-narrative of purification persists in the literature at least in part because it corresponds with the "rites of destruction" attested to in the sources as means of cleansing the churches.[22] Yet the rhetoric of purification is not exclusively a trope of narration, but also of

---

[18] Ibid., 379, 420.
[19] *The Reformation of Ritual: An interpretation of early modern Germany* (Abingdon UK: Routledge, 1997), 201.
[20] Ibid., 191 – 192.
[21] Robert W. Scribner, "The Reformation, popular magic, and the "Disenchantment of the World"." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (1993): 475 – 494; Alexandra Walsham, "The Reformation and 'the disenchantment of the world' reassessed." *The Historical Journal* 51, (2008): 497 – 528.
[22] Sergiusz Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts*: *The protestant image question in Western and Eastern Europe* (Abingdon UK: Routledge, 2013), 75-98; Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* 83 – 103.

theological persuasion. That is to say, purity and pollution do not only function as motifs in a large-scale story of change, but were also possessed an immediacy and urgency for the lives of Christians. I argue that addressing the situational demands of ritual purity for Protestants provides us with a more nuanced understanding of the different functions of this metaphor than relying on the "subtraction story" of purification that pervades the literature.[23] Moreover, a close investigation of the rhetoric of these interventions reveals the heightened importance of embodied and material elements when considering confessional and ritual purity. The point for Protestants of a plurality of confessions was not that "pure religion" simply downgraded the material aspects of religion, but instead, demanded specific conduct with respect to what one did with one's body in the context of worship. Indeed, Luther's concept of "the priesthood of all believers" seems to have prompted a concern for physical as well as doctrinal purity among his followers and colleagues, a concern I term "ritual ethics."

For the sources I deal with here, being present or in proximity to Catholic rites represents a pernicious form of contact. Participation in ceremonies, whether in positive or negative situations, incorporates the subject into a larger, collective spiritual and social body, the Church or the "Synagogue [n.b] of the Antichrist."[24] It was no mistake that a favorite proof text for the defenders of Evangelical ritual purity was the image, shared between the Gospels and the Pauline letters, of a bit of leaven contaminating the dough (e.g., Gal. 5.9). These different intellectuals emphasize, nonetheless, different senses of pollution, which I take to be paradigmatic for this way of thinking about ritual in the Reformation. The first two describe how Catholic ritual pollutes Evangelical religion, while the third goes into further detail about the

[23] The phrase comes from Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 26.
[24] Nicholas Amsdorf, *Daß nie nöter gewest ist wider den Römischen Antichrist zu schreiben* […] (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1551), A iij^{v}.

effects of this pollution.

1. Ceremonies invented by human beings "cover up" the Gospel by citing and instantiating alternative theologies, all of which distorts the experience and meaning of worship.
2. The enactment of anachronistic observances prompts a reversion to an outdated, or pernicious form of religion. The logic here is supersessionist with respect to perceived Jewish elements surviving in Christian worship. This is then applied analogously to the traditions of late medieval Latin Christianity.
3. Pollution of the body through inappropriate cultic action disturbs its proper harmony with the soul, a harmony that is essential for the Evangelical virtue of sincerity in religion.

Through an examination of these paradigms of ritual pollution, I argue that if the metaphor operates according to a logic of interpolation and interruption, then pollution should be read here as quintessentially that which divides the subject from herself in the rupture of body and soul, from the spiritual comforts of worship, fellowship with other sincere Christians, and from the new dispensation, the new era of the Gospel. Thus pollution operates as a material, social, and temporal disruption. In this way, it is at once a violation of the sacred spaces of the body and the church, but also an interruption of sacred history. Polluted rituals, imposed from without by coercion, interfere with the operation of sacred power, yet they also reveal an atavism, the "aboriginal calamity" of humanity's unruly idolatry, the pollution that arises from within. Attending to these spatial, temporal, and anthropological resonances of the concept of 'polluted

rituals' provides an important corrective to an influential typology that categorizes ritual in early modern Europe as governed exclusively by either a logic of presence or representation, exemplified by the contrast between Catholic Eucharistic theories of transubstantiation and Zwinglian notions of memorial symbolism in the Lord's Supper.[25] Indeed, the move to the latter often appears as part of triumphalist (or tragic) narratives about the rise of modernity. What I want to focus on here instead is the way in which representations of idolatry-pollution prompt difficult political and ethical decisions. If worship among confessional others was not simply different but dangerous, this influenced where and how one could live as an early modern Christian. Moreover, for the controversialists, one's stance toward ritual also revealed something essential about the solidity and sincerity of their character. In a biting passage, Flacius evokes this connection when he mocks the theologians of Wittenberg for claiming that anything that is adiaphoric cannot, by definition, become something impious: "it's just as if someone said, "since he is a brother, therefore is not a false brother. If he is false, then he is not a brother, but an enemy."[26] Even if the "false brother" is a simile for exposing the sophistry of denying the pollution of rituals, it functions to associate falseness in personal relationships with corrupted religious practice.

III. Idolatrous attachments to ritual in the writing of Joachim Westphal

We have already encountered Joachim Westphal, the Lutheran controversialist writing who worked hard to secure Luther's theological legacy for the polemic against the Interim and compromises in *adiaphora*. Beyond engaging in the politics of memory surrounding Luther,

[25] Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 7, 169, 181.
[26] *Bericht […] von etlichen Artikeln der christlichen Lehr* (Jena: Thomas Rebart, 1559) E i^{r}.

Westphal shows himself to be the true theorist of ritual among the dissidenters.[27] In his tracts and sermons, he concentrates on how ceremonies and ceremonial objects bear traces of older scenes of idolatry, which enables them to "block out" the Gospel. Their polluting influence stems from two causes: they are embedded with false theologies. They bear the mark of the idolatrous intentions of those who institute them.

Westphal writes in the first of his *Duo Scripta* about a persistent excuse employed by the proponents of compromise in adiaphoric ritual: that this whole controversy revolves around nothing but trifles.[28] To create strife over such minuscule details was thus represented as being the sign of overzealousness and even betrayal of the true religion (A 2^{v}). Westphal's aim in his first essay is to undercut such a complaint by dividing the category of "unimportant matters" in two, comprised of 1) things that are in of and for themselves unimportant, and 2) things that appear trifling when considered apart from their context (A 3^{r-v}). When approaching the conditions of this second sub-category, Westphal argues that when attention is paid to the founders, circumstances, and goals of a given practice, it becomes clear that "from out of trifling things, great and important things emerge."[29] In his present historical situation, the circumstances of the return of church-*adiaphora* is notably a military defeat of the Schmalkaldic League in a war that Westphal understands to be motivated chiefly by religious aims.[30] From the point of view of his opponents, the theologians of Wittenberg, the emperor's demands pertain to

[27] "Westphal, Joachim," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*, ed. Irene Dingel, accessed August 13, 2015, http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/bbaebe43-09c9-4dde-9517-4b138fd63f13.

[28] Joachim Westphal, *DVO SCRIPTA M. IOACHIMI WESTPHAL HAMBVRG* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549), at A 3^{r}. German translation: *Zwo Schrifften M. Joachimi Westphali, Pfarherrn zu Hamburg* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550).

[29] "Longe alia est rerum natura, cum per se absolute, et e diuerso, cum per comparationem seu relationem considerantur. Alia item est oratio de rebus consideratis in se, et in relatione ad aliud. Mutant enim naturam et conditionem rerum minutißimarum circumstantiae et relationes, quae accedunt. Saepe accessoria ex paruis magna faciunt" (A 4^{r-v}).

[30] For the dissidents perspective on the Schmalkaldic War, cf. Anja Moritz, *Interim und Apocalypse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 102 – 108; 211 – 234.

minutiae, "mere ceremonies" and not the substance of doctrine or the sacraments (A 6^{r}). Yet Westphal wants his readers to scrutinize the intention behind these impositions: "it is not just some whim on the part of the high potentates, but rather it is done wholly in earnest…when it comes to ceremonies, they magnify the most insignificant into the most excellent, since they take it all to be for the sake of the divine services."[31] Westphal does not presuppose that the Catholics are deliberately bent on destroying the true religion, but instead are convinced that their ritual practices are essential to true worship, hence their willingness to fight a war to "reform" the German churches anew.[32] In a masterful reversal, Westphal accuses the compromisers of actually insulting the Catholic emperor by not taking his understanding of religion seriously (A 5^{r-v}).

After imploring his readers not to underestimate the imperial reforms, Westphal begins to unveil the dangers hidden within them. The ceremonies prescribed by the Interim are tainted by the intentions of the imperial conquerors. They are all the more dangerous because of the high social standing of those who seek their re-establishment and their power to make these ceremonies into the law of the land (A 6^{r}). Westphal's thinking on this point connects him to Luther's anxieties about liturgical compromise during the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, when the reformer explained to Melanchthon that the essence of a form of worship was determined by its efficient cause, that is, by the person or persons who instituted it.[33] There could only be two

[31] "Non tantum autem, quae nostri eleuant et tanquam leuia abijuciunt, magna censentur summorum hominum consilijs contentione, adfectatione, sed etiam eorundem opinione, iudicio, et existimatione. In caeremonijs uel minima magnifaciunt, Habent enim pro diuinis cultibus omnia, abgrogatis uel imminutis caermonijs, putant cultum Dei abrogatum et imminutum" (A 6^{r}).
[32] Cf. Eike Wolgast on the title of Charles V's expanded version of the Interim in "Reformation, Reform," 327.
[33] *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*: *Briefwechsel* Volume 5, ed. J.F.K Knaake et al (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883 –) 527. See above, Chapter II, Section II.

options for the establishment of a practice of worship: it was either the work God or of human beings in thrall to the Devil.

The problem of taint does not only depend on the intent behind the liturgical compromises, but also upon the beliefs that are "attached" to those ceremonies. A plausible interpretation of Westphal's preoccupation with these "associations" is that they are psychological, pertaining to the laity's experiences of pre-Reformation rituals. The disposition of the flock was a live issue for dissidents such as Westphal, yet instead of focusing only on subjective experience, he explains the dangers that reside in the practices and materials that are the objects of that experience.[34] For Westphal, idolatrous beliefs and desires persist as accretions embedded in the materials and gestures of old rituals. Westphal frequently uses terms such *accidenta, additamenta*, or *appendices* to present the false-teachings as entities that have bonded symbiotically to the ceremonies in the form of an appendage, an attachment, or a supplement (A 3^{v}, A 4^{v}, A 6^{v}). Through this bond, pseudo-*adiaphora* function as a prop or bulwark [*adminiculua superstitionum et idolatriae*] to secure superstition a spot in the cultic setting (A 6^{v}). This indicates that the problem does not only pertain to the psychology of worship, but also to the conservation of a purified liturgical domain. What is vital to comprehend about Westphal's critique is that this impurity sullies the structure of worship, its language, the space, the materials, and finally, the souls of those who participate. Pollution is multivalent, communicable between psychic, linguistic, and material realms.[35]

To this effect, he writes of the *superstiones caeremonijs annexas*, the superstitions "attached" to the ceremonies: "the superstitious [read: the Catholic imperial forces] demand not

[34] For the importance of experience as a source of authority in this period, cf. Thomas Kaufman, "'Erfahrungsmuster' in der frühen Reformation." *Historische Zeitschrift. Beihefte* (2001): 281 – 306.
[35] Colin Jones, "Plague and its metaphors in early modern France," *Representations* (1996): 97 –127, at 112.

only that the ceremonies are resumed and observed, but also the superstitions *that are attached to the ceremonies*…and if they are observed without these beliefs, it is just as if they were not observed at all."[36] How are we to understand this notion of "attachment"? How do certain beliefs become congealed to materials and gestures? I would argue that Westphal's consciousness that the *adiaphora* controversy was really a battlefield between the defenders of the Gospel and the agents of the Antichrist has decisive importance for his rhetoric of contamination.[37] Through his reliance on the concept of the efficient cause, Westphal follows Luther in considering the substance of a ritual practice to be determined by the agent who institutes it.[38] However in this context, the concept of the efficient cause is further complicated by the fact that it applies not only to the inventor of a given practice, but also to whoever repurposes it, in this case, princes and bishops who serve the Antichrist. Thus, Christian praxis is extremely vulnerable to pollution through the abuses of rogue agents. Moreover, Westphal denies that practices and objects that have been tainted can be purified of their previous associations, despite the assurances from Melanchthon and the rest of the Albertine theologians that the "corrupted" segments of the ritual praters have been cleansed.[39]

For Westphal, the material conditions of worship are bound up with the community's theology, as well as its subjective experience of religion. Thus one reason given by the

---

[36] "Postulant autem superstitiosi non tantum recipi et obseuari caermonias, sed etiam superstitiones caeremonijs annexas, sicut ipsi obseruant sua sacra, ita ab alijs obseruari mandant, si aliter obseruentur, sine opinione cultus, et meriti, perinde id habebunt, ac si non obseruentur, nec ferent publicam doctrinam et confessionem repugnantem impijs appendicibus, quae caermonias contaminant idolatria" (A 6^{v}). My emphasis.

[37] Cf. Thomas Kaufman, *Das Ende der Reformation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 464 – 74.

[38] *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*: *Briefwechsel* Volume 5, 527.

[39] "Siquidem utcunque uerbis et promißis, literis et syllabis repurgentur Caeremoniae a suis sordibus, tamen reuehunt damnatas superstitionies et errors. Non dubium est, plaerosq; ritus, cum primum instituterentur fuisse experts et incontaminatos a superstitionibus, tamen progressu temporis contaminatos esse peßimis additamentis" (C 3^{r} – C 3^{v} [In original edition there is typo that repeats C 2 for C3]). For the assurance of cleansing, see above, Chapter I, Sections II and III.

opponents of compromise in *adiaphora* was that churchgoers would be scandalized by the reversion to abolished practices and accordingly lose faith in the Reformation (A 7^{r}).[40] Dissidents such as Westphal frequently represent this problem through metaphors of material congestion, that is, that the reintroduction of old ceremonies would "block out" the transmission of the Gospel promise of free grace, adulterating pure worship by "darkening and suppressing" the power and dignity of the true sacraments (B 2^{r}). According to this line of reasoning, superfluous ceremonies are like layers of grime covering up the engraved caption beneath a venerable monument. Westphal writes that the dignity of the original sacramental signs would be obscured by a crowd of "human ceremonies," that the "sacred seals would be mixed together with human traditions, which in short time would cover up the promises of God…whence the seals receive the power and dignity of sacraments."[41] Westphal's description of the holy power of the sacraments parallels his account of idolatrous ritual insofar both are determined by their efficient cause. Furthermore, both true and false ritual materialize doctrine which has been "attached" through the institution of a divine or demonic agent. If the true sacraments are blotted out through a plethora of other observances, then the divine promise of salvation which has been sealed onto these forms of worship is squeezed out of the Church as a physical site and as an institution.

Having recently fled to England from Strasbourg on account of the Interim, Martin Bucer argued against a position very similar to Westphal's. The context was the controversy around John Hooper's refusal to don priestly vestments during the ceremony for his promotion to the

[40] Cf. Mathias Flacius, *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris, in quo integre propemodum adiaphorica controversia explicatur* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549), E 3^{r}.

[41] "Reiecti dignitas baptismi et sacrae coenae, turba caeremoniarum plurimum est obscurata, nec tamen pericula mouent, quo minus denuo admisceantur sacrosanctis signis traditiones humanae, quae breui tempore iterum obruant promißiones Dei, signis annexas, unde uirtus et dignitats Sacramentorum pendent" (B 2^{r}).

bishop of Gloucster.[42] Bucer expresses his concern that the whole project of reforming the Church of England would be sidelined by Hooper's zeal. He compares the attack on vestments to focusing on the "the external Amalek" or the mere "insignias of the Antichrist" at the expense of the "whole Amalek" or the true "body of the Antichrist," or its "filthy intestines," i.e., covert Catholic clerics who retained power in the dioceses, as well as more generally ignorance and impiety among the English.[43] Even if liturgical matters adorn the body of the celebrant, Bucer denies them any major connection to the essential spiritual body of the Antichrist. He also asserts, against Hooper, that priestly vestments need not persist in their previous symbolic function as a pre-figurations of Christ's sacrifice; [44] they may be re-purposed by a reformed church and used to inspire respect among the common people.[45] Nor do they retain any of the corruption referred to by Westphal, as Bucer's ally Peter Martyr states: "I do not persuade myself, that the wickedness of the papacy is so great, that it renders whatever it touches altogether defiled and polluted, so as not possibly to be given to virtuous and godly men for a holy use."[46] Bucer argues similarly in his correspondence with Jan Łaski: the physical elements of the liturgy are corrupt only when they "hang together with Antichristianity and in its profession," and thus "none of the marks [*notae*] of Antichristianity are capable of adhering in

[42] John Henry Primus, *The Vestments Controversy: An Historical Study of the Earliest Tensions Within the Church of England in the Reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth*. PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 1960, 3 – 16.

[43] *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* 152 – 153, 156; Primus 53.

[44] "Atque idem manifeste docet Aaronis sacerdotium, in Christi sacerdotio esse abolitum. Hebr. 7. 8. 9. 10. cum omnibus suis ritibus, vestibus, rasionibus, vnctionibus, Consecrationibus, et similibus" (Constantin Hopf "Hooper's 'Notes' to the King's Council 3 October 1550," *The Journal of Theological Studies* (1943): 194 – 199, at 198).

[45] *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* 155.

[46] Primus, 58.

things" when they are used in a different theological context.[47] Bucer's diction with respect to "hanging together with" and "adhering to" reveal that he is thinking in the same terms of Westphl's *appendices*, while drawing the exact opposite conclusion about their negative impact.

Bucer's pragmatic concept of reform clashes with the valorization of purity on display across the texts I have examined. For such thinkers as Westphal, the devil is very much in the details: "if we don't wish to lose what's great, it is necessary to oppose these changes in their beginnings, and thus to conserve what's small, so that the great is not snatched away with the small. And so on account of what's greater it will be necessary to fight on account of the very smallest things."[48] This argument shows how important the physical elements of worship could become for the reformers, since they appear in their writings as the connecting tissues that bind doctrine and communities. With this in mind, I turn to representations of the negative consequences of impure ceremonies for the Protestant subject.

IV. The stench of insincerity: Calvin's representation of the Nicodemites

The situation for French Evangelicals offered some grim choices: exile, martyrdom, or outward submission to the old church. As a French representative of the Reformed in the 1540s, Calvin was put in the position of having to provide his perspective on matters of dissimulation in ritual. The stance he takes in this matter prefigures his later position on *adiaphora* in the Holy Roman Empire, because he understands any form of dissimulation or outward compromise with the "enemies of the Gospel" to compromise the Christian religion. In the texts he wrote in connection with ritual dissimulators, or "Nicodemites," Calvin rejects all forms of ritual

[47] "Iam aliquid esse notam Antichristi, in nulla inest re in hoc enim nullae res conditae sunt a Deo: Sed pendet totum a consensu atque in Antichristianismum, et eius professione: quo consensu quaque professione commutatis consensu ac professione Christianismi, nihil potest in rebus ipsis haerere notae Antichristianismi" (*Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* 155).

[48] "Quod si magna amittere nolumus, necesse erit principijs obstare, et conseuare parua, ne maga cum paruis eripiantur, et propter maijora pro minimis retinednis pugnare necesse erit" (*Duo Scripta* A 6^{r}).

dissimulation and gathered the opinions of other Evangelical intellectuals to bolster his authority.[49] Controversy persists in the scholarly literature as to whether this group had produced a coherent ideological self-understanding, or whether Calvin simply spun together their group identity and ethics out of whole cloth simply in order to tear it to shreds.[50] In any case, he was deeply concerned about the potential of ritual duplicity for the softening the boundaries that divided Evangelicals from Catholics, a boundary that he conceived of in terms of a purity that was expressed through outward, bodily adherence to a theological system.

In order to see the link between bodily purity and religious virtue, it is necessary to examine the *Excuse de Iehan Calvin A Messieurs Les Nicodemites* (1544), his most developed treatment concerning whether Evangelicals may be present for the ritual abominations of their Catholic neighbors. The text begins by sarcastically dismissing the complaint that Calvin's expectations are unreasonable for French Evangelicals—they are attempting to avoid an essential duty by partitioning body and soul: "but what does that mean except that they are making a partnership [*partage*] between God and the Devil, in order to keep the soul for the one, while giving the body to the other…pray tell, can God be content with such a mixture [*meslinge*]?"[51] Here Calvin plays with contradiction, arguing that to attempt to separate body and soul really amounts to the desire to mix good and evil, bringing them together in an economic transaction. The Nicodemites attempt to partition body and soul fails because it restricts authentic religiosity to an enclosed and socially irrelevant interiority.

---

[49] "Appendices ad libellos de vitandis superstitionibus," *Omnia Opera* vol. VI, ed. Edouard Cunitz, Johann-Wilhelm Baum, and Eduard Wilhelm Eugen Reuss (Brunswick: C.A. Schwetschke, 1867) 617 – 644.

[50] Cf. Carlos Eire, *The War Against the Idols: the reformation of worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (New York: Cambridge, 1986), 235 – 258 as well as "Calvin and Nicodemism: A Reappraisal," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 10 (1979): 44 – 69.

[51] *Omnia Opera* 6, 594.

A crucial feature of this text is the typology it provides for identifying different kinds of religious dissemblers who avoid an open, bodily confession: self-serving, inconsistent preachers, humanists among the ecclesiastical elites "who were content to have the gospel as long as it did not hinder their pleasure," intellectuals who wanted Christianity to remain pure as a sort of Platonic philosophy while condescendingly tolerating the superstition taking place in their midst, and finally common merchants who thought of profit before holiness.[52]

All of the varieties of Nicodemite share a fundamentally imbalanced relationship to the world: either fearful on account of their worldly wealth and status, or too removed from the physical immediacy of the Gospel teaching. Thus they are victims of a kind of moral confusion for which Calvin provides a startling simile, in which the Nicodemites who dismiss idolatry as a minor disruption are compared to workers cleaning out a sewer, who, having become inured to their own stink, mock those who hold their noses. Instead of facing their own baseness and stupidity, they further block out the stink by eating onions and garlic to overwhelm their senses, choosing to see the sewers as their personal rose garden.[53]

The Nicodemites as represented in Calvin's typology occupy dignified and powerful positions in society and thus Calvin uses the "filth" [*l'ordure*] of idolatry to smear them and upset that prestige. Connected to this imagined-sullying is the reversal of class position: the rich and the privileged become the roughest of manual laborers. It is as if Calvin is saying that the honorable execution of any vocation would be impossible in such a polluted region. And yet

---

[52] Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: dissimulation, persecution, and conformity in early modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1990), 77.

[53] "Ainsi, pour bien exprimer quelz ilz sont, ie ne saurois user de comparaison plus propre qu'en les accouplant avec les cureurs de retretz [*qui cloacas repurgant*]. Car comme un maistre Fifi, apres avoir long temps exercé le mestier de remuer l'ordure, ne sent plus la mauvaise odeur, pource qu'il es devenu tout punetz, et se moque de ceux qui bouchent leur nez: pareillement ceux-cy, s'estans par accoustumance endurcis à demeurer en leur ordure, pensent estre entres des roses, et se moquent de ceux qui sont offensez de la puanteur, laquelle ilz ne sentent pas…Mais c'est une povre et malheureuse provision, quand on se rend stupide, pour ne point sentire son mal" (*Omnia Opera* 6, 595).

Calvin is not addressing everyone remaining in Babylonian captivity, but only those would seek to excuse themselves out of pride, avarice, or cowardice.[54] Calvin's simile is designed to help him reorient his readers' perspective, turning their gazes away from worldly dignity, so that they can see the Nicodemites for what they are, spiritually. To ignore the corporeal demands of the true religion thus means to have lapsed in spiritual hygiene, and Calvin uses vivid language to unveil this lapse. By dividing religion into the spiritual and the corporeal for the sake of their own convenience, the Nicodemites extinguish their senses and judgment with "every subterfuge available to them," figured in his reference to the onions and garlic scarfed down by the sullen laborers (595). Thus the pollution of the body initiates the destruction of discernment, integrity, and faith itself, because such a degree of self-delusion is needed to go through with it. Calvin's representation of pollution is thus dynamic, at once reflecting the pollution of the materials and the pollution of one's conscience through self-deception, the willful deadening of one's spiritual and physical senses.

Bodily confession cannot be factored out of the equation of Christian life, just as the ritual pollution of the Mass cannot be considered a mere external inconvenience over-and-against the purity of one's intentions. Exterior reverence "is a sign and testimony of spiritual tribute," while participation in false ritual means "abandoning one's body, the temple of God, to that pollution that Scripture condemns, as much as or more than prostitution."[55] Avoiding the wrong sort of rituals does amount to a "sign and testimony of spiritual honor," that is, an expression of one's piety. One could then claim, in accordance with the rationalist paradigm, that ritual ethics are merely derived from doctrinal concerns, and thus secondary in importance, testimony to the

[54] Ibid..

[55] "C'est desia un grand crime, de commettre idolatrie exterieure, abandonnant son corps, qui est le temple de Dieu, à pollution telle, que l'escriture condamne, autant ou plus que paillardise…ie dy mesme la reverence exterieure, qui est signe et tesmoignage de l'honneur spirituel" (Ibid., 611).

Protestant subordination of the material to the spiritual. On the other hand, Calvin presents ritual pollution as the destruction of piety, suggesting that the boundaries between material, spiritual, and doctrinal purity are more porous than acknowledged in scholarly accounts of the rationalization of religion during the Reformation.

V. Musculus: Social and psychological disintegration through ritual pollution

The moral vocabulary of purity, sincerity, and steadfastness that Calvin develops as a foil to cowardice, submission, and dissimulation was taken up by theologians who faced the prospects of re-Catholicization after the defeat of the Schmalkaldic League. One example is the pastor and biblical scholar Wolfgang Musculus, who, having been the preacher at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Augsburg from 1531 to 1548, was compelled as a result of the Interim to abandon the city and seek refuge in Zurich, Constance, and finally Bern, where he remained until his death in 1563.[56] An irenic presence in the middle years of the Reformation, Musculus was drawn into the controversies involving ritual and sincerity that exercised Calvin when responding to the so-called Nicodemites as well as the Interim-era conciliators. However, he innovates by linking the discussion of Nicodemism to the imperial situation in the German lands during the Interim.[57] Musculus does not write to refute a particular historical actor or text. Rather, he constructs a dialogue, entitled *Proscaerus*, in order to model the debates and exemplary characters of Christians making their way through a bewildering situation.[58]

---

[56] Paraphrasing *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* vol. 23, ed. Rochus von Liliencron (Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1876 – 1912), 95-97. For a more developed treatment, cf. Reinhard Bodenman *Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563): Destin d'un autodidact lorrain au siècle des Réformes* (Geneva: Droz, 2000).

[57] For a list of vernacular translations, consult "Druckverzeichnis des Wolfgang Musculus," *Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563) und die oberdeutsche Reformation*, ed. Rudolf Dellsperger, Rudolf Freudenberger, and Wolfgang Weber (Berlin: Akademie, 1997), 395 – 398.

[58] Originally published under the pseudonym Eutychius Myo. *PROSCAERUS. Liceat ne homini Christiano, euangelicae doctrinae gnaro, papisticis superstitionibus ac falsis cultibus externa societate commnicare. Dialogi quatuor* (Basle: Jakob Kündig, 1549). The pseudonym refers to the character of Eutychius from Acts 20. 7 – 12, a young boy who falls asleep in a window sill listening to Paul's

Proscaerus is named for the central anti-hero of this long dialogue, the paradigm of the worldly would-be Christian, who attempts to wall off his public, bodily persona from his inner convictions, while at the same time seeking relief for a guilty conscience (A 5 ^{r}).[59] In the dramatic frame imagined by Musculus, Proscaerus represents the situation of a prosperous young Nicodemite living in a city subject to Catholic "reeducation." His position is especially tenuous, for his faith is no secret—for twenty years, he has taken part in the new movement with enthusiasm. Under the Interim, he has much to lose: wealth, the safety of his family, and his very life. The dialogue does not dismiss these concerns through recourse to the radical ethic of self-sacrifice expressed by the theologians of Magdeburg. Nor does it put forward Calvin's preferred solution: exile, even if this was the option Musculus himself opted for. Instead, it affirms communal solidarity, while simultaneously admonishing its readers to beware of the contaminated communion with idolatrous ceremonies. Catholic observances are unambiguously the source of pollution in the dialogue. However, what is more interesting is their adverse effects. Dissimulation prompts a bipolar reaction on the part of the conscience: despair, self-contempt, dull complacency, and the "blindness" of the soul, with rapid-fire transitions between the two polls of terror and stupefaction. In terms of its communal impact, dissimulation in ritual matters fosters a culture of hypocrisy and thereby prevents authentic communion, which for Musculus encompasses collective observations of piety as well as frank conversation. Not only is the individual's soul vulnerable to demonic temptations, but he also leads others down the

---

discourse, falls, sustains what seems to be life-threatening injury. The biblical text implies that Paul heals the boy, without spelling this out literally. This image of falling asleep, injury, and healing may be read as encapsulating the drama experienced by those who remain in Augsburg and are tempted to choose dissimulation in ritual matters, experience doubt and despair, like Proscaerus, and are revived by authentic Christian fellowship and teaching.

[59] Musculus explains in his introductory epistle that the name of this character is a Latinized form of the Greek word for "temporizers," which appears in Matthew 13 (A 2^{v}). The German rendering of the "temporizer" is *Wetterhahn*, the weathercock that blows with the wind.

same path. (D 6 $^{r-v}$). Consequently, ritual dissimulation is the cause of disassociation at the micro and macro levels.

Proscaerus brings his problems to the authentic Evangelical, Eusebius, not in order to repent, but more to test out arguments that legitimate his participation in Catholic cultic life. At the same time, his conscience is genuinely wracked by guilt, "wounded" by this turn back to the old ways (A 6 ^{v} and B 1^{r}). As first, he voices his insecurities to another citizen, the antipode of Eusebius, the appropriately named Asebius, who balks at the idea of taking religion seriously at all, especially when it risks tearing members away from the security of the body politic (A 8 ^{v}).[60] Unsatisfied by the cold confidence of Asebius, Proscaerus flags down Eusebius to ask him whether communion among the idolaters is licit.

Eusebius presses Proscaerus to describe the state of his conscience while he is present for these rituals. Proscaerus reports that it caused him pain and even warned him vehemently that he was disobeying God and affirming idolatry; he worries that he will become "completely blind" [*excaecatio*] of this peril through habituation. Even now, he reports that these qualms are beginning to fade (B 4^{v}). Taken aback, his interlocutor notes that this new feeling is exactly the object of his earlier fear, the realization of which sends Proscaerus into despair (B 5 ^{r}). Asebius departs from their company, disgusted by the exchange, and promising to commend Eusebius to the local magistrate, which Proscaerus interprets as a mocking euphemism for notifying the authorities about their conversation (B 6 $^{r-v}$). The remaining characters are thus in peril because of their participation in the kind of communion Musculus presents as beneficial, a meeting in which the dangers of illicit ritual communion are laid bare.

[60] Substantive of the adjectival form of the Greek ἀσέβεια, ungodliness or impiety, in direct opposition to εὐσέβεια, i.e., reverence or piety toward gods and parents.

In the second dialogue, Proscaerus insists on a fundamental division between act and intention, the body and the soul, ceremony and theology to explain his conduct under the Interim. Proscaerus lays out his rationale for communion in externals among Catholics in the following way. He names two forms of being in communion with a group: the first of being of the same ideology and the same spirit and affect of the group in question. The other is being in communion through mutual participation in a given "external" rite.[61] Proscaerus wishes to locate the authentic site of idolatry in the ideology, spirit, and affect of the subject, while offering external communion through ceremony as a benign instrument of social cohesion and civil obedience (C 4 ^{r}). Similar to the authors of the Augsburg Interim, and even to the later philosophical defenses of absolutism in Hobbes and Spinoza, this view takes the "outward" forms of religion to be under the exclusive authority of the political sovereign, functioning for the sake of social coherence.[62] Without denying that religious communion is vital for social coherence, Eusebius presents a contrasting position. Religious communion comes in three forms: through participation in the rites and instruction of pure Christianity, adiaphoric practices, and idolatry (C 1^{r} – C 1^{v}).[63] Moreover, whenever the adiaphoric practices are imposed by tyranny and made legally binding, they shift into the pernicious form of communion (C 2 ^{r}).

For Proscaerus, contamination would only take place were he to believe in the power of the illicit ceremonies to save his soul. From the perspective of his interlocutor, insincere

---

[61] "Vnum quo in ipsa sententia, siue illa uera sit, siue falsa, deinde & eodem affectu & spiritu: alterum, quo externo tantum opere ac ritu communicatur" (C 4 ^{r}).

[62] Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between early medieval texts and social scientific theory* (Princeton NJ: Princeton, 2001), 164 – 202; Nathan Rein, *Chancery of God: Protestant print, polemic, and propaganda against the empire, Magdeburg, 1546 – 1551* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 106 – 107. See Asebius's remarks on A 8 ^{r} – A 8 ^{v}.

[63] For the importance of ritual life in the formation of the Christian subject, see *Proscaerus* E 7^{v}. A clue we have as to what Musculus considered to be the ideal form of communal worship and Christian pedagogy comes in his account of the singing of vernacular songs among his congregation at Augsburg. Cf. R. Dellsberger, "Leben und Werk," *Wolfgang Musculus (1497 – 1563) und die oberdeutsche Reformation*, 33.

participation is neither licit nor safe for the soul. When Eusebius hears Proscaerus's attempt to bifurcate the concept of communion, he asks him whether he would tolerate being in companionship with thieves, murderers, and prostitutes (C 4 ^{v}). Proscaerus denies that he could ever be compelled to belong to such a group. Eusebius points out that Proscaerus remains steadfast when it comes to what is commanded by the second tablet of the Law, but when it comes to the first, he is indifferent (ibid.). Even if both tablets are sacred, Eusebius's complaint indicates the hierarchy of divine matters over civil. Yet Proscaerus denies that he violates the precepts of the first tablet, precisely because he does not hold to the opinions or spirit of the papists. He also implies that it is possible to retain a social link with idolaters in a way that is distinct from being one among thieves and adulterers. In a similar way, he denies that he is in the same moral position as Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego from Daniel 3, who refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's idol. Proscaerus admits that he would have sinned, had he worshipped Nebuchadnezzar's idol, yet at the same time, he asserts that what he does during Catholic services is not the same sort of practice of adoration.[64] Eusebius responds that Proscaerus has not so far been able to articulate the nature of the distinction, and thus his argument about the two forms of communion does not stand up to the example from Daniel. Having put Proscaerus on the defensive, Eusebius pushes harder on the importance of harmony between one's doctrine and conduct, quoting Romans 14.23: "whatever does not proceed from faith is sin." He asserts that because Proscaerus involves himself in a cult without putting any stock in its efficacy or theological significance, he is condemning himself before God (C 5 ^{v} – C 6 ^{r}).

[64] "Quia illic gentilis erat adoranda statua, hic uero iuxta quorundam sententiam aliud habetur adorationis genus" (C 5 ^{v}).

One of the unique features of Musculus's dialogue is that he appears to take the reasoning of those who would compromise or dissimulate in ritual matters seriously. Proscaerus is not simply a straw man; he is capable of effectively countering the pious Eusebius. When the latter cites the passage from Romans, his interlocutor inspects the passage and notes that one of its most important messages is not to judge others in things that are irrelevant to faith. Proscaerus points out that so far, their argument has not pertained to adiaphoric matters, the very topic of Paul's discussion in Romans 14, but rather to supposedly illicit practices (C 6 ^{r}). Since he does not approve of the Catholic form of worship, he does not enter substantive, inner communion with them, and thus he does nothing illicit. Accordingly, the passage in question does not provoke any guilt.[65] In other words, he has not been completely satisfied that anything binds him to sin that does not originate from his sincere, personal views. The fact that he is outwardly in communion with others who hold to the sanctity of Catholic ritual is irrelevant to him and God.

Despite Proscaerus's accurate observation about the literal meaning of the passage from Romans, Eusebius shows that what is most important in this situation is being able to reason from the principle set down in scripture. This speaks to the thesis of the chapter: texts and ideas cause either pollution or purity; ideas have physical effects and even leave a trace on the body. Given that one may be damned in acting with indifferent matters without faith, Eusebius infers that the situation is all the more critical in the use of illicit things: "thus in the abuse of medicine, something that is per se good and harmless becomes harmful due to bad use, and then what should we say if someone seizes upon poison? If the use of medicine is able to become harmful, certainly how much more harmful will the use of poison be" (C 6 ^{v}). Proscaerus then admits that

[65] "Quid hoc ad nostram quæstionem facit, quae non concernit res liberas & licitas, sed illicitas? Deinde, in eo quod facio, licet ipsa papstica sacra non probem, meipsum tamen non iudico: hoc est, factum meum non damno" (C 6 ^{v}).

there is "poison" in papal ceremonies, but one that does not impact the mind, but only the body [*uerum mente illa non atingo, sed corpore duntaxat*] (ibid.).

So far, Eusebius has not been able to persuade his interlocutor that environment and physical action affect the soul in any way. However, one ought to keep in mind that Proscaerus began the dialogue complaining of the guilt he experienced over his illicit communion. He would thus seem to be at odds with himself, divided between the testimony of the heart and his ability to generate evasive rationalizations. This split between his affect and his reasoning faculty corresponds to his desire to sequester the "poison" of false ceremonies in the body so that his soul will be left untainted.

Interestingly enough, similar appeals to a hierarchy of "internal" belief over "external" ritualization is frequently attributed to the Reformation as evidence of its inherent "anti-ritualism," but in this case, such a perspective is presented as being one of the most potent threats to Protestant solidarity and perseverance.[66] In contrast to the solipsistic notion of authenticity frequently associated with the Reformation's valorization of faith, Andrew Pettegree writes of the public, cultural context of religious transformation operating in early modern Europe: "Religious choice may still be personal—as it often was—without being private. Decisions were best arrived at in a communal context. Much of the culture of persuasion in the sixteenth century was based on the assumption that decisions would be arrived at collectively."[67] Pettegree's analysis of different scenes of Evangelical persuasion, such as in communal singing and the theater helps clarify the suspicion present in the anti-Nicodemite texts of those who

[66] Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, "Kneeling before God—Kneeling before the Emperor: The Transformation of a Ritual during the Confessional Conflict in Germany," *Resonances: historical essays on continuity and change,* ed. Nils Holger Petersen, Eyolf Østrem, and Andreas Bücker (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 149-172. Adam B. Seligman et al *Ritual and its Consequences*: *an essay on the limits of sincerity* (New York: Oxford, 2008) esp. "Introduction," 3 – 6 and "Ritual and Sincerity," 103 – 130.

[67] *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (New York: Cambridge, 2005), 8.

would disguise their private, individualized theological commitments in a public, liturgical setting.[68] Eusebius justifies such suspicion by means of theological simile: faith in the Gospel cannot be contained in the soul, but must burst forth through in word and deed, because as with a flame, too tight an enclosure causes suffocation (C 7 ^{v}). If Proscaerus persists much longer in dissimulation, his relationship to the divine will be smothered [*igniculum fidei prorsus extinguat*] (C 8 ^{r}).

Conclusion:

The argument of this chapter has been that there are some specific concerns about the capacity of materials, bodies, and practices of worship to pollute Protestant Christianity in times of crisis. In contrast to the various scholarly narratives of disenchantment which focus on the "stripping of the altars" without giving a detailed account of what made them polluted in the first place, I have attempted to articulate what unifies Protestant ideas about impurity in ritual, that is, pollution as *interpolation* and *interruption* at spatial, semiotic, facultative, temporal, and social levels. By doing this, I hoped to demonstrate that embodied ritual praxis was more deeply ingrained with incarnational significance. In other words, that if the Reformation is the onset of a "Christian modernity," then this does not only take place through iconoclasm, but simultaneously through a reinvestment of meaning and power into the material elements of religion, particularly with regards to their use in erecting spiritual and social boundaries between rival confessions. The dangers that Protestant intellectuals discerned in ritual compromise are often so multivalent that they can be difficult to pin down and define with precision. Their polymorphic representations of the threat of impure contact are a new strain of incarnationalist

[68] Ibid., 53 for the communal power of singing in opinion formation.

thought and rhetoric, one that indeed may have had deep implications for other modern ideologies of purity.[69] Whereas in late-medieval Catholic contexts, the incarnational aspect of liturgical materiality was frequently associated with the miraculous properties of relics and the elements of the Mass,[70] in the context of Protestant controversies concerning ritual, it becomes a manifestation of the eschatological opposition between the churches of Christ and Antichrist.

[69] Susannah Heschel, "Race as Incarnational Theology: Affinities between German Protestantism and Racial Theory," *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating race, gender, and ethnicity in early Christian studies*, ed. Laura Nasrallah and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 211 – 234. My thanks to Adam Y. Stern for bringing Heschel's work to my attention. For an example relating to liberal Protestant practices of healing, consult Pamela E. Klassen, *Spirits of Protestantism: Healing, Medicine, and Liberal Protestantism* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2011).

[70] Cf. Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia, U Penn, 2006) in addition to her article "The Sacrality of Things: An Inquiry into Divine Materiality in the Christian Middle Ages," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 78 (2013): 3 – 18.

Chapter IV: Adiaphorism as an Epidemic of Idolatry

The solidification of the Lutheran confession arrived out of decades of truculent controversy and factionalism. While it attempted to harmonize points of dispute between theologians loyal to Melanchthon and based in Wittenberg ("Philippists") and those critical of the direction of Wittenberg's theology after the death of Luther ("Gnesio-Lutherans,") the Formula of Concord privileged the latter in certain articles, above all, the one concerning *adiaphora*.[1] Article Ten thus stipulates that whenever there is reason for believing that "the enemies of God's Word desire to suppress the pure doctrine" through "the introduction and sanction of idolatry," under the pretense of *adiaphora*, these abuses must be opposed and rejected.[2] Yet how exactly did something that in one moment appeared rather trivial become, in the next, an aid to idolatry? In this chapter, I build off of the previous chapter's examination of Protestant pollution rhetoric in order to demonstrate its full range of impact during the *adiaphora* controversy and thus better explain the shift from *adiaphora* to *idolatria*. In this way, I describe how the controversialists reactivated a traditional trope of Christian polemic, "idolatry as plague," to attack compromises in *adiaphora*. I argue that the deployment of the rhetoric of plague and pollution works simultaneously to make apparent the otherwise invisible stains of idolatry in traditional ceremonies and to mark the bodies and reputations of "Adiaphorist" compromisers.

This dissertation argues that in order to grasp the full thrust of Article Ten and its

---

[1] Robert Kolb, "Dynamics of Party Conflict in the Saxon Late Reformation: Gnesio-Lutherans vs. Philippists." *The Journal of Modern History* 49 (1977): 1289-1305. Cf. Irene Dingel, "The Culture of Conflict in the Controversies Leading to the Formula of Concord (1548 – 1580)," *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550 – 1675.* Ed. Robert Kolb (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008) 15 – 65.

[2] *Triglot Concorida: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1923) 828 – 830.

significance for ritual during the Reformation, the idea of danger that it presupposes needs to be explicated. The most important and least-discussed aspect of this danger is the rhetoric of pollution and contagion that is employed in the representation of "inessential, indifferent" human traditions and their pernicious effects. The importance of this rhetoric lies in the way it grants a perspective on the power and danger the reformers saw in ritual practice. Despite the revisionist work done by Robert Scribner, much contemporary research on the impact of the Reformation on Christian ritual practice argues that the Reformation disenchanted ritual, making it the means of social discipline rather than a technique for participating in sacred or magical power.[3] In this chapter, I take issue with this account by showing how an influential contingent of Protestants understood corrupted rituals to be charged with supernatural power and significance. These reformers did promote the purification of the Church from what they took to be magical superstitions, such as the invocation of the saints, or priestly consecrations. However, this chapter demonstrates that they simultaneously re-conceptualized the operation of the supernatural in ritualized bodies and materials.[4] Using rhetoric, the critics of compromise attempted to make the pollution of bodies and souls by pseudo-*adiaphora* legible as signpost for the approaching apocalypse.

---

[3] The most influential formulation of disenchantment is Max Weber's in *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*. For a more recent exploration of early modern changes to ritual, consult Susan Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007) 70-71, 190-201. For background on social discipline and confessionalization, cf. Heinz Schilling: *Konfessionskonflikt und Staatsbildung. Eine Fallstudie über das Verhältnis von religiösem und sozialem Wandel in der Frühneuzeit am Beispiel der Grafschaft Lippe* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1981) and Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550-1750* (Milton: Taylor & Francis, 1992).

[4] For defining the boundaries, consult Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon," *Past and Present* 90 (1981): 40 – 70, at 59. Alexandra Walsham, "The Reformation and 'the disenchantment of the world reassessed," *The Historical Journal* 51, (2008): 497 – 528, at 512 – 3.

I. Pollution rhetoric and the literal-figurative dichotomy

In her classic study *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas lays out four epistemological and rhetorical outcomes resulting from the assertion of a "pollution belief," i.e., an idea about the corporeal and societal consequences for violating the moral and cosmic order of a group:

> i. When a situation is morally ill-defined, a pollution belief can provide a rule for determining *post hoc* whether infraction has taken place, or not.
>
> ii. When moral principles come into conflict, a pollution rule can reduce confusion by giving simple focus for concern.
>
> iii. When action that is held to be morally wrong does not provoke moral indignation, belief in the harmful consequences of a pollution can have the effect of aggravating the seriousness of the offense, and so marshalling [sic] public opinion on the side of the right.
>
> iv. When moral indignation is not reinforced by practical sanctions, pollution beliefs can provide a deterrent to wrongdoers.[5]

This enumeration is of great use for unpacking the rhetoric of pollution and contagion during the *adiaphora* controversy. The entire business of negotiating imperial peace through ceremonies was situated in the realm of moral and theological ambiguity. As shown in the first chapter, Melanchthon and his colleagues contributed to this confusing atmosphere through their tactics of stalling and making vague concessions. Chapter two demonstrates how the question of compromise in ceremonies was by no means clear for Luther, who expressed contradictory opinions on the matter. In chapter three, it was established how the pollution in question was essentially theological, the stains of idolatry—stains that were invisible. Thus the dissident theologians had to find a way to make the matter more clear-cut, and seized on the rhetorical and epistemological solution of invoking pollution.

[5] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An analysis of the concept of pollution and taboo* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 165.

To call an opponent 'plague ridden' and 'polluted' was an abiding feature of Christian polemics by the time Flacius was making his accusations. It might be tempting to dismiss this gesture as an appeal to a clichéd metaphor. Below in Section IV, I will explain how this trope plays a new role in the context of the *adiaphora* controversy as opposed to earlier iterations from the medieval and late-antique period. For now, I want to pose the question of the force of this trope, and of metaphor in general, and trouble the assumption that it is of little consequence for the interpretation of the theological controversies of the sixteenth century. With the emergence of the linguistic turn in the social sciences over the past thirty years, the cultural force of tropes has become a prominent field of investigation.[6] A central conceptual problem for this endeavor is to elucidate the relationship between what is commonly thought of as figurative and denotative language. According to a positivist theory of reference, Flacius calling his opponents "contagious with the plague of Adiaphorism" would mean that there is a structural similarity between the phenomena of the "corruption" of ritual and the communication of harmful microorganisms or what contemporaries theorized as noxious substances such as "fomites" during an epidemic.[7] To call Adiaphorism a plague would make the claim more startling and "ornamental," but would not say anything new about either ritual or disease.[8]

Anthropologist Terence Turner provides an alternative account for the role of tropes by first contesting the "naturalness" of the categories and classes used in denotation. In a

---

[6] For a brief genealogy of the developments in anthropology, consult James W. Fernandez's introduction to *Beyond Metaphor*, *Beyond Metaphor: The Theory of Tropes in Anthropology*, ed. James W. Fernandez (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991) 1 – 13.

[7] For 16th century theological and medical accounts of the plague, consult Matthias Lang, ""Der Vrsprung aber der Pestilentz ist nicht natürlich, sondern übernatürlich…": Medizinische und theologische Erklärung der Seuche im Spiegel protestantischer Pestschriften 1527-1650." *Die leidige Seuche. Pest-Eälle in der Frühen Neuzeit.* Ed. Otto Ulbricht (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2004) 133 – 180. For the theory of fomites, cf. Girolamo Fracastoro, *De contagion et contagiosis morbis* (1546). See also Justin K. Stearns, *Infectious Ideas: Contagion in Premodern Islamic and Christian Thought in the Western Mediterranean* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2011).

[7] Terence Turner, ""We are Parrots," "Twins are Birds,"" *Beyond Metaphor* 124.

constructionist paradigm, classification takes place through the abstraction of a feature from an object that serves as the common quality for the new class. The second step is "the imputing of that feature to one or more other objects, which thereby become recognized, along with the prototype, as tokens of the type or members of the class: in short, generalization. A logical "class" or semantic "type," in this view, is essentially a coordinated bundle of these two types of cognitive operations for constructing referent-objects, tokens, or instances" (ibid., 127). Turner goes on to claim that the construction of metaphor occurs in the same way (ibid., 127-29). His example is "the foot of the mountain," in which the base of the human body becomes the distinguishing quality of a category. His claim that categorization and metaphor are closely related is bolstered by examples of metaphors that have come to be referenced as denotative descriptions, such as "the equilibrium of financial markets" (ibid.., 128). Metaphors, according this account, do not "die" when they lose their ornamental luster, but rather flourish in everyday language, shaping experiences and common-sense interpretations of reality.[9]

Turner's intervention is useful for theorizing the rhetoric of the *adiaphora* controversy. He shows that there is no absolute boundary between figurative and denotative language, but rather a pragmatic negotiation between these two poles in the description and construction of reality. I argue that precisely this form of negotiation lies at the heart of Flacius's use of figures of pollution and plague. That is, Flacius employs a traditional trope while applying it in a unique way in the context of the *adiaphora* controversy. When he speaks of contagion and corruption, he is not repeating a commonplace for its own sake, but rather using the language of sickness to mark this ritual compromise and its proponents as dangerous. This gives new meaning to the commonplace of "idolatry as plague," designating a kind of contagion that afflicts body and soul

[9] For an example of metaphor structuring experience and structure, i.e. "the war on drugs," consult George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 156 – 7.

through the practice of "false ritual." At the same time, Flacius's graphic evocations of impurity and infection do not simply instate a category, but also attempt to persuade his readers. They may be thought of as adherence to Luther's admonition that the Christian should refuse Satan's "filth" [*Teufelsdreck*] with what Heiko Oberman describes as a "scatological counterattack."[10] Recourse to scatological and corporeal language makes the eschatological enemies recognizable by flinging their own filth back at them, staining the source of corruption for all to see.

If the dissidents are using the rhetoric of contagion in the way I am proposing, what does this persuasive strategy have to do with what they actually saw as being wrong with compromising in adiaphoric ceremonies? Two frequently cited reasons for resistance are 1) that compromise encouraged Catholic opponents [*Widersacher*] to persist in persecuting the Gospel, and 2) that Evangelical congregations would become confused by the return to the old ways, and abandon the "pure Gospel" in their hearts.[11] The critics of the compromises, as well as the signatories of the Formula of Concord, conceive of rites in "a time of confession," or emergency, as constituting a form of communication. Reinstating the alb [*Chorrock*] as the normative garment for leading worship thus would communicate something akin to the following: 'I am ready and willing to submit to papal authority.'[12] The principle at stake in the refusal of the alb is thus one of confession mediated by materials and gestures, an act of communication that asserts the insurmountable divide between "The Church of Christ" and the "Synagogue of the

---

[10] "Teufelsdreck: Eschatology and Scatology in the "Old" Luther," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19 (1988): 435 – 450, at 443.

[11] Nicholas Gallus, *Eine Disputation von Mitteldingen* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550) A iij [v]. For analysis of Gallus's reports of his personal confusion and *Anfechtung*, cf. Nathan Rein, "From the History of Religions to the History of 'religion': The Late Reformation and the Challenge to Sui Generis Religion," *Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Early Modern German Culture: Order and Creativity, 1500-1750*, ed. Randolph Head and Daniel Christensen (Leiden: Brill, 2007) 27 – 44 at 39 – 40.

[12] Cf. Matthias Flacius Illyricus and Nikolaus Gallus, *Antwort…auff den Brief etlicher Preidger in Meissen* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550) A iiij [v].

Antichrist"![13] I establish in this chapter that there is another sense of "communication" simultaneously at play in the debates around ritual inessentials, that is, the communicability of a plague that is spoken of as simultaneously spiritual and physical. Given what we have learned in chapter three about pollution in Protestant controversy literature as signifying materialized idolatrous ideas, the proximity between the two senses of "communication" possesses a certain logic.

I take the rhetoric of contagion present in the treatises and pamphlets of the debate to be paradigmatic for a whole series of tropes concerned with impurity, dissimulation, and desecration. They pertain to the corruption of the church, "the pure word of God," the essence of the human being, as well as creation figured more broadly. The opposition between purity and corruption resists being circumscribed to one particular discursive site—it might be said to be virulent itself, spreading between discussions of hermeneutics, ecclesiology, liturgy, anthropology and especially politics.[14] This phenomenon stems from Luther's demand for a church and society grounded on the pure Gospel itself, shorn of human innovations and abuses.[15] At the same time, the Gospel encompassed independent yet interconnected realms of human experience. It was something lived, experienced, but also administered and contested by different forms of authority, complicating claims of its pristine simplicity. For example, before its demise after the military campaign of Charles V, the Schmalkaldic League propagandized their resistance to the emperor as a war against those who would persecute them on account of the

[13] Nicholas von Amsdorf, *Das nie nöter gewest ist wider den Römischen Antichrist zu schreiben…* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1551) A iij^{v}.
[14] Colin Jones makes an analogous point with respect to the interpenetration of discourses on plague between church, state, and medicine in "Plague and its metaphors in early modern France," *Representations* (1996): 97 –127, at 112.
[15] Gerald Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) 5.

"pure Word of God."[16] Maurice of Saxony contested that claim, stating that the Gospel was being used as a pretext for rebellion, and was thus being abused.[17]

Both sides claimed to respect and defend the purity of the Gospel, yet the interpretive efforts needed to circumscribe its proper and consecrated domain were often exhausting and unpersuasive to one's opponents, precisely because of the perpetual intermeshing of theological and political objectives.[18] An important result of these impasses, I would argue, is the intensification of the rhetoric of corruption. Persistent, if nebulous commitments to the protection of Gospel "purity" left Evangelicals predisposed to anxiety about the dangers of pollution and infection, as well as to conflicting interpretations about what constituted this danger. Such a rupture over the meaning of purity and corruption came to the fore in a public appeal to Philip Melanchthon by Evangelical leaders in Hamburg in 1549.

II. Pseudo-*adiaphora*: more dangerous than heresy?

By April of 1549, Melanchthon had been involved since the previous summer in negotiating a new church ordinance that would safeguard Evangelical doctrine while making concessions in ceremonial *adiaphora.* At this point, the Georgsagenda was rejected a suitable substitute for the Augsburg Interim, and Flacius had just quit Wittenberg the month before. Uneasy over the direction these negotiations were taking, the pastors of Hamburg, under the direction of Hamburg superintendent Johannes Aepinus and the theologian Joachim Westphal, wrote to Melanchthon about rumors that Protestant leaders were ready to reintroduce Catholic liturgical practices, doctrinal teachings, and episcopal obedience, all under the guise of

[16] Nathan Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 81-89.
[17] *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürstens Moritz von Sachsen*, (PKMS) Volume 3, ed. Johannes Hermann and Günther Wartenberg (Berlin: Akademie, 1978) No. 576, 406.
[18] In his July 3 1547 address to the Saxon estates in the aftermath of the war, Maurice promised to promote the Christian religion "*nach göttlichem Worte*" (PKMS 3, no. 674, 464).

"indifferent things."[19] They implored him to express his own views with regard to this scandal, so as to unite the theologians and pastors loyal to the Gospel in protest. The pastors emphasized Melanchthon's ability to bring order and unity to the Evangelical side by valorizing his honesty and indeed his purity, stating that "after Luther," Melanchthon and his circle are "the most holy and sincere of men, steadfast in restoring and defending the pure doctrine and the true worship of God" (CR VII, 367).[20] Such sincerity and purity is contrasted with the threat of pseudo-*adiaphora,* "a pestilence in the Church of Christ more harmful than the pseudo-apostles and the pseudo-prophets ever were" (ibid.).[21] This second point is significant because it reveals an anxiety over the ambiguity raised by the debate: up to that point, from the perspective of these followers of the Wittenberg reformation, heresy had proclaimed itself loudly and clearly and was thus easily recognizable, but accidental elements in divine worship were far more difficult to categorize with respect to impiety, especially given the diversity of ritual styles across the German lands. The valorization of Melanchthon's virtue appears in close proximity to the invocation of his great responsibility as the new head of the Wittenberg movement in the wake of Luther's death. Without action, "the purity of our religion [*puritate nostrae religionis*] will be besmirched in such a way that the Church will never be able to recover" (368).[22]

Apart from being an early iteration of the rhetoric of contagion in this debate, this letter expresses a theological principle that would be cited again and again, up to the constitution of

[19] In *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume VII, ed. Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil. (Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1840) 367 – 382. For the authorship and biographies of all of the numerous contributors from Hamburg, see "De rebus adiaphoris epistola—Einleitung," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* ed. Irene Dingel, Jan Martin Lies, and Hans-Otto Schneider (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 43 – 59.

[20] "Qui post D. M. Lutherum, sanctissimum virum sincerum, fidum et constantem purae doctrinae et veri divini cultus instauratorem ac propugnatorem." Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in this chapter are my own.

[21] "Eruntque nocentriores in Ecclesia Christi pestes, quam unquam Pseudoapostoli et Pseudoprophetae fuerunt."

[22] "Nisi hic ceu ad sistendum publicum incendium vestram operarm contuleritis, Ecclesia damnum accipiet, quod nunquam resarcietur."

Lutheran confessional norms at the end of the century, that is, the claim that elements that are "truly *adiaphora*" can shift over to the domain of "impiety" in times when their true ends are being abused. The Pastors state it in the following way: "*adiaphora*, in the true sense, are bound by certain limits, and if these are transgressed, they cease to be *adiaphora*, and become corrupt, profane, things that disseminate superstition, ensnare consciences, and provide opportunities for the reintroduction of the old abuses and impiety" (373-4).[23] This statement represents the earliest theoretical articulation of why compromise in *adiaphora* was dangerous in "times of confession," one that was taken up by Flacius and the rest of the opponents of the Saxon politics of ritual.[24]

The form and quality of "transgression" remains ambiguous, yet it is certain that someone has done something to these "*adiaphora* in the true sense" to turn them into vectors of impiety, to make these material and gestural elements into nefarious agents in a ritual field. Indeed, they appear to be animated with such diabolical force so that they now have the power and the purpose to "fight with the Word of God" [*cum verbo Dei pugnant*], "nourish superstition" [*superstitionem alunt*], and "pervert the religion of Christ into the superstition of the Antichrist" [*religionem Christi in Antichristi superstitionem pervertunt*] (374). This is quite a lot of power to attribute to garments, Latin songs, oils, and salts, and goes beyond what Westphal understanding of "idolatrous attachments" as laid out in the previous chapter. At the same time, it is not yet entirely clear how this demonic power is activated, nor how it spreads impiety and superstition. The underlying cause could be taken for granted in this context — the Devil and his servant the

[23] "Adiaphora autem, quae vere sic vocantur, inclusa sunt certis finibus, quos, si transgrediuntur, Adiaphora esse desinunt, fiuntque corruptelae, profantiones, seminaria superstitionis, conscientiarum laquei et aptae occasiones reducendi veterem abusum et impietatem."
[24] Reimund B. Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst: Studien zur Genealogie ästhetischen Denkens* (Tübingen: Max Niedermeyer, 2005) 140. Sdzuj cites his source as Flacius, *Bericht […] von etlichen Artikeln der christlichen Lehr* (Jena: Thomas Rebart, 1559) E i^{r} – ^{v}.

Antichrist, otherwise known as the institution of the papacy. Yet the dynamics of contamination and their deeper implications for human souls would be extrapolated in far greater detail in the writings of the loudest and most prolific of the *adiaphora*-skeptics, Matthias Flacius Illyricus.

III. The indelible stains of idolatry and their effect on the soul

By the time Flacius composed *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris* late in 1549, he had been writing pamphlets against the imperial Interim and the domestic policies of religion in Saxony for about two years. This work constitutes his most systematic rebuttal to the muted defenses of the use of *adiaphora* by the theologians in service to Maurice of Saxony, incorporating arguments from previous critics such as the Hamburg Pastors, and thus gesturing towards a growing consensus among Evangelical intellectuals in condemnation of the compromises with the emperor in matters of faith. At the same time, Flacius sharpens and intensifies the rhetoric of pollution. This escalation coincides with a growing insistence on his legitimate claim as critic and defender the Evangelical churches. Indeed, he professes to speak loudly and simply with the help of the Spirit: "truly for a long time I and many other pious folk had been frustrated in our hopes, so that finally I determined that something ought to be stammered out in the midst of the priests and scribes who either keep silent or actively shame Christ, putting my trust in that promise of our Lord Christ: 'Do not be apprehensive about what you will say, for it will not be you who speaks, but the spirit of the Father who speaks through you'" (212).[25] This claim not only signals legitimate authority, but also announces that the style of the discourse will be bracing, rough, and even earthy, in continuity with the prophetic spirit that animated Luther in

[25] ("De veris et falsis adiaphoris," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548 – 1560)*, ed. Irene Dingel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), to be cited parenthetically hereafter. The scriptural citation is Mark 13:11.

his own moments of "rhetorical excess."[26] And yet there's a bitterness, a sense of being overwhelmed by betrayal that accounts for the stuttering that is unique to Flacius, who was also a foreigner and struggled in these years with expressing himself in German.[27]

Flacius begins the preface of this work by remarking that whenever he reads the Exodus story and considers the ingratitude of the Israelites, his heart is filled with condemnation and detestation of their faithlessness: "who of sound mind would not detest such perversity?" (198). This ingratitude ought to prompt disgust, but it only prefigures a grosser act of impiety, the ingratitude toward the spiritual liberation of the Evangelical churches in the sixteenth century: "for truly the misery of their slavery was more corporeal than spiritual," while the Christians of recent times are now ready to submit themselves once more to the caprice of the Antichrist and the certain damnation of their souls (ibid.). Certainly this level of ingratitude against God outstrips that of the Israelites.[28] Flacius allegorizes the physical temptations experienced by the Tribes in order to further link these two scenes of treachery in sacred history, reading the flesh-pots of Egypt as "the peace and tranquility of the belly in the days of the papacy, which we dream of as having been better than now" (202).[29] The Egyptian onions "are the ceremonies and traditions of the papists."[30] That is, many would-be Christians have become worn out by the simplicity of the Gospel [*Euangelij pertaesi*] and drawn back to the splendor of the papal style of worship, represented here as a flavoring ingredient that offers no real sustenance (202 – 204).

---

[26] Melanchthon, "Eulogy for Luther," in *A Melanchthon Reader*, trans. Ralph Keene (New York: Peter Lang, 1988) 92 – 93. On "rhetorical excess," cf. Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition*, 53-58.
[27] Luka Ilić, *Theologian of Sin and Grace: The Process of Radicalization in the Theology of Matthias Flacius Illyricus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2014), 69
[28] "Vincit profecto uincit longe nostra erga Deum pro instaurato IESu CHRIsti Euangelio, tamque gloriosa e serutite Antichristi liberatione, ingratitudo populi Israelitici ingratitudinem" ("De veris et falsis adiaphoris," 200. B 1^{v} in the original edition.
[29] "Ollae carnium sunt pax et tranquillitas ventris, quam in papatu maiorem fuisse somniarmus, quam iam sit."
[30] "Coepae autem sunt papisticae ceremoniae et traditiones" (ibid., 202).

Flacius uses the preface to link the circumstances of the sixteenth-century German lands back to key moments of betrayal and idolatry in the biblical narrative. This decision provides the reader with a hint concerning the danger of rituals—their capacity to promote repetitions of an idolatrous past.

Even as he distinguishes the corporeal servitude of the Israelites from the spiritual servitude of his present moment, Flacius also gestures toward the way in which both forms are connected. Indeed, one of the implicit claims of *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris* is that spiritual slavery begins with the body, in the adoption of abandoned practices and tainted materials. The tropes of idolatry, impurity, and diabolical seduction that emerge between these two stories strongly inform the theological critique posed by Flacius. These tropes coalesce around two main themes of the book: the role of materiality in idolatry, and the struggle between fidelity and promiscuity, which both hinge on the embodied nature of desire. Through this connection, Flacius develops a rhetoric of pollution to argue that compromise in ritual matters is an affront to God. This is due to the contaminated state of the objects and ceremonies in question, as well as the sullying effect on the bodies and souls of those under the care of the Church.

In the first chapter, Flacius employs the question-and-answer model in order to establish the nature of "true *adiaphora*." He thus begins with a question about the definition of an *adiaphoron*, that is, a kind of thing or practice that may be observed or not, or performed in any way. The question about whether there are any such practices in the church receives an affirmative answer, with Flacius pointing to Paul's reference to them in 1 Corinthians 8-10, 14 and Romans 14. These biblical loci refer to choice of food, fasting, vows of chastity, and the observation of specific holy days (214).[31] Going beyond these passages, Flacius specifies that the materials and the time and place of divine service are also not strictly specified by God, and

[31] Cf. Reimund Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 143.

therefore can be set in all due liberty, provided that these decisions do not cause division within the church. Even though the particulars of these traditions are not foreordained, Flacius explains that God mandates them in general because of a holy desire for order and edification.[32] In the Aristotelean terminology employed by Flacius, this is the final or first cause of *adiaphora*. Other forms of public and private *adiaphora* obtain, proper to pedagogy, family life, and the discipline of the state, yet these are set apart from the traditions of the church, which exclusively remain within its proper sphere of influence (214 – 218). Church *adiaphora* arise from a pious and free desire of a church to accommodate its will to the will of God in matters that have not been specified by divine writ, and at the metaphysical level, this pious wish is the efficient or second cause. Therefore the selection and execution of these *adiaphora* necessitate interpretation and implementation on the part of loyal and intelligent servants of the church.[33]

Flacius reveals much about the practical implications of the "true adiaphora" when he describes how the church would be destroyed by the false, a description that makes up the bulk of his treatise. They fall under two categories: those that have "transformed" into pseudo-*adiaphora* because they have been imposed recently by the political servants of idolatry and therefore lost their status as *adiaphora* because they go against the will of the Church (240). The second are observances that were permanently stained by idolatry before the creation of the Interim (242). This distinction allows Flacius to critique the return of practices such as the wearing of vestments which had been considered as indifferent prior to the Interim by members of the Wittenberg reformation. There had to be a theory, provided by Äpinus and Westphal, as to

[32] "Vult enim Deus omnia ordine, et ut aedifcationi piourum ac gloriae Dei quam maxime aptum est fieri, caeterum in specie ista instituere et circumscribere ius est penes totam Ecclesiam" (216).
[33] "Secunda causa est libera et pia voluntas Ecclesiae. Libera, ut plane not sit coacta. Pia, id est, ad voluntatem Dei accommodata, quae tantum gloriam Dei, et piorum aedificationem spectet, non ulla humana commoda per talia Adiaphora uenetur. Tertia causa sunt pij et intelligentes homines quibus Ecclesia talem Adiaphororum institutionem mandat. Atq; haec de causis efficientibus" (218).

why such things that were once harmless were now "the seeds and sinews of superstition" (CR VII, 375).[34] However, in the end, the distinction becomes irrelevant—once a ceremony is associated and marked by idolatry in the "situation of confession," it joins the ranks of all of the other impious observances, practices that may never be readmitted to the Church.

In treating the first cause of the false *adiaphora*, the author focuses on how the compromises entail open disobedience of God's command for order. On this point, Flacius argues that ceremonies, practices, and even materials that have been previously tainted by idolatry forfeit their *adiaphora* status and can only disrupt the orderly cultivation of piety. In order to communicate the severity of this disruption, Flacius describes the high stakes on the part of divinity: "for God does not desire that ceremonies, which have served impiety for a long time, and at some point have been abolished on account of impiety, be reinstated. He gets vehemently angry not only for the sake of impiety itself, but also with regard to all of the things that pertain to it, and he says that those things that exist for the sake of idolatry, which are cultivated in the service of idolatry are contaminated, polluted, and unclean."[35] These bodily practices, Latin prayers, and materials that "pertain to impiety" are marked by the bad history of idolatry and will always retain its traces. That is to say, pseudo-*adiaphora* are not only polluted with idolatry, but are also contagious with false religion.

The traces of idolatry not only serve as reminders of the persistent fickleness of human nature, but they can also become triggers to release humanity's passion for the chaos of seductive spectacles. Thus every precaution must be taken. Flacius cites examples from the Hebrew Bible,

---

[34] Flacius begins this work with the following formula: "Omnes Caeremoniae et ritus quantumuis sua natura indifferentes desinunt esse adiaphora, cum accedit coatio, opinio, cultus et necessitatis, abnegatio, scandalum, manifesta occasio impietatis, et cum quocunque demum modo non aedificant, sed destruant Ecclesiam, ac Deum contumelia afficiunt" (132).

[35] "Nam Deus non vult restitui caeremonias, quae diu impietati servierunt, et semel ob impietatem abolitae sunt. Irascitur non solum ipsi impietati uehementer, sed et omnibus eius circumstantijs, dicit solum ipsum ob idolatrias, quae in eo exercentur, contaminari, pollui, et immundum esse*"* (244).

focusing on Moses's treatment of the precious metals from which the Golden Calf was formed: "Likewise Moses solemnly curses and destroys the Golden Calf, just as God seethes zealously and furiously against the materials themselves [*ipsas materias*] as well as the other circumstances of idolatry."[36] False worship, superstition, and idolatry leave behind a palpable blemish on the very materials that are used to erect the idols, and this is why in the Biblical narrative, the temple of Baal and other dwellings for idols were turned into "sewers and latrines" ["*locis idolatriarum cloacas et latrinas fecerunt*"] (C 7/r). The blemish adheres to their substance, yet consists of intangible factors, such as the intentions of the people who previously practiced the rituals, as well as the historical conditions of its genesis.[37] Yet even objects that had once served a sacred purpose, such as the bronze serpent from Numbers 21, forfeit all honor when humans begin to worship them in place of the divinity (246). It does not matter if some of these practices were instituted by the Church Fathers "since they have already been contaminated deep inside with idolatry and papist abuses for a long time, and thus are no longer ceremonies of the Fathers, but of the Antichrist, and it is pious when they are abolished, and impious if they are reinstated against the will of God" (ibid.). Flacius is keen to invoke and describe divine rage, emphasizing a jealousy that is almost limitless. He also harmonizes his rhetoric with divine judgment: if God reveals the idols to be filth by turning their temples into sewers and latrines, Flacius must continue to speak of the pseudo-*adiaphora* in scatological and corporeal terms, smearing their innocuous surfaces. This is all the more urgent given the intangibility of the corruption.

[36] "Moises etiam ipsum aurum uituli aurei detestatur et perdit, Adeo feruens odium et zelum habet Deus, etiam contra ipsas materias et alias circumstantias idolatriae" (ibid.).
[37] Joachim Westphal, *Zwo Schriften M. Joachimi Westphali, Pfarherrn zu Hamburg* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550) A iiij [v].

But what exactly is the relationship between the pollution of the materials themselves and the desecration of the soul of the Christian? In his response to the wave of iconoclasm that swept across Germany in the 1520s, Martin Luther wrote that it was superfluous to tear down idols, if the idols themselves have already been "torn out of the heart of the believer" through the correct preaching of the Gospel ["*durchs wort Gottes aus den hertzen rysse und unwerd und veracht machte.*"][38] Fewer than thirty years later, Flacius is less optimistic with regard to the removal of the idols, arguing that the weaker members of the Church are all too ready to be converted back to the false religion. By affording iconoclasm such a central place in his rhetoric, Flacius reveals much about his own theological anthropology, which would become more explicit in the 1560s, and would end up being rejected in the Formula of Concord.[39] It would be absurd to hold the gold responsible for being shaped into an idol; the human maker remains the cause of the perversion. Indeed, the human contaminates the shaped material, and this material bears the trace of the perversion of humanity. Through this contamination, whereby idolatry is deposited in otherwise innocuous objects, other human beings may be infected. This suggests that the idols can never be "torn out" of the post-lapsarian heart in any complete fashion, for the *imago dei* has been obliterated; in its place festers a diabolical disease, "an image of Satan…infected by poison deep within."[40] Idols pollute the souls of the pious by reopening the scars that outline this satanic image in their hearts.

One practical as well as symbolic example of the damage done by corrupted rituals pertained to the language used for worship. The symbolic aspect stretches back to the attempts of

---

[38] *Wider die himmlischen Propheten*, in *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Vol. 18, ed. Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1908), 37 – 214 at 67.
[39] Over the course of a controversy with Viktorin Strigel, Flacius would go on to claim that the essence of postlapsarian humanity had been completely blotted out by evil. Cf. *Disputatio de originali peccato et libero arbitrio…*(Basle: Johann Oporinus, 1562).
[40] "est ad imaginem Satanae transformatus," Thesis III, A 1[r].

the Wittenberg Reformation to make scripture and worship more meaningful for the laity through a new emphasis on participation and comprehension. This aspect of the divine service was thought to have been put in jeopardy when it was revealed that the Interim would entail a return to Latin hymns and prayers.[41] For Flacius, this re-oriented the church service back toward a sacralized model of priestly intervention. Scandal would thus result among the pious, since the priest's linguistic isolation in the celebration of the Mass served to "obscure the Gospel" and shift the purpose of ritual from awed-recognition and thanksgiving back to magical superstition.[42] According to this critique, the return to liturgical Latin involved discarding a beneficial human tradition, the communal singing of vernacular hymns, and replacing it with an older, corrupted variation. Both fall under this category of human traditions, yet they are differentiated by the fact that the former has been instituted as a useful tool for the celebration of the Gospel, while the latter is taken, according to Flacius, to be an essential component of religious truth by its advocates, a pseudo-religion that amounts to 'tradition for tradition's sake.'[43] By contrast, the singing of German hymns (among German-speaking congregations) contributes to the true worship of God, that is, the alignment between correct affective response (sincere gratitude, *timor dei*) and doctrinal comprehension (*sola fides, sola gratia*) on the part of the Christian. With respect to the use of these hymns, Flacius refers to a Biblical iteration of the divine command for order: the command in Deuteronomy 31.19-22 that the common people

[41] For Latin in the "Außtzug," consult PKMS 4, no. 397, 451. Cf. Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002) 117.
[42] "Postea uero cum et Romani suam linguam coeperunt mutare, item ea forma publicarum caeremoniarum ad alias gentes ignaras sermonis latini prelata est, item Euangelium coeptum est obscuari, quia non intellexerunt usum illarum cantilenarum et lectionem esse aedificationem Ecclesiae, putaverunt esse opus quoddam, quod sua natura Deo placeret, atque adiecto Canone, alijsque quibusdam impijs ab Ecclesia eam actionem ad solos sacerdotes transtulerunt" ("De veris et falsis adiaphoris," 270).
[43] *"*[N]am caeremoniae sunt praecipui nerui papatus, et in eis summa religionis apud papistas collocatur" (ibid., 276).

learn by heart the wisdom of God through the repetition of song.[44] This selection of scriptural evidence indicates a pessimism with regard to theological anthropology that extends even into Flacius's praise of devotional singing. The song that Moses sets down in these verses of Deuteronomy is a prophetic testimony of the Israelites' future idolatry after God delivers them into Canaan, a proof-text for the Israelites to comprehend their own misery. A further Biblical citation in Flacius's text regarding the value of singing comes in 1 Samuel 16.33, where David uses his voice and the lyre to drive the evil spirits out of Saul. The use of this citation underscores the gravity surrounding this "useful" practice. Even if the specific words of these devotional songs remain "indifferent" according to Flacius's exposition, he represents communal singing as a crucial defense against diabolical influence, especially with regard to the young and those who of a weaker disposition. Singing "leads them away from crooked thoughts…and beats back the Devil."[45] If the true application of "human tradition" repels demonic forces, one is left to draw the appropriate conclusion with regard to the false.[46]

Two overlapping social groups are most at risk in the displacement of vernacular hymns, the young and the "vulgar masses," [*nerrische Pöffel*] the unlearned [*stulta*,] who are most intractable when it comes to the proper reformation of the heart.[47] In writing of the latter, Flacius admits that the reformers have not been completely successful with liberating this "rabble" from their own devilishness, even before the onset of the Interim.[48] Now, with the return of

[44] This appears in the German translation from 1550, quoted in *Der Adiaphoristische Streit*, 273.
[45] "Qua ratione praesertim iuuenes et puellae se a prauis cogitationibus abducunut, ad pietatem excitant, et Diabolum a se pellunt, ut in historia Saul legitur. Quin & multos in grauibus miserijs tales cantilenae cogitatae consulantur*"* (ibid., 272 – 274).
[46] For the importance of usefulness in church *adiaphora*, consult Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 157 – 164.
[47] "Rabble," in the German translation of this text, *Der Adiaphoristische Streit*, 277.
[48] "Nostri Doctores uix potereunt explodere abusus reiectis absuum fundamentis. Imo nondum omnes suos auditores illis innatis abominationibus et superstitionibus liberarunt" (ibid., 276).

superstitious human traditions in place of the edifying, faithless "Epicureanism," (hypocrisy and indifference toward religion) will flourish.

Flacius's favorite scriptural metaphor for the moral lassitude of the common people is their propensity to prostituting themselves [*scortaturi.*] In the case of the "rabble," wantonness remained dormant and contained under the pressure of true worship and good governance, but in the presence of the "seats and instruments of impiety," the negative effects would become all the more pronounced.[49] This "prostitution" is both understood as a metaphor for faithlessness and literally an actual consequence of attenuated discipline, since "under the papacy, eating meat during Lent is considered a worse sin than prostitution or scamming one's neighbor," and thus lewdness would be more tolerated in the new "Epicurean" church.[50] In the same way, Flacius explains that one of the "shameful" aspects of the compromises is that when the young people no longer understand the words of the liturgical songs, they will become more interested in one another's bodies than in the divine service.[51] Also significant for the Evangelical doctrine of grace is the representation of "*adiaphora*-prostitution" as an expression of a market-mentality and works-righteousness. Because the ceremonies in question are associated with the "magic" of *ex opere operato*, the common people would believe that simply hearing a Mass could safeguard their salvation, and as a result moral seriousness would become superfluous.[52]

The conflict between the Church of Christ and the Church of the Antichrist is not only waged in the field of doctrine, but also in the smallest details of embodied practice and experience. Corporeal participation in ritual becomes the first line of battle. Original sin has

[49] "Cum uero restituentur illarum impietatum sedes et instrumenta, multo minus eis resistere poterunt. Non est dubium quin infiniti post illas abominationes statim sint *scortaturi*, ut scriptura saepe loquitur" (ibid., my emphasis).
[50] "In papatus habetatur longe maius nefas commedere carnes die uerneris, aut in quadragesima, quam scortari, aut proximum decipere" (ibid., 268).
[51] Ibid. 274 – 275.
[52] Ibid., 268.

rendered humanity vulnerable to the bodily senses, and the Roman ceremonies "invade" [*incurrant*] through the eyes of the spectator, so that human beings stand in awe of them. The divine message is blocked out by a flood of gestures and sensations that bear no relation to it. Sin pushes this false religion forward "because it is easier to mime the rituals than be in accordance with the commands of God with all of one's heart" (ibid., 268). It is no coincidence that for Flacius the easy way to sin is most readily accessed by practices that take advantage of human embodiment.

IV. From pollution to a plague of idolatry

While *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris* is recognized by contemporary scholars as a seminal work in the development of Lutheran confessional identity[53], certain others of Flacius's pamphlets, notably, *Christiana Admonitio Matthiae Flacij Illyrici de uitando impij Adiaphoristarum fermenti contagio* […] (1550) have been passed over.[54] This is not altogether surprising, given the fact that Flacius composed or contributed to scores of different works between the years 1548 and 1552. Unlike *Liber*, this pamphlet has never been, to the best of my knowledge, translated into the vernacular. The fact that it appeared in Latin indicated the elite level of the intended readership. It was not written to excite the masses; numerous vernacular "*Schmähschriften"* were already fulfilling that function.[55] Rather, I read this text as communicating a final break between Flacius and his old teachers and colleagues. Even if *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris* was fiercely polemical, it still attempted to persuade the other side

[53] *Liber* is treated extensively in R. Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst* 143 – 147. *Christiana Admonitio Matthiae Flacij Illyrici de uitando impij Adiaphoristarum fermenti contagio secundum regulam Christi de admonendo fratre peccante institutia* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550).
[54] *Christiana Admonitio Matthiae Flacij Illyrici de uitando impij Adiaphoristarum fermenti contagio secundum regulam Christi de admonendo fratre peccante institutia* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550).
[55] Cf. Thomas Kaufmann's most useful bibliography (by year and author) on the textual production of Magdeburg, in *Das Ende der Reformation*, *Magdeburgs "Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1548-1551/2)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) Anhang 1, 493 – 554.

through systematic presentation of the salient topics, refutations of counter-arguments, and the construction of a counter-public of Evangelical dissenters. What is on display in *Christiana Admonitio* is the next stage of development in the rhetoric of infection and pollution, that is, the rhetoric of quarantine and excommunication. The title of the tract admonishes its readers to "avoid contact with the impious leaven of the Adiaphorists," thus indicating that considerations of the pathology of "Adiaphorism" have shifted from the materials and practices of ritual to the souls of those who argue in favor of them.

The "leaven" in question is of course a Biblical reference to Jesus's admonition to his disciples to "beware the leaven of the Pharisees," as well as Paul's rhetorical question to the Corinthians "do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?"[56] In the relevant passage from Luke, Jesus interprets his own image as signifying pharisaical hypocrisy. Flacius takes up this meaning as well as the corporeal sense of contamination. The representation of such a spiritual infection does not stop with this Biblical figure, but continues with the invocation of the language of plague and leprosy. That is, exposure to the "Adiaphorists" and their rituals not only muddles opinions and faith, but also leaves a visible blight [*scabies*] (A 3^{v}). In many instances in the Synoptic Gospels, the miracle of the healing of lepers stands as a sign that Jesus's ministry is God-ordained.

However, the lepers against whom Flacius contends are beyond healing or persuading: "they are incapable of providing me with an account of their reasoning, for it is just as if they had been completely bewitched and blinded" (B 1^{v}). Indeed, in the preface to *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris*, he had already asked how much worse spiritual slavery was than physical, and the same principle applies to the figures of plague and leprosy used in this text. Another scriptural

[56] Matthew 16.6, Luke 12.1, and 1 Corinthians 5.6-7, NRSV.

citation obtains for Flacius's denunciation, this time from the Book of Revelation: "so the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth, and a foul and painful sore came on those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image."[57] Thus the use of plague-imagery fits squarely with the eschatological interpretation of history that obtains in the theological critique of "Adiaphorism" that streamed out of Magdeburg.[58] It is important to note that in the Revelation passage, the plague-sores occur by divine command while corresponding to the state of the soul for those afflicted. In other words, the sores of the plague are the sign of God's condemnation. They are simultaneously dangerous for the innocent and essential for distinguishing between false and true Christians.

This latter point is essential for the intensification of conflict within the Evangelical camp during the decades of controversy between the Interim (1547) and the stipulation of confessional norms in the Formula of Concord (1577). To describe one's opponents as stricken with the plague of divine wrath [*iram diuinam*] simultaneously entailed a positive claim of one's own doctrinal and spiritual purity. Nestled together with the rhetorical imagery of scabbed, pestiferous bodies is the invocation of the discerning powers of the Holy Spirit: "the Stoical and tough opinion of the Holy Spirit seems excessive to those gentle Peripatetics (and even Epicureans,) and this is the same Spirit who commands Paul and Jonathan to excommunicate this sort, i.e., those who have corrupted the Gospel of Jesus Christ through either the observation of ceremonies and vane philosophy or even through forms of fraud [*species fucoscas*]" (A 2^{r}). Flacius acts as the surrogate of the Spirit, charged with the special task of purifying sacred space, as well as isolating, excluding, and even silencing, those who would spread the disease.

---

[57] Revelation 16.2, NRSV.
[58] Thomas Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 430 – 484 and Anja Moritz, *Interim und Apokalypse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009)211 – 281.

The partisans of Wittenberg always regarded Flacius's intervention as an attempt to expropriate church power, and they had already expressed this view by the time this pamphlet was brought out.[59] This problem lies at the center of the text, and an awareness of its importance helps to clarify the recourse to the figures of an apocalyptic quarantine. Flacius does not sidestep this challenge, but reproduces the charge of usurpation made against him (A 6^{r}). Yet he refuses to accept that his act of admonition must be read as a violation of the "chain of command," for as opposed to the slavishly hierarchical church of the Antichrist, the church of Christ calls for the individual Christians to come to the aid of their brothers and sisters in the event of danger (A 6^{v}). The principle of admonishing the neighbor is grounded upon "zeal for the protection of the true religion" [*studio tuendi ueram religionem,*] which in this particular case, extends to warning other Christians "to avoid the Adiaphorists, keeping away from them as if from spoiled leaven, or leprous men, in order that these Christians not be infected similarly by their sickness through contact" (A 6^{r}). A specific form of this hazardous "contact" [*contagium*] is having dealings or intercourse [*contrecto*] with the infected, a verb that possesses sexual connotations in Latin. This connotation gets accented by Flacius as he speaks with the voice of a simple Christian, telling his brothers to stay away from the Adiaphorists "so that you don't caress [*contrectes*] this filthy pitch [*pix*,] otherwise you will also be smeared with it" (A 6^{v}).[60] This links the notions of ritual, moral, and religious purity back to the rhetoric of chastity and promiscuity that plays such an important role in Flacius's treatment of the corrupted materials and gestures of idolatry.

The layering of tropes of infection and pollution produce in Flacius's discourse what it previously lacked—the obvious signs of contamination and moral collapse. In a move that is

[59] Cf. Johann Pfeffinger, "Gründlicher und Wahrhafftiger Bericht," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* ed. Irene Dingel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 698. This point would be made more satirically later in Johann Major's *Synodus avium* (1557).

[60] "Singlui pie possunt ac debent monere suos fratres, hic pix est, ne contrectes eam, alioqui inquinaberis ab ea."

reminiscent of the rhetoric of Luther and his great classical rhetorical influence Quintilian, Flacius's recourse to the discourse of contamination seeks to render present what had thus far been absent. Quintilian explains that the utility of evocative imagery in persuasion in this way: "What the Greeks call φαντασίαι *(phantasiai)* we call *visiones,* images by which the representations of absent objects are so distinctly represented to the mind that we seem to see them with our eyes and to have them before us. Whoever shall best conceive such images will have the greatest power in moving the feelings."[61] That which must be rendered present is the sign of guilt, betrayal, and danger to the Evangelical cause, and the tangibility of Flacius's metaphors help to animate and incarnate what was at first a technical debate over an ancient, obscure moral category. His accusation of "spiritual leprosy" depends on the vivid presentation of a pathology that consumes and corrupts body and soul simultaneously.[62]

Douglas's intervention in the anthropology of impurity shows that the appearance of pollution provides evidence of wrongdoing and simplifies the forensic situation, so that guilt offers up its own legible signature. Flacius needs rhetoric to produce the corporeal signature of spiritual corruption, and what's more, that rhetoric must capture the self-evidence of this denigration.[63] Turning to "that spiritual cancer," [*spiritualem istum cancrum*] from 1 Corinthians is the key move in this development, because to speak of an infectious cancer is to speak of a disease that puts its essence on display.[64] The visibility of cancer constituted its identity as a

[61] Quintilian, *Institutes*, 6.2.29-30. For the connection between Quintilian's rhetoric and Luther's ideas about faith and rhetoric, cf. Klaus Dockhorn. "Luthers Glaubensbegriff und die Rhetorik." *Linguistica biblica* 21 (1973): 19-39.
[62] Cf. David Nirnberg on the overlap between the spiritual and the corporeal with respect to leprosy in medieval southern France and the Kingdom of Aragon (*Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998], 57).
[63] Quintilian, 6.2.32: citing Cicero, Quintilian argues that what is necessary is to produce the "evidentness" *[evidentia*] through a kind of *enargeia* in the oration which produces and shows more than it narrates.
[64] *Christiana Admonitio* B 1[r].

disease in Latin medieval natural philosophy, and thus factored into the diagnosis of the disease and the subsequent isolation of the patient from the community.[65] Flacius makes great use of the visibility of the *adiaphora*-plague, repeatedly citing his "plain, clear experience" with the disease and its carriers (A 8^{r}, B 1^{r}). These citations and repetitions of multiple and overlapping sites of pollution make the distinction between plague as metaphor and a literal contamination of bodies all the more obscure. Nevertheless, a hierarchy of threats persists: the spiritual over the corporeal. Flacius has conjured these images of bodies eaten away by leprosy, only to beseech his audience "that we might recognize how much worse contact with spiritual lepers is than with lepers of the flesh."[66] The terrible imagery of the plague turns in a split second from grim realism to spiritual allegory.

By making the threat to the German churches self-evident in this way, Flacius is thus in a better position to authorize his critique: "I have done nothing that oversteps my proper duty, precisely in consideration of the fact that I am not merely a private person, but rather occupy a certain position, as I have proven elsewhere. What's more, the issue here is self-evident [*res ipsa declarat*]" (A 6^{v}). Not only is the severity of the guilt of the "Adiaphorists" self-evident, but so are the consequences of their treachery. Flacius invites his "earnest Christian reader" to ponder [*perpendere*] not only whether these men ought to be excommunicated, but also whether they have not already been excommunicated *de facto*. And indeed, when the right-thinking Christian considers the situation, and compares his views with others whose true piety is manifest, he will come to understand that the deed has already been done at the sociological and political level, since the true confessors of the Gospel have made a space between themselves and the

[65] R. I. Moore, Heresy as disease." *The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1973) 1 – 11 at 3.
[66] "Agnoscamus etiam obsecro, longe maius malum esse contagium spiritualis leprae, quam carnalis" (B 3^{r}).

hypocrites. (A 7^{r}). The malefactors have already been excommunicated "above all by God himself" [*non tantum ab Ecclesia, sed imprimis ab ipso Deo excommunicatos*] (A 8^{r} – ^{v}). "Adiaphorism" thus becomes the sign of a disease used by God to torment the wicked and drive them out before the entire church.[67] This is, as it were, Flacius's answer to Bernhard Ziegler's call for unity and brotherhood: 'keep away from me, leper!'[68]

Augustine of Hippo is perhaps one of the first Christian theologians to speak of heresy as a disease operating for a providential end, explaining that those heretics who hold fast to their "pestiferous and fatal teachings" [*pestifera et mortifera dogmata*] actually discipline the Church through hardship, and thereby serve the divine purpose.[69] This suggestion of the positive use of the enemies of the church becomes radicalized by 1550; Flacius's opponents are now beyond persuasion, servants of the Devil, and intermediate causes in the divine administration of the eschaton. They represent God's judgment of the betrayers of the Gospel, while providing those who are rightly guided by the Holy Spirit with an opportunity to show themselves and shepherd the faithful through these final tests of perseverance (B 4^{r}).[70]

Augustine's use of the plague metaphor to describe heresy was taken up again and again in the medieval Latin Christianity. R.I. Moore shows how this trope was deployed against theological challengers such as the Cathars, appearing in the writings of William the Monk, Peter the Venerable, William of Newburgh, and Eckbart of Schönau. According to Moore, the association between heresy and plague was not simply a favored literary motif but also was also used to describe and classify the degenerate behavior of the heretic. Thus heresy was taken as a

---

[67] "Videant pij, ne ipsi aliter iudicent, seque etiam tum leprae Adiaphoristicae, tum irae diuinae participes faciant" (A 8^{v}).
[68] Consult Chapter I, Section VI above.
[69] *De civitate dei*, 18.51, 613.
[70] Flacius speaks of *Mahometistis.* In German, *Mammaluck* was used during this period to signify mercenary behavior in matters of faith; cf. Nathan Rein, *Chancery of God*, 118.

spiritual form of plague, rather than plague serving merely as a metaphor for heresy.[71] Even if the heart of the matter lay in matters of doctrine, by treating heresy as a disease, these medieval writers ceaselessly evoked the ravaged body in their condemnations.[72]

Another revealing example of the classificatory and rhetorical uses of pestilence from the medieval church appears in moral theology, specifically the development of "Sodomy" as a category of sin and the "Sodomite" as a character type. Mark D. Jordan explores the discursive production of these types in the work of the eleventh century theologian, Peter Damian. Damian's Sodomite is not strictly a medical or legal personage, yet it is nonetheless frequently compared to the cause of plagues, plague itself, a tumorous growth [cancer,] a wound or wounded member, and a raging contagion.[73] Like heresy, sodomy afflicts body and soul, with the perverted body being the site of infection and transmission of the disease. These examples from the history of theology in western Christendom are not only important for demonstrating the enduring and wide-ranging application of the plague-trope. Beyond this, by placing the *adiaphora* controversy in this context, we can sharply see the continuities and ruptures among the different Christian theological usages of the metaphor of disease and plague.

Just like the authors treated by Moore, the participants in the *adiaphora* controversy considered bodily and spiritual corruption to be thoroughly intertwined, becoming, at moments, indiscernible. At stake in the sixteenth-century controversy was not simply an argument over doctrine. The debate was about how the performance of certain rituals encode, perform, and transmit forms of theology and pestiferous idolatry. That is, it concerned the incarnation of theological teaching through public ritualization. Similar to the sodomitic bodies addressed by

---

[71] Moore, "Heresy as Disease," 9
[72] Ibid., referring to William the Monk's condemnation of Henry of Lausane, quoted on p. 11.
[73] Paraphrasing 57, fn. 54 in *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

Peter Damian, the threat to the church comes through bodily experience, pleasures, and mimesis. However the issue was not the secret conduct of the members of religious orders in their cells, but rather the infection of Christian bodies in the public celebration of the Gospel.

Such publicity indicates the political aspects of the controversy: the importance of domestic and foreign policy in the shaping of religious ordinances that came to be judged as "infected." Compromise on *adiaphora* was as much a political decision as it was a theological one, an instance of religion as an object of secular governance and a tool for diplomacy. The rhetoric of plague in this case was employed to characterize the idolatrous ambition of the early modern state as much as the theological and moral deviance within the ecclesiastical sphere of influence. Again and again, dissidents would present the ritual compromises in Saxony as part of a chain of cause and effect that originated with the Antichrist.[74] From this point of view, Maurice of Saxony's use of *adiaphora* to settle with the religious policy of the emperor was yet another moment of the selfish rationalizations of human reason, "the blindness of the Old Adam," which would desecrate and devastate the Church.[75] What we see in the concern about "the contagion" of false ritual is the notion that the folly of human wisdom might spread the plague of idolatry through the imposition of polluted objects and gestures, the stamping of "the sign of the Beast" on Evangelical bodies. Thus both poles of sacred history, the Fall and the Apocalypse, are brought together in the figure of the idolatrous Adiaphorist, who is the point of transfer between the Old Adam and the Whore of Babylon.

Conclusion:

In what is considered to be one of the definitive historical-anthropological treatments of changes to ritual in the Reformation of the German lands, Susan Karant-Nunn asserts that

[74] "De veris et falsis adiaphoris," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548 – 1560)*, 240.
[75] Flacius, *Christiana Admonitio*, A 2^{r}.

revisions of ritual practice served to refigure the presence of evil in the world as something operative within the human being, disrupting the notion that Satan attacked the soul by means of external and material causes.[76] Karant-Nunn sees this internalizing of evil as concomitant with the social disciplining of the masses, which nonetheless faced stubborn opposition through the conservation of a more materialistic-supernatural world-view prominent among the peasantry and "common folk."[77] Yet my reading of the rhetoric of pollution and contagion complicates this assessment. It is clear from the writings of the *adiaphora*-skeptics that the habituation of the body was of central importance in maintaining the ideological purity of the Evangelical churches, a fact quite familiar to Karant-Nunn in her investigation of church visitation records. However, she treats this trend in social discipline as qualitatively different from the supernatural-materialistic emphasis on the body. In this chapter, I have attempted to show how the internalization of evil that Karant-Nunn detects could only transpire through a reverse process of transfer between body and soul, between contaminated vestments and the vulnerable *imago dei*. She is right to point out that part of the "Reformation of ritual" was the denial of the magical efficacy of sacramentals.[78] Yet the very gesture of refusing false *adiaphora* also reinvested them with moral and eschatological power, figured by the apocalyptic infestation of ritual materials and gestures.[79] The rejected *Chorrock*, the oils, salts, and the gestures of the sign of the Cross were not magical, yet they were no less dangerous as instances of *Teufelsdreck*, the corrupting stain of evil.

---

[76] *Reformation of Ritual,* 70
[77] Ibid., 70 – 71.
[78] Ibid., 45 – 54 and 70 – 71 for the place of sacramentals in baptism before and during the Reformations.
[79] Robert W. Scribner, "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the "Disenchantment of the World,"" 482-483. Scribner critiques the notion that Evangelical religion "desacralizes" the world and time through the citation of Luther's eschatology. Cf. Alexandra Walsham, "The Reformation and 'the disenchantment of the world reassessed," 497-528.

In this chapter I have shown how for an influential set of Protestant theologians ritual was not an innocuous, disenchanted tool for stabilizing society, but rather possessed the capacity to pollute the Church through material connections to an idolatrous past and an apocalyptic future. Beyond that I demonstrated the importance of rhetoric for making the "plague" of Adiaphorism a self-evident reality. In the following chapter I address the symptoms of this theological disease.

Chapter V:

'Experience, bright as day': Descrying Deception in the Adiaphora Controversy

I. Introduction: anxieties of appearance and experience

The metaphors of contamination and contagion were not the only tropes used to present the dangers of compromise during the *adiaphora* controversy, though they set the stage for the rhetoric to be examined in this chapter. That is to say, if "Adiaphorism" is a spiritual plague, it is essential to understand the symptoms of this disease better. At the same time, images of plague and its filth, as I showed Chapter IV, were used to mark, sully, and shame the proponents of compromise. This had the function of making invisible sins "visible" through figurative language.

The other important gesture for exposing the "Adiaphoric fraud" was that of detecting and unmasking. Through wood-cut images and literary enactments, the theological dissidents lay bare the unsavory motives and spiritual blindness of their opponents for all to see. In so doing, they revealed Adiaphorism's effect on the soul: it prevented its victims from experiencing the difference between truth and falsehood, good and evil, idolatry and religion. It inhibited the proper sense of shame in the embarrassing calamity of compromise with the Antichrist. Indeed, the dissidents would argue that they had struggled long enough to keep the disgrace of their old teachers and colleagues "covered up," but in the present emergency worldly pieties had to give way to the revelations of divine justice.

In this chapter, I argue that the gesture of uncovering secret corruption emerges out of the tension between two sensibilities of the *adiaphora* skeptics:

1. An iconoclastic skepticism regarding false appearances, especially as they manifest themselves in ritual and rhetoric.[1]

2. A profound reliance on the authentic experience of the Protestant Gospel, especially in scenes of worship, but also in practices of reading and reflection.

For the dissidents authentic experience of the pure Gospel was extremely valuable and at the same time vulnerable to being counterfeited and tainted —ritual was at once an act of deception and a form of communion with the sacred. One strategy for coping with this tension was to shame those who contributed to ambiguity of religious experience and thus damaged its reputation through their negotiations in ceremonial matters. The divine cult was in danger of becoming ridiculous through the idiocy of old professors. Those mocked, such as Melanchthon or Pfeffinger, were used as living examples of the divine curse that cut off human beings from the grace of knowing and experiencing the Gospel in this life. Here we may see an unintended consequence of intense polemic about ritual in this period: ritual's association with the debased and shameful became all the more enduring as Protestants struggled to secure the practices of "true religion."

The controversialists concern with link between authentic experience and authentic worship connects their literary efforts to ongoing scholarly discussions about the role of experience in the production of modernity. Early modern Europe has been marked out as a period when the value of outward appearances was put into question. This critical scrutiny (which may only be spoken of in the singular for heuristic purposes) applied not only to the accumulation of knowledge in natural philosophy (Descartes and Bacon,) but also to the

[1] For the polemical link between ritual and rhetoric, consult Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 294 – 302 and Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 221 – 238.

masking of motives and the presentation of the Renaissance courtier in games of power (Machiavelli and Shakespeare.)[2] Recently, Susan E. Schreiner has linked scholarly discussions of the anxieties concerning appearance and certainty in the early modern period to the core theological issues that animated creative developments in the theologies of the Reformations.[3] Schreiner demonstrates the tragic dynamic of the "search for certainty" of this time, showing on the one hand how desperately desired an absolute ground for valid judgment was (for example in the Protestant rallying cry of *sola scriptura*,) and on the other hand that the many of the same historical figures who sought certainty also knew the well-nigh hopeless difficulty of attaining it: "this may lead to the awareness of perspective and the intuition of the intellect or to the belief that we live in a closed world of idolatry from which or reason cannot escape—or to the insight that truth can be found "in the center" of a bloody and tragic reality."[4] That is, the search of authentic experience made certain intellectuals grapple with the possibility that the world was a giant illusion and the spell could only be broken in moments of tragedy and suffering.

The two points concerning a "closed world of idolatry" and the manifestation of truth through blood and sorrow hang together in the discursive strands of the controversy literature of the 1540's and 50's. Schreiner explores the relationship between these two concepts through an analysis of Luther's Genesis Lectures. In her reading, Luther dwells on the consequences of the

---

[2] Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2005), 9 – 77; Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-fashioning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 67. Victora Kahn, "Revising the history of Machiavellism: English Machiavellism and the Doctrine of Things Indifferent," *Renaissance Quartlery* 46 (1993): 526-561, quoted by Reimund Sdzuj, *Adiaphorie und Kunst: Studien zur Genealogie ästhetischen Denkens* (Tübingen: Max Niedermeyer, 2005) 159.

[3] Susan E. Schreiner, *Are You Alone Wise: The Search for Certainty in the Early Modern Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[4] Ibid., 392.

temptation and fall for humanity's capacities to sense and judge from experience.[5] "The world of idolatry" is of course the work of Satan, who fabricates doppelgängers for the Gospel and the Church in order to lure humanity away from God's commands and promises: "Satan hides most thoroughly by fulfilling the spiritual needs of humanity" in an idolatry that seems to be anything but to those caught up in its illusion.[6] Meanwhile, the only available means for cutting through the cobwebs is the provocation of the cross, "the God "who comes under a contrary appearance,"" and thereby disrupts common-sense associations between appearance and reality.[7] That is to say, the theology of the cross separates signifier and signified, with the salvation and hope of humanity arriving through a person of most humble worldly circumstances dying a brutal and painful death.

Leo Joseph Koerner describes this interruption of signification as the iconoclastic gesture of Luther's theology, a gesture that retains imagistic signs for pedagogical purposes, yet in so doing, distorts and subverts the image.[8] Koerner reads Luther's Epiphany Sermon from 1528, in which the Reformer explains the purpose behind divine revelation in language. Without this linguistic revelation, the image of the truth would be incomprehensible. It is as if God had crudely painted something that looked like a horse, and then inscribed it with the caption of "cow."[9] The Incarnation steps forward in an unlikely and baffling guise; without the inscription, which Luther links to the testimony of John the Baptist, the truth would be thoroughly occluded

---

[5] Schreiner notes on 327 that Luther will often speak of a ""leprosy" that crept into the "perceptual powers of the soul.""

[6] Ibid., 331.

[7] Ibid., 332.

[8] *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) 210 – 211.

[9] "Spiritus Sanctus promisit, quod Christus nasceretur Bethlehem et **hats fur gros not ansehen**, ut in scripturam **wird verfast**. Quare? quia si Christum non suscipimus in scriptura, nemo suscipit. Ut malus pictor, quando vult pingere vaccam et depingit equum, oportet **druber schrieb** vacca. Sic deus **schreibt boß ding**" (WA 27, 14.1 – 3).

by its appearance. As Koerner observes, this act of pedagogy necessitates that "God ruins the painting" ["deus **verderbt das gemeld**"].[10] As powerful as this [distorted] image may be, it still does not provide much help in distinguishing the hidden God [*deus absconditus*] from the disguised Devil. Both sides are important for Schreiner's study of the "anxieties" of certainty in the 16th century, yet the qualitative difference between them remains implicit. One might ask, for example, who is more hidden, the Living God, or the Father of Lies.[11]

The tension between divine and satanic hiddenness is manifest in the debates of the *adiaphora* controversy and that dilemma elicited a particular rhetorical solution, that is, the ironic representation of the Devil's cunning, if tattered, disguises in contrast to God's majesty and power. In this context either the prophetic announcement of divine judgment or the evangelical message of divine mercy serve to rend the cloak that hides the demonic countenance. Yet the Gospel proclamation itself encompasses a reversed appearance, a god born in a manger together with the impassioned, crucified Christ. When the rhetoric of the *adiaphora* critics emphasizes this mysterious aspect of the divine message, it simultaneously foregrounds the real dangers of satanic subterfuge, the betrayal and mockery of a vulnerable Christ. The feeling of danger these authors try to elicit ties together pious horror at the humiliation of the Incarnation and the vulnerability of the souls of Protestant laity in the face of "the abominations" of the Interim-era liturgies being enforced in the German lands. They must get their audience to snigger at yet another bumbling attempt to betray Christ and his purified Church, while stoking paranoia about that very possibility. Satan is both a buffoon and a deadly serpent; God is both a broken body and the omnipotent patriarch of history. These supernatural personages are by turns hidden and revealed, humiliated and triumphant. The critics of the

[10] *Reformation of the Image*, 211; WA 27, 14.5.
[11] Schreiner, *Are You Alone Wise*, 294, 299.

compromises seem to recognize how bewildering these reversals could appear for both the learned and the humble, and they thus put forward a criterion of recognizability: uncompromising confession of the truth up to and beyond the point of self-sacrifice.[12]

In this chapter I explore that two forms of "fraud" arise for the *adiaphora* critics. The first is the deception of the masses through forms of ritual that "overload their senses" and thereby make them amenable to idolatrous styles and notions.[13] However the emphasis in the controversy literature falls most heavily upon the second from, i.e., the self-deception of the learned. While the poor unlettered are the victims of their embodied experiences, the theologians are shown to be the victims of repressing embodied experience, pushing away the Gospel that provides clear testimony through the movements of the soul, whether in witnessing the mounting abuses in the liturgy or even heavenly messages encoded in dreams. That is, they either cannot or will not countenance the authentic appearance of the Gospel and delude themselves with sophistry. The political pressure promoting the reintroduction of the alb, the epitome of "false *adiaphora*," along with all of the other demonic disguises in ritual matters, are the occasion for a subtler form of demonic disguise, self-deception through "fleshly" reason [*illa ueteris Adami impia sapientia*].[14] False appearance for these fallen intellectuals are represented in the controversy literature as illusions produced by over-subtle rationalizations and corrupted, sophistic rhetoric all for the sake of political tranquility. As a result of their

---

[12] See Section II below. For some examples of the importance of suffering for the pamphleteers of the period, cf. Flacius, *Vermanung…zur gedult vnd glauben zu Gott / im Creutz, dieser verfolgung* (1551) as well as Erasmus Sarcerius, *Creutzbüchlein* (1550). For analysis of the latter, consult Irene Dingel ""Der rechten lehr zuwider" : die Beurteilung des Interims in ausgewählten theologischen Reaktionen," *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaftskrise Und Glaubenskonflikt*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005) 292 – 311, at 308 – 310.

[13] M. Flacius and N. Gallus, *Antwort…auf den brieff etlicher Prediger in Meißen* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550) A ij ^{v}; consult Section IV below.

[14] Flacius, *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris*, G 2 ^{r}

stunted affective and experiential capacities, the self-deceiving elites perpetuate the ritual deception of the masses through the corrupted rhetoric of Adiaphorism, which are akin to elaborate "Catholic" rituals, because, in the eyes of the dissidents, they both depend upon distraction and ornamentation to deceive.

What is essential in all of this is that both the divine and demonic operate in the world of this controversy through contradictory appearances and that the emphasis falls on how clearly they are experienced and judged. The great temptation of this chapter would be to break it up by partitioning false appearance and true experience. Yet this would betray their essential interdependence. Again and again, the controversialists struggle to articulate their "clear experience" of the Adiaphorist-deceit. Indeed they frequently speak of clarity, of self-evidence, after narrating their own experiences of doubt and confusion.[15] This speaks to the importance of authentic experience of the Gospel for navigating a world of false appearances—without this self-authenticating truths of the Gospel, one would be deceived and destroyed by satanic illusions.

Whether by "overwhelming the senses" or deadening the soul, the writers of the controversy descry a threat to religious experience. In his intellectual history of the appeal to experience in the modern West, Martin Jay foregrounds the internal diversity that constitutes the category itself. The "invocation" of experience is conditioned by specific challenges and thus produces unique iterations of the alleged meaning and power of experience.[16] Despite its historicity, Jay discerns a pattern in the invocation whereby the citation of experience appears as

[15] Two paradigmatic texts for this tendency are Flacius's *Apologia Matthiae Flacii Illyrici ad Scholam Vitebergensem* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549) and Gallus's *Eine Disputation von Mitteldingen* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550). Cf. Thomas Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, *Magdeburgs "Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1548-1551/2)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 231 – 240.

[16] *Songs of Experience*, 4.

"the nodal point of the intersection between public language and private subjectivity."[17] It is worthwhile to pose the question here, as to what kind of experience is at stake in the controversy, and how the private was allowed to become authoritative in public exchange.[18] As Jay remarks, drawing on the work of Joan Scott, the appeal to experience is often used as a foil, in opposition to another source of authority being called into question.[19] In this case, that other authority is the reputation of theologians of Wittenberg such as Melanchthon.

Authentic experience arises through being moved by the external manifestations of the Gospel, which are simultaneously the markers of the true Church.[20] Luther theorizes these in *Against the Heavenly Prophets* as including the visible sacraments of Baptism and Communion and the public preaching of the Gospel. He covers these external signs in a treatise defending the use of images in Christian worship, and even describes the reception of the sacraments and the hearing of the Word as a process in which the Gospel is traced upon the heart of the believer as an image.[21] Thus experiencing the external appearance of the Gospel allows its internal inscription, another way of describing the effective persuasion of the Holy Spirit. Both the external apprehension of and internal conversion to the Gospel are works of divine persuasion.[22] Authentic experience thus depends on access to the visible testimony of this divine rhetoric as

---

[17] Ibid., 6.

[18] "Experience is at once always already an interpretation *and* something that needs to be interpreted. What counts as experience is neither self-evident nor straightforward; it is always contested, and always therefore political…Experience is, in this approach, not the origin of our explanation, but that which we want to explain" (Joan W. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1991): 773 – 797, at 797).

[19] Jay, 4, citing "The Evidence of Experience."

[20] The doctrinal norm for this vision of the Church is set down in the Augsburg Confession, Article VII. "The Church is the congregation of the holy, in which the gospel is properly taught and the sacraments are properly administrated" (*A Melanchthon Reader*, trans. Ralph Keen [New York: Peter Lang, 1988] 101).

[21] *Selected Writings of Martin Luther,* Volume 3. Ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007) 177 – 178; 224.

[22] Klaus Dockhorn. "Luthers Glaubensbegriff und die Rhetorik." *Linguistica biblica* 21 (1973): 19 – 39.

well as in the proper psychological and spiritual response to its messages.[23] These criteria of authentic religious experience for Luther can help clarify the complaint of deception among the *adiaphora* skeptics.[24] Their critique was grounded in what they took to be their personal, yet normative experience of the true signs of the Gospel. For example, in narrating his spiritual struggle over the Interim, Nicholas Gallus cites his study of scripture, the hearing of certain discourses from reliable Evangelicals, and the witness of the Spirit, through which God wished "to seal the truth upon his heart" and provide certainty about the danger of the compromises.[25] Pseudo-*adiaphora* in the liturgy was thought to disrupt this sacred rhetoric of the Gospel, specifically with respect to non-elites, who needed the message communicated to them not only verbally but also in their overall experience of worship. With regard to the elites, it was suggested that the bad rhetoric of "Adiaphorism" had ruined something inside them, so that they were now incapable of being moved by the Spirit. The consequences were dire in both

---

[23] The theme of the visible message applied to the famous propaganda images of the Reformation. With regard to the divine task of propaganda imagery, the ex-superintendent of Torgau, Gabriel Didymus, writing in opposition to the Interim cites propaganda imagery created under Luther's watch by Lucas Cranach the Elder in 1545 that further extrapolates Luther's Antichristology. "Doctor Martinus, hath diesen Abgoth Bapst ihm 44. jhar erst recht gesehen vnd erkant, vnd solches Erkentnys mith munde, schrifft, vnd Bilden bekanth vnd bezeuget" (*Ein Kurzer Bericht und Antwort auf die neue Kirchenordnung 1549,* Dr. Loc. 10298 / 2, 44 ^{v}).

[24] Nathan Rein points to the criterion of inner experience in the case of Nicholas Gallus and Flacius as a ground for resistance in this period. However it is also important to add that just *any* kind of inner experience did not legitimate resistance in the eyes of the Magdeburgers. If it did, the critiques of the more radical Reformers would also be valid. Consult "From the History of Religions to the History of 'religion': The Late Reformation and the Challenge to Sui Generis Religion," *Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Early Modern German Culture: Order and Creativity, 1550-1750*, ed. Randolph Head and Daniel Christensen (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 27 – 44, at 39 – 40. Thomas Kaufmann makes a similar argument in his essay "'Erfahrungsmuster' in der frühen Reformation," *Historische Zeitschrift* 31 (2001): 281-306. For both scholars, the appeal to experience is an important persuasive technique in writing, yet they focus on how experience legitimizes and orients the authorial subject who is claiming that authority. What is inseparable from this process is the recourse to experience as a way of discrediting one's opponents, which involves questioning the "purity" of said opponent's experience, faculties, and judgment.

[25] "Zu dem / hat ich vnsern Herrn Gott / das er mir seiner zusagung nach / den Geist der Warheit geben / vnd mein hertz versiegeln wolte" (*Eine Disputation von Mitteldingen,* A iiij ^{v}). Cf. Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 237.

instances: authentic experience was either choked out, or short-circuited, so that the most self-evident facts became obscure for the afflicted.

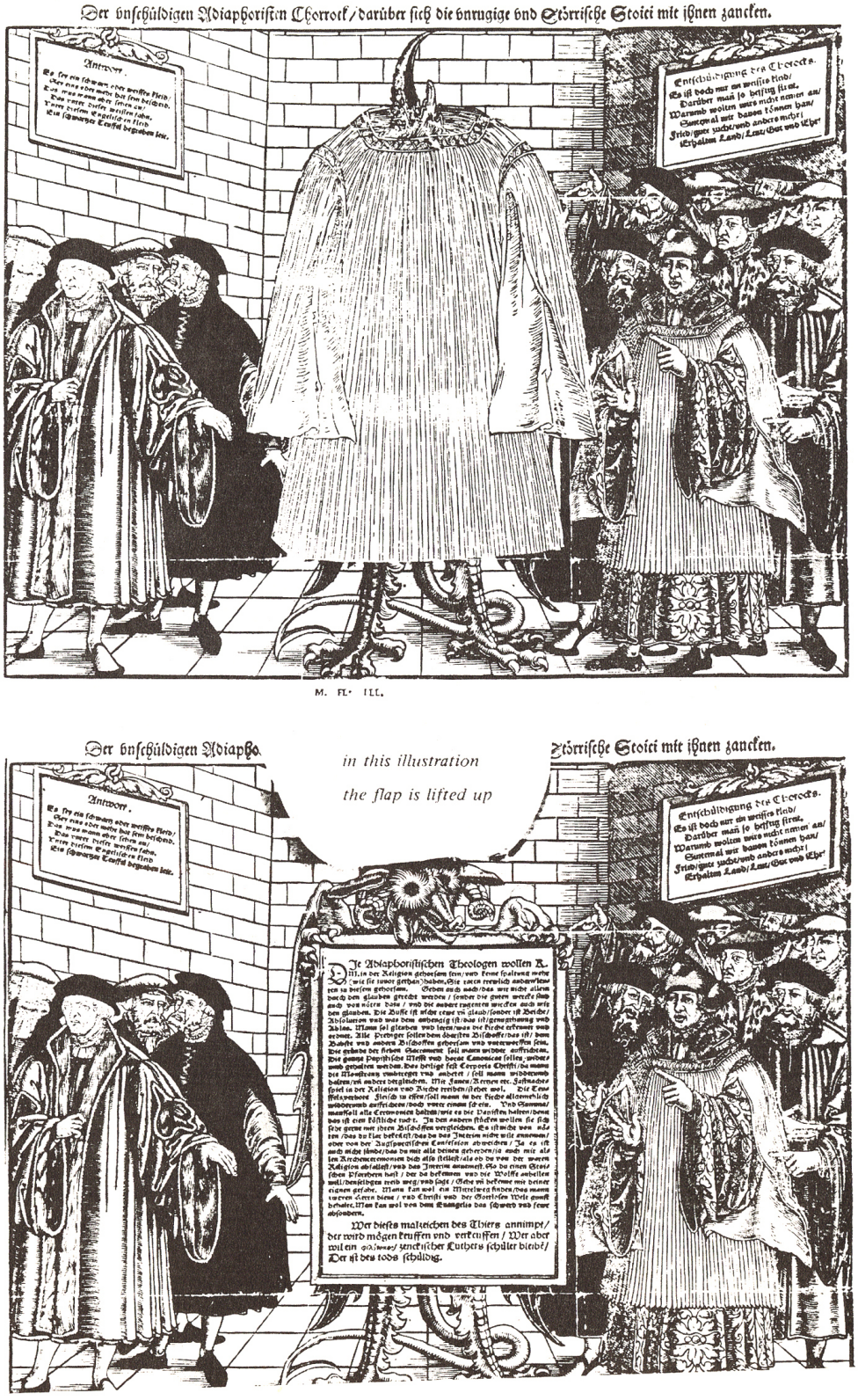

Fig. 1 ***Der unschüldigen Adiaphoristen Chorrock*****, woodcut by Pancratz Kempf**

II. Behind the alb: representing the false image of religion through an image

The theological propagandists of Magdeburg did not only denounce the false appearances of *pseudo-adiaphora* in treatises and *Schmähschriften*, but also made use of single-sheet wood-cut images to represent a complex theological argument through evocative imagery. One in particular, *Der unschuldigen Adiaphoristen Chorrock*, or "The innocent Adiaphorist alb," allows its possessor to participate in the gesture of pulling apart the Devil's disguise.[26] The image has two positions, neutral and open, the latter effected through the lifting of a flap. In the neutral position the viewer is confronted with a plain, if imposing alb. A beak or claw poking out of the neck hole is the first hint as to its dubious place in sacred worship, as are the demonic feet and tail that emerge from under the skirt. Already in this mode the image evinces the characteristic rhetorical trope under investigation: the Devil is disguised, yet the disguise is threadbare, and reveals at least as much as it conceals. The cunning and buffoonery of evil are displayed simultaneously. Even before the flap is lifted the disguise fails to take the viewer in. Of course this is a piece of propaganda and making the adversary readily apparent is central to the task at hand. Yet this task becomes more complicated when the adversary is to be denounced as the most dangerous con artist ever, and yet the con fails from the first. If artists truly wished to express the problem of demonic hiddenness, the neutral position would reveal nothing of the demon, or at least less.

Clustered around the alb-monster are two rival theological camps. To the left are those sober, zealous Evangelicals who have eyes to see. Four in number, they stand at a disadvantage

[26] Image by Pancratz Kempf, text by Flacius. It is in the public domain, available at Prometheus Bildarchiv, accessed April 25, 2016, http://www.prometheus-bildarchiv.de/

to the group of eight that files in to support this doubtful liturgical innovation. The gestures and facial expressions of these characters also reveal much: the skeptics either look away, refusing to countenance the charade, or look on coldly. The two right-most skeptics, or "*Stoici*" thrust their hands out, palms down, as if to push the beast back. These theologians and preachers are dressed more simply than their counterparts, unpretentiously academic. By contrast, the "*Adiaphoristen*" look garish and clown-like. The member of their party standing most in the foreground wears his own alb over a strangely patterned and ornate robe, suggesting the regalia of some imagined pagan priesthood. His physiognomy is alarmingly placid, as if he were sleepwalking. While the skeptics hold themselves in uniform poses, the Adiaphorists glance about in every conceivable direction, evoking a dull murmur of different opinions and rationalizations. Unlike the group on the left, they do not appear to notice the demon's legs.[27] The ironic subtitle of the illustration refers to the "*Zanck,*" or hassle, being perpetrated by the "Stoical" skeptics, yet the disarray of the Adiaphorists signals that it is their voices that are producing the cacophony. They appear disorganized and desperate. Some point and gesticulate, both to signal their support for this thing that occupies the center of the frame, but also to invite the viewer to associate them with their theological position, one that is foolish and dangerous *prima facie*.

One of Leo Joseph Koerner's most important observations about the "Reformation of the image" is the way in which visual art becomes deliberately pedagogic and allegoric in the wake of Luther's *theologia crucis*. Teaching a lesson with images began to trump inspiring adoration, precisely because an understanding of dogma was the necessary grounding for the correct experience and adoration of the divine. The hand gestures of the subjects in Kempff's

[27] For this point I am indebted to Anja Moritz's interpretation of the woodcut in *Interim und Apokalypse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 248.

illustration echo the way the image of Luther pointing to the crucified Christ in Cranach the Elder's Wittenberg altarpiece. As Koerner puts it, "Luther's fingers do not merely refer. They also model how reference works in the best of circumstances, when communicating about can show what is. Preaching, this set-up shows, is of such effectiveness that it directly displays what it seems obliquely to describe. Words, as it were, greet their object as something present before them, to which they mutely gesture."[28] In this mode of signification, image and word merges together to gesture toward what really is, since the act of preaching is precisely what is being mediated by the painted altarpiece. The didactic quality of Kempff's image is reinforced by Flacius's captions. The rival camps do not only display their virtues and vices, but they also speak out through these inscriptions. The right-hand caption, entitled "the apology of the alb" [*Entschüldigung des Chorrocks*] insists that "what they're fighting so hard over is just a white dress. Why shouldn't we put it on, since that way we'll be able to keep the peace, good discipline, and more besides: to preserve the country, the people, God, and honor!"[29] It is noteworthy that this apology of the alb seems to come from the Adiaphorists, but the genitive in the title suggests that perhaps the demon is putting words in their mouth, and that is "his" apology after all. The series clause that concludes the apology groups together worldly benefits with divine interest, relativizing the proper hierarchy of concerns for the ministers of the Gospel.

The answer, posted in the left-hand caption, issues the reply that "it doesn't matter whether the dress is black or white, whether it is simple or complicated, the issue has already been settled [*es sey ein schwartz oder weisses kleid / sey eins oder mehr hat sein bescheid.*][30] You just have to inspect it and see that under this white cloth [*unter dieser weissen fahn*], under

[28] *Reformation of the Image*, 191.
[29] *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut*, vol. 2, ed. Walter L. Strauss (New York: Abaris, 1975), 507.
[30] Ibid., 507. For 'hat sein bescheid,' consult Grimms *Wörterbuch* s.v. "Bescheid," *Trier Center for Digital Humanities*, 1998 – 2016, accessed April 3, 2014. http://woerterbuchnetz.de/.

this angelic dress, a black devil lies buried [*Ein schwarzer Teuffel begraben leit.*]"[31] In this caption especially, the content of the text could be inferred from the austere postures of its "speakers." Most revealing is the injunction "to inspect it" [*das mus man aber sehen an.*] The trap is easy to see through, if one has the proper incentives and functioning faculties. By contrast, the Adiaphorists are deluding themselves, and refuse to see what is before their eyes. This breakdown of the capacity to experience is not an insignificant point in the polemical literature. It is effective for presenting one's opponents as fools, not to mention as men who have been abandoned by the illuminating presence of the Holy Spirit.

Despite the appeal to plain perception of an unambiguous truth, the piece possesses its own internal contradiction. Once the flap is lifted, the demon is revealed, who clutches at a longer piece of text. The tone and voice of this text is mixed. At first, it serves as a précis of the argument for "obedience to the Kaiser in religion" from a skeptic's point of view, listing the forms of doctrinal, ecclesiological, and ritual backsliding into Roman Catholicism. In keeping with the theme of bad costumes, it describes the ceremonial adjustments as bringing back the "Carnival games" or *Fastnachtspiel* into the divine service, disturbing its seriousness. This barb may refer to the gestures of both the priest and the congregation during the Mass, as well as processions of the host with candles.[32] Friday meat-abstinence shall also return, yet under a confusing appearance ["*doch vnter einem schein.*"]

After this summary of abuses, the grammatical person shifts from third person plural to second person singular: "*you* don't need to confess that you don't want to accept the Interim or

---

[31] Ibid..

[32] Sdzuj produces a long passage from Calvin's critique of the Interim in which the Genevan Reformer simply describes in mocking detail the physical movements of the priest during consecrations. *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 167.

stray from the Augsburg Confession, just as it isn't a sin that you signal through your gestures and with all of the church ceremonies as though you were apostatizing from the true religion."[33] It continues in this vein, instructing the reader that he or she ought to drive the alarmist preacher from out of the community, who in attempting to warn the Church of the "wolves in sheep's clothing" is repackaged as "the boy who cried wolf." The demonic-Adiaphorist voice further suggests that the reader "drive this fanatic from your midst, and tell him to go and confess at his own peril."[34] This shift of grammatical person signals a sarcastic mimicry of the rationalizations of the demon and his dupes, the *hurrnfarben* of human reason, an attempt to fool the congregation or the unsure minister into accepting the compromises. If the old robes cover a demon, the new rationalizations and pretexts cloak doctrinal error and apostasy from Christian discipleship. The text begins by describing abuses, and then begins to speak on their behalf. In this way it reproduces the effect of a misfiring-deception already visible in the image of the demonic alb, except in reverse order, starting with the unveiling of false *adiaphora* through discourse, and then proceeding to the verbal fraud. This symmetrical progression within the piece contrasts the fraud and its unmasking and thus has the effect of intensifying the obviousness of the danger.

Even as the image ridicules the transparency of the satanic scheme, its central caption, in parroting the voice of the Devil, displays its eerie fascination and persuasion. Indeed, the rightly-guided are in the minority according to this image. What accounts for this is the "cunning of human reason," the "*Bauchfrieden*" that seeks after the easier way, and relinquishes

[33] "Es ist nicht von nöten / das **du** klar bekennest / dass **du** das Interim nicht wilt annemen / oder von der Augsburgischen Confession abweichen / Ja es ist auch nicht sünde / das du mit allen deinen geberden / ja auch mit allem Kirchenceremonien dich also stellest / als ob du von der wahren Religion abfallest / vnd das Interim annemest" (*The German Single-Leaf Woodcut*, vol. 2, 507).
[34] Ibid..

the Cross and suffering: "there is surely a middle way [*Mittelweg*] to be found so that one can serve two Lords…One can surely separate the Gospel from fire and sword."[35] The repetition of 'one can surely' [*Mann kan wol*], an instance of the rhetorical figure *anaphora*, the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of consecutive clauses or sentences, evokes a desperate enumeration of rationalizations.[36] And yet for the critics of the compromises, this drive for self-preservation in word and deed was both rational and evil, echoing Jesus's reply to Pilate from John 18.36, "my kingdom is not of this world." The reference to a "middle way" [*Mittelweg*] plays on the German rendering of *adiaphora*, *Mittelding*, and thus serves to link the ritual-moral category to this attempt to evade the costs of Christian discipleship, which entails being martyred through "fire and sword." Just as the consumer of this work of propaganda is invited to tear away the outer layer of the skirts to expose the demon, so does the test of violent persecution promise to unveil the true disciples of the Gospel. Violence as the center of truth, to paraphrase Schreiner, reappears here as the payment for an unavoidable debt, one that cannot be bargained away by "accepting the sign of the Beast," and donning the alb.[37]

III. Wolf in sheep's clothing: teaching the congregation about false appearances

In a text from the same year, *Antwort…auf den brieff etlicher Prediger in Meißen,* co-written with Nicholas Gallus and undersigned by Nicholas Amsdorf, Flacius further develops his representation of false appearances by expanding upon the Gospel-image of the false

---

[35] Ibid.: "Mann kan wol **ein Mittelweg finden** / das mann zweyen Herrn diene / vnd Christo vnd der Gottlosen Welt gunst behalte. Man kan wol von dem Euangelio das Schwerd vnd fewr absondern."
[36] Brian Vickers, "Repetition and Emphasis in Rhetoric: Theory and Practice," *Repetition*, ed. Andreas Fischer (Tübingen: Narr, 1994): 85 – 113, at 91 – 97.
[37] "Wer dieses malzeichen des Thiers annimpt / der wird mo̊gen keuffen vnd verkeuffen. / Wer aber wil ein φιλόνεικος / zenkischer Luthers schůler bleieben / Der ist des tods schuldig" (*The German Single-Leaf Woodcut*, vol. 2, 507)

prophets who come as wolves in sheep's clothing.[38] In a public exchange with some pastors from Meißen, who were questioning the actual danger of wearing the alb during church services, the Magdeburg theologians respond that to do so would entail the wholesale acceptance of the "wolf in sheep's clothing." The metaphor becomes a bit strained at this point, since it is indeed the Evangelical pastors themselves who feel conflicted about wearing the alb; have they thus become the wolves? In this context, the image of the "wolves" requires a logic of association—the acceptance of the Adiaphorists entails an acceptance of the Papacy, just as capitulation to Maurice's liturgical agenda is said to be just the same as the acceptance of the emperor's Augsburg Interim. There is thus a chain of mediations that stretches back to the persecution of the Evangelical churches: "*hinter dem INTERIM noch Interim stecke*."[39] The "sheep's clothing" disguise approximates the masking effect of a matryoshka doll. Another striking metaphor employed by Gallus hinges on representing the compromises as a bastard genealogy borne of spiritual prostitution: the latest set of compromises, the *Außtzug* detailed in Chapter I*,* Section VIII, is the *schandhurenkind* of the Leipzig Interim, itself the issue of the "prostitution" of the Augsburg Interim ["*durch schendliche Hurerey im vorigen jar aus dem Augspurgischen geboren war*"].[40] Such misogynistic references to harlotry serve to link the skeptics' denunciations to prophetic denunciations of idolatry in scripture. Moreover they also connect the two main tropes of danger associated with the compromises, disguise and contamination,

[38] *Antwort M. Nicolai vnd M. Fla. Jllyrici auff den brief etlicher Prediger in Meissen von der frage Ob sie lieber weichen den den Chorrock anziehen sollen* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550).

[39] Carolus Azaria, *Wider den Schöden Teuffel* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549) C ^{v}, quoted in Moritz, 238.

[40] *Eine Disputation von Mitteldingen*, B 1 ^{v}. For an account of the different stages of the Saxony religious ordinances, see Ch. I above.

thereby anchoring the appeal to confessional orthodoxy in the images of corporeality and honor.[41]

Flacius and Gallus explain to the preachers at Meißen that "if you soften in this matter, you are thereby helping to steer greater alterations into the church; you are making an entrance for them. Since the common people easily grow accustomed to alteration, and moreover that you are looking on with toleration upon that which you used to curse. Even if it is only the eyes (through which we are more fiercely moved than through the other senses [*hefftiger…bewogen werden*]) that are accustomed to suffer this, it can't be avoided that their dispositions [*gemůter*] shall become more frivolous and tolerate the visible elements of the Papacy [*sichtbare stůcke des Bapstumbs*]."[42] Thus the first part of their claim is that these alterations create gaps in the physical and spiritual structure of the Church, inviting either the presence of Catholic clergy or simply an acceptance of their doctrine and liturgical style. The next part is that these old, albeit familiar appearances will unsettle the dispositions of the flock. These two pieces are actually closely related, since the spatial integrity of the Church and the movements of the believer's soul coincide in the Antichristology of the period. For example writing in the same year, Andreas Osiander the elder reads the Antichrist prophecy of 2 Thess. 2.4, in which the lawless one "takes his seat in the temple of God" together with 2 Corinth. 6.16 "for we are the temple of the living God," in order to show that the Antichrist's annexation of the temple means the bondage of the bodies and souls of "the living temples."[43] Whenever the skeptics discuss the "holes" in the Church walls, they are almost always working on these two levels of meaning. In

[41] For the relationship between purity and honor in Early Modern Germany, consult Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts*: *Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 23-68.

[42] A ij [v].

[43] *Andreas Osiander D.Ä Gesamtausgabe* Volume 9, ed. Gerhard Müller and Gottfried Seebaß (Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 1994) 352.

this way they are also rebutting Melanchthon's claim that the *adiaphora* compromises are a way of preventing the Evangelical churches from "having been abandoned to the wolves" [*reliquendae sint Ecclesias lupis*].[44] It is crucial for understanding the passage above to note that the dissidents are speaking to pastors and theologians, as opposed to their flocks. Thus they unpack the apocalyptic image of the wolves and the sheep in a way that is relevant to pastoral administration. However, they exhort these pastors to take a different route with respect to teaching their flocks:

> Warn your sheep of the evil that lies hidden in these changes. Warn them and testify before God and humanity that the wolf is coming in a white sheep's cloth, and that he is steadily raving and rampaging around the pen for the sake of perpetrating chaos, looking for any kind of hole through which he may creep into the church. Therefore they should be keeping watch and not let him in, but rather they should resist the werewolf [*den Beerwolf*] together with you and patiently endure the danger.[45]

This coda of the apocalyptic image repackages the critique into a mythic narrative in which the servants of God struggle against a rampaging monster. In this presentation, the monster's disguise is given as the slimmest pretense. In keeping with the logic of this homiletic allegory, it would be impossible to be taken in by its false appearance. The struggle is not to

---

[44] CR VII, 386.

[45] "Warnet vleisig ewre schaff fur dem vbel das in diesem verenderungen verborgen ligt vnd steckt / warnet sie vnd bezeuget fur Gott vnd den menschen das der wolff komme in einem weissen Schaffs kleide /wüte vnd tobe bereit auswendig vmb den stall her / fur grösser rasenheit / vnd suche alerley löcher durch welche er hinein möchte kriechen / darumb sollen sie achtung haben / das sie jhn nicht einlassen. Sonder zugleiche mit Euch sich widdern den Beerwolff setzen vnd die gefahr gedültiglich leiden" (Biij [v]). Also treated in Moritz's *Interim und Apocalypse*, 248. The *Beerwolf* refers back to the rationale Luther helped develop for justifying the Schmalkaldic League's resistance against the Emperor in the 1530s. The princes owed the emperor their allegiance and submission in bodily things, but once he served as the Antichrist's servant, he could be resisted militarily on the grounds that no one could be compelled to cast their own soul into hell. Cf. WA 39 II, 42, 49.

discover the truth or to persuade one's opponents, but rather to maintain the boundaries, plug the gaps, holed up in a desolate church and surrounded by enemies, waiting for the Son of Man to come. Yet in the very next paragraph, the authors admit that it may be difficult to motivate the congregation to see things this way, that perhaps there may come a time when the loyal preacher must "knock the dust from his feet and leave off from [ministering to] them."[46] This signals that the demonic disguise may work better than the homiletic allegory reveals, that these images of the confrontation with "the werewolf" must be superimposed on mundane experience in order to see things as they really are. Even if vision is the sense that is most capable of moving the human soul, the image of the alb is inconspicuous and trivial without the visual correction provided by an eschatological hermeneutic.[47]

IV. Concealment and revelation in the realm of appearances

The theme of appearance, or *Schein*, plays a vital role in the letter of support written by Johann Äpinus at the front of Flacius's *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris* of 1549. The letter comes packaged with Flacius's treatise as an expression of solidarity among the Evangelical remnant that is trying to stay pure before the second coming of the Lord. With this in mind, it is important to grasp at the outset the thematic overlap between *contagion* and *false appearance* in the propaganda against the Interim. What is being hidden is also that which will pollute churches and souls, yet Äpinus makes a point of underscoring his faith in God's desire to conserve the truly pious, who are "giving thanks to the Lord for being preserved and for not

[46] "als denn schüttelt den staub ab von den füssen / vnd weichet von jhnen" (B iij ^{v}); Matthew 10.14.
[47] This idea of rendering the threat in vivid, even outlandish detail is precisely the power Gabriel Didymus sees in Luther's captions for to the propaganda images directed against the papacy. Cf. *Ein Kurzer Bericht und Antwort auf die neue Kirchenordnung 1549,* Dr. Loc. 10298 / 2, 44 ^{v}.

being polluted" by this most deleterious of sins.[48] The theme of appearances in Äpinus's preface organizes itself around three points: appearances that conceal, those that reveal, and those that humiliate. The first item pertains to the metaphoric logic of contamination discussed in the last chapter, to the means of infection itself, which must be hidden in order to be effective against the churches. This act of poisoning is presented with some irony as a kind of sorcery, reversing the appearance and substance of those infected. The topic of humiliation builds on the transmuted, shamed Church. It operates on different levels, at once underscoring the baseness of the betrayers of the Church, as well as signaling the ethic of self-sacrifice and passion found in the Evangelical *theologia crucis*. This move doubles the topic of humiliation, which is at once a sign of divine mercy, emulation of Christ's sacrifice, of human depravity, and of the fragility of authentic discipleship.

The first application of the trope of deceiving appearance arrives when Äpinus announces the task of the entire work: to reveal the quiet promotion of the Interim among the theologians of Saxony as the camouflaging "dye of human wisdom" that covers up the heart of the *adiaphora* compromises.[49] That is, not only do the ritual practices conceal their corrupted essence of papal doctrine, but additionally the apologies for their reintroduction serve to add another layer of dye [*fucus.*] Here begins the back-and-forth with respect to false appearances in the letter, for just as Äpinus names them as dangerous disguises, he feels the need to protest abruptly that the truth of the situation is self-evident in this moment of crisis, and will become

[48] "Pij agant gratias Domino, quod conservati sunt, ne polluerentur peccattis prauissimis huius defectionis" ("M. Matthiae Flacio Illyrico…D. Ioannes Epinus,"*Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* ed. Irene Dingel, Jan Martin Lies, and Hans-Otto Schneider (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 142).

[49] "Cognoscebam etiam sapientes quosdam in potentiorum gratiam, sapientiae humanae fuco callidus pingere Adiaphorica consilia, & mutationes, quam ut fraudes & doli sub istis consilijs latentes, a quouis detegi, silui & refutari satis possent, eo quod omnibus non sit ea sermonis copia, proprietas & perspicuitas, quam haec tractatio requirat" (140).

ever more clear with the passing of time.[50] The argument of the letter lurches between wonder at the subtlety of the trickery involved and seething outrage over the blatantly evil motives that drive the *adiaphora* compromises. In this way it is paradigmatic in expressing a paradox about idolatry widely attested to in dissent against the Interim. In a similar vein and at quite some distance from Hamburg in the town of Torgau, Gabriel Didymus could write that, on the one hand, "idolatry is the very subtlest and softest of sins, and the sin that is the most unidentified."[51] On the other hand, whoever did not comprehend that the alterations to the order of worship were being done for the sake of the Pope "does not want to know about it and is openly and willfully allowing himself to be scammed and seduced."[52] Writing this with too much proximity to Maurice's center of power, Didymus saw jail time and the loss of his church office for dwelling on this problem too intently.[53] Scholars such as Schreiner and Claire Gantet emphasize how for Luther and Melanchthon, the "enthusiastic" heretics were the dupes of the Devil, who had compromised their cognitive abilities.[54] Yet it seems as if it were more difficult to rely on this rationale when controversy sprung up among actors who had so recently been

---

[50] "Haec persuasione autem nihil esse fallacius & uanius res ipsa etiam nunc docet, & non sine grauissima Ecclesiarum dispipatione, temporibus progressu docebit clarius" (ibid.).

[51] "Abgotterey ist die aller subtiliste vnnd geweichste sünde, vnd die aller unbekannteste sünde" (*Ein Kurzer Bericht und Antwort auf die neue Kirchenordnung 1549,* Dr. Loc. 10298 / 2., 39 ^{v}).

[52] "Darumb alles das jhenige, so vmb das Interims willen geschieht, das geschieht vmb Bapstes willen. Darumb ist solcher aller Abgotterey. Das aber diese jtzige Newe Kirchen ordnung vmb Interims willen ausgesetzt / legt und geschieht, das ist dermassen so offenbar, das er niemand vnbewusst ist, ohne das der er nicht wissen will, und sich selbst offentlich und willinglich will betriegen und verführen lassen" (42 ^{r}).

[53] Albert Chalybaeus, *Die Durchführung des Leipziger Interims*, Phd dissertation, Universität Leipzig, 1904, 53.

[54] Schreiner, 298; Claire Gantet, "Dreams, Standards of Knowledge and Orthodoxy in Germany in the Sixteenth Century," *Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Early Modern German Culture: Order and Creativity, 1550-1750*, ed. Randolph Head and Daniel Christensen (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 69 – 88, at 77 – 80. Cf. Claire Gantat, *Der Traum in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ansätze zu einer kulturellen Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Berlin: De Gruyer, 2010). The specific case in question here lies with Caspar Peucer, a student of Melanchthon's whose physiological work on dreams and cognition was based on the Praeceptor's *Liber de anima*. Gantet claims Peucer's *Commentarius de praecipuis divinationum generibus* (1553) as the most thorough working-out of the concept of *Schwärmerei*.

members of the same community, centered in Wittenberg. Failures in persuasion led to recriminations, and along with them, a more complicated sense of responsibility. Didymus sums this up rather concisely: the Adiaphorists were allowing themselves to be scammed. In the same moment, their powers of perception were being tampered with as they played along with the illusion. This accounts for the way in which the Adiaphorists are denounced by turns as vain and stubborn, or blind and incompetent.

This duality accounts for the swinging motion between the various exclamations of Äpinus's text pertaining to the self-inflicted wounds on the part of the Church. It is clear that with their bombastic, exaggerated sarcasm, the *adiaphora*-skeptics discern some sort of black humor, as if they had all become the victims of a terrible prank: "the Devil could have hardly lighted upon a more cunning strategy by which he may so easily overturn our churches, for we ourselves are the key to his stratagem and in this way he betrays the church with an Ischariotian technique."[55] Äpinus credits Satan with understanding that the alterations and mitigations with respect to liturgy would not be sufficient for conning the Church, "it behooved him to draw out Epicurean men [from among our ranks,] wise according to the wisdom of this world, who supported these changes with their painted-over rationalizations [*fucatis rationibus*] and offered hope with empty propositions, and thus they deceived the churches with the adiaphoristic makeup of a prostitute [*adiaphorico fuco; Mitteldingische hurnfarb*]."[56] This metaphoric use of dubious dyes and paints works on several levels, at once signaling the notion that the old rituals contained more spectacle than worship, as well as Luther's notion that earthly wisdom always

[55] "Diabolus uix potuisset aliud stratagema reperire, quo facilius euerteret Ecclesias nostras, Nam hoc strategamate nos per nosmetipsos [sic] expugnat, & Ischariotica arte Ecclesiam prodit" (144).

[56] "sed a Sathana etiam extrudi oportuit quosdam Epicureos homines, secundum saeculum prudentes, qui mutationes faciendas esse fucatis rationibus, & uana proposita spe suaderent, & adiaphorico fuco Ecclesias fallerent…" (ibid.). For the German, consult "Von wahren und falschen Mitteldingen," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* 145.

fails to adhere to the good because it is subject to the Devil's world of appearances, for which it is "the pretty whore."[57] The misogynistic touch in this phrase links the complaint back to the figures of the Church as an embodied being, whose honor and physical purity express the quality of her relationship to divinity.

The most dangerous aspect of the *adiaphora* compromises is their power to effect such reversals and betrayals through seemingly benign means. Even though Äpinus can jeer at the Devil for betraying himself through a lack of self-control, pseudo-*adiaphora* represent the height of his cunning, depending on a perverted doubling of Christian teaching and characters rather than on cruelty and tyranny: "This *adiaphoric* toxin is so powerful that the most loquacious are rendered mutes, the eloquent stutterers, and what has been properly established now seems ambiguous and perplexing. Wolves emerge from out of the midst of pastors…the metamorphosis ascribed to Circes' songs and drinks is nothing compared to the change effected by *adiaphoric* sorcery."[58] When Äpinus refers to this power, the *adiaphico toxico*, it is not entirely clear whether he means the ceremonies themselves or the "fleshly" rationales for their reintroduction. Most likely, with both being ruses of the Devil, they are too intertwined to warrant separating. Moreover, they are mutually reinforcing: unity in ceremonies was supposed to be the first step in the path toward a thoroughgoing reconciliation. Äpinus presents this claim for compromise as organized around a metaphor of healing. Yet this too is affected by the figurative logic of masking and dissimulation, since the "bandages" of ritual are only sufficient

[57] "Quin etiam scientia non coniuncta istis tantis mailis, si modo coram Deo stultescere non vult, neque fide regi, tum totis Eclesijs, tum singulis hominibus pernoisciosa est…Haec est illa ueteris Adami impia sapientia, quam tanopere Lutherus insectabatur, quanque ipse pulcherrimum Diaboli scortum (uerißimo nomine) appellabat" (ibid., 320).

[58] "Tanta enim uis inest huic adiaphorico toxico, ut alias loquacissimos reddat plane mutos, disertos balbutientes, recte institutos ambiguos & perplexos. Ex pastoribus quibusdam lupos, & ex Christianis Epicureos, tantum in huius vitae commoda attentos. Metamorphosis olim attributa Circes carminibus & poculis, nihil est ad hanc immutationem, quae Adiaphoricis ueneficijs efficitur" (158).

to hide away [*tegentur*] the wounds to the Church that have been caused by false doctrine. By simply covering up these differences, there can be no hope for healing, as the wounds again become "raw and incurable."[59] "Adiaphorism" is thus shown to effect no real rapprochement between the fragments of Christendom. Instead, it functions simultaneously as a suffocating bandage and as a poisonous sorcery [*veneficium*]. Both images adhere to the theme of distortion and obfuscation: the poison changes Christians into Circes' pigs and into the "wolves" of the Counter Reformation; the bandage covers up the wounds of the Church so they cannot be seen, much less treated.

Right in the midst of his sarcastic praise for the cunning of the Devil, Äpinus argues just as strenuously for the divine purpose in all of this confusion and outrage:

> God has a different plan from ours; it satisfies him that during the present dangers the multitudes of the hypocrites would be uncovered [*detegatur*] by afflictions and desertions, and that the false Christians be brought to the light of day [*patefiant*], and the truly pious be tested and purified by the flames of temptation and persecution. By the purposeful plan of God and the good Church, the hypocrites are being exposed [*patefiunt*] by their doubting, those who make a pretext of the Gospel for the sake of their own lusts, and imitate piety at their convenience. These are the right verdicts of God, which ought to console and revive the pious, and not dishearten them.[60]

---

[59] "Nisi in doctrina & ritibus, qui ex ueris adiaphoris constare debent certus consensus prius constituatur, nunquam uere curabuntur Ecclesiae uulnera, sed tegentur tantum, & quidem ita ut aliaquando recrudescant, & incurabilia fiant. Nunquam colaescet in Ecclesia uera concordia, numquam tollentur schismata" (ibid.).

[60] "Deus alia habet consilia quam nos, placet ipsi, ut multorum hypocrisis praesentibus periculis, afflictionibus & desertionibus detegatur, utque ficti Christiani patefiant, & uere pij probati igne tentationis & persecutionis purgentur. Destinato Dei consilio & Ecclesiae bono, dubio procul patefiunt hypocritae, qui Euangelium praetexuerunt suis cupiditatibus, & pietatem simularunt gratia commodi. Haec iusta sunt Dei iudicia, quae pios consolari & animare debent, non frangere" 142 – 144).

One may recollect the intimacy between God and Satan in the Book of Job, wherein God's purposes are fulfilled by the tests of the adversary. Indeed, the two seem to be working in concert, or at least the latter is fulfilling the will of the former despite his best efforts at doing evil. What seems clear is that it is these hypocrites who are being brought to light by the raging controversy are the self-same *Epicureos homines* who are trying to reintroduce idolatry into the church and seduce pious souls. This coincidence between concealing contagion with *Mitteldingischer hurrnfarb* and being exposed by means of that very act captures the ambiguity of appearance at work throughout the writings of the *adiaphora* controversy. Reimund Sdzuj is right to claim that the *adiaphora*-skeptics were deeply suspicious of the realm of appearances, and that they sometimes seemed to be yearning for the chance to leave the realm of sensory externalities behind completely ["*daß es möglich ist, die Sphäre des Sinnliche-Äußerlichen vollständig zu verlassen*"].[61] Nonetheless he underestimates the fact that these thinkers simultaneously took the realm of appearance to be the scene of divine justice. False appearances invariably betray themselves, and Devilish cunning masks *and* expresses a dull superficiality. This amounted to an unofficial article of faith among the Reformers. During the same controversy, Andreas Osiander would write that such liars cannot help but betray themselves and even confessing their "antichristian vice," as if there were some defect built into the mechanism of deception.[62] For Äpinus the defect is that the Devil "knows no moderation" and gives himself away through his tyrannical conduct.[63] In this particular historical situation

---

[61] *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 164.

[62] "Es geht in aber eben darob, wie es lügnern gehn soll, nemlich das, da sie am allergeschwindisten liegen wollen, verrhaten sie dannoch die warheit wider sich selbst und bekennen, das eben das die einige, rechte antichristische untugent sey…" (*Andreas Osiander D. Ä. Gesamtausgabe*, Volume 9. Ed. Gerhard Müller, Gottfried Seebaß (Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 1994) 351). Cited hereafter as *GA 9*.

[63] "Sathan, quia nescit moderationem adhibere in suis technis & fraudibus, semper eis uel manifestam impudentiam, uel apertam tyrannidem coniungit" (148).

satanic importunity emerges in the tyrannical demand by secular leaders such as Charles V and Maurice of Saxony that the Evangelical churches conform to illegitimate church ordinances. At the same time, immoderation also surfaces in the return the Catholic liturgy, which the *adiaphora* skeptics saw as essentially a grandiose distraction from the celebration of the Gospel.[64]

Appearances may not only be the means for concealment and revelation, but also humiliation. Throughout the letter, Äpinus demonstrates a great concern for the reputation of the Evangelical churches abroad, which also functions as a synecdoche for the true Church as a whole. He complains that through this controversy "our churches are exposed to the laughter of not only our adversaries, but even of the entire world."[65] This is the case because of the way in which the *Epicureos homines* within the Evangelical camp are attempting to appease the Enemy, that is, by aping devilish cunning in order to scam the Devil himself. The German translation refers to the fallen Church as the "*Spotfogel*," a bird that is ridiculous in appearance and behavior, but also a bird that mocks by imitating its enemies.[66] Both senses are in effect here, as the Adiaphorists shame themselves by copying "fleshly wisdom." By downplaying the confession of true doctrine and appeasing the worldly leaders and the pope, the Adiaphorists are thus in effect "arguing that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the prophets, apostles, evangelists, all of the holy bishops and martyrs are fools, who were never able to teach God's truth, nor to establish and protect the Church without the contempt of the world and apart from the greatest odium and persecution."[67] Suffering for the truth, which is the visible signature of allegiance to

[64] Cf. the critiques leveled by Amsdorf in Chapter I, Westphal in Chapter III, and Flacius in Chapter IV.
[65] "Ecclesiae nostrae non solum aduersarijs, sed etiam omnibus nationibus risui exponuntur" (156).
[66] "Von den wahren und falschen Mitteldingen," 157. Consult *Grimms Wörterbuch* s.v. "Spottvogel."
[67] "Qua sapientia Epicurei illi aperte arguunt stulticiae Filium Dei Iesum Christum, Prophetas, Apostolos, Euangelistas, omnes sanctos Episcopos & martyres, qui nec ueritatem Dei unquam docere, nec Ecclesiam

the Gospel, becomes a source of shame for the hypocrites. Their embarrassment reveals their infidelity. This critique of the wisdom of the world stands in continuity with Luther's rejection of the "theology of glory" that ignores the theology of the cross. Luther makes it explicit in the Heidelberg Theses of 1518[68] that the visible god is the impassioned, suffering god, who is only known through an affective response to divine "fragility and foolishness" [*infirmum et stultum Dei*]. Moses's glance at God's back serves as the pre-figuration of this divine folly, which Luther articulates in Theses 19 and 20:

> 19. That one is not worthy of being called a theologian who would discern [*conspicit*] the invisible aspects of God through things that were created and understood [*intellecta*]. 20. However that title is reserved for the one who would understand [*intelligit*] the visible and basest aspects [*posteriora*] of God through [God's] conspicuous [*conspecta*] sufferings and the cross."[69]

The referenced image from Exodus 33:23 humbles the theologian's pretensions for gazing upon divine glory; the visible is also what is crude, foolish, and embarrassing. Luther makes the inversion between the intelligible and the visibly impassioned felt through his rhetorical choices. In this case, he employs the figure of chiasmus with the verbs *intellego* and *conspicio*, which reverse their forms and positions between the theses. *Intellego* first appears in the perfect passive plural participle modifying the things by which God is seen, signaling their common-sense comprehensibility. Next, the verb shifts to the third person present singular subjunctive in the subsequent thesis, signifying what would be necessary for the actual understanding of God,

---

plantare ac conservare sine mundi reprehensione & absque summo odio & persecutione potuerunt" ("De veris er falsis adiaphoris," 146).

[68] *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 1, ed. Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883) 350 – 374.

[69] "19. Non ille digne Theologus dicitur, qui invisibilia Dei per ea, quae facta sunt, intellecta conspicit 20. Sed qui visibilia et posteriora Dei per passiones et crucem conspecta intelligt" (WA 1, 354).

which is only possible through what has been revealed in suffering flesh. This process works in the reverse order for *conspicio*, which appears at first as a finite verb describing the false cognition of the pseudo-theologian, and then shifts to the passive participle form to indicate the true path to understanding divinity, God's foolishness and humiliation. This reversal in form and position serves to destabilize the hierarchy between the overweening human intellect grasping after what it can't reach, and the visible suffering that reveals God through affect. If one reads Luther's theses together with the critiques of the anti-Adiaphorists, divine visibility not only incarnates the truth, but also provokes scorn of divine fragility and the rejection of divine alterity among those without grace.

Even as Luther, echoing Paul, celebrates revelation and godly wisdom as divine foolishness, Äpinus bristles against those who would brand Christ and his followers as fools. Indeed, humiliation is ambiguous in the theological paradigm emerging in the decades of controversy. In contraposition to the pathetic body of Christ, the shame of the prostitute and the stage clown are marked by the cheap paints and dyes masking their countenances. Äpinus consistently associates false-*adiaphora* and their supporters with disreputable trades, pointing to the *hurnnfarb*, the dyes, and then the ridiculous pomp that turns priests into cheap performers. Sdzuj notes a remark in John Calvin's critique of the Interim, in which Calvin ironically demurs from addressing the question as to "whether an actor possesses a hundred times more dignity than the priests do during the enactment of the divine service and among the assembly of men," precisely in order to suggest it.[70] These scornful comparisons bear out the dynamic between deception and self-deception that alluded to above. The difference in dignity that Calvin argues

[70] Calvin, *Interim Advltero Germanvum Cui adiecta est*, "Vero ut hoc subticeam: histrionem plus habere centuplo in scena grauitatis, quam in sanciendo Dei & hominum foedere habeat Sacerdos?" quoted on Sdzuj, 167.

for between the actor and the priests consists in the greater self-awareness on the part of the entertainer; at least the clown knows that it is his job to make the audience laugh, and is thus all the more respectable for this deliberateness. By contrast, the priestly acolytes of false religion are too embarrassed or deluded to pay too much attention to their own humiliation; they are "the gigolos of modesty" [*prostituti pudoris*] who inadvertently stumble into farce while attempting to celebrate the deity.[71] Their humiliation is not the kind that resists the values of the fallen world, but rather exaggerates them through pomposity. False ritual and theological apologies for it appear in this context as a deformed attempt at the repetition of Christian virtues, and it is this failure of emulation and self-awareness that constitutes a different form of humiliation apart from the *posteriora Dei*. Yet humiliation remains ambiguous, appearing as the sign of Christ's presence as well as his desecration.

Just as Äpinus's text evokes a mood of sarcastic paranoia about the ironic reversal of appearances taking place at the end of days, there is some irony present in the way it doubles the appearance of humiliation. The ideal form would be the correct emulation of Christ's impassioned self-sacrifice, a humiliation according to the false standards of the world; the failed form would be taking part in the humiliation of Christ as a tormentor, by laying a "crown adorned with *adiaphora*-thorns" upon his head.[72] The Passion-drama provides the archetype for this representation of struggle and persecution within the Church. Yet in the episodes that make up the Passion-sequence, those are who closest to Christ fail him and become intermingled with the crowd of his tormentors. It is as if *adiaphora*-skeptics such as Äpinus were attempting to interrupt the repetition of that failure, a failure that is all the more humiliating because of the

[71] Calvin, *Interim Advltero Germanvum Cui adiecta est. Vera Christianae pacificationis, & Ecclesiae reformandae ratio* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549) P 4 [v].
[72] Flacius, *Liber* A 1 [r].

way it signals the breakdown of divine pedagogy and the fracturing of the Evangelical movement. Humiliation is the source of the bile that characterizes this controversy-literature. The controversialists hated their opponents less than they hated the possibility of what they could so easily become themselves.

V. Clarity and obscurity in religious experience

Sarcastic humor and horror work together in the Kempf-Flacius woodcut and Äpinus's denunciation of Adiaphorism's fraud. The ploy of the devil is ridiculous, yet persuasive to the weak-willed and self-deceived. This is the conceptual and rhetorical tension that the *adiaphora*-critics attempt to maintain through their protests: the danger at hand is visible to the eye, yet it disguises itself just enough to give human reason the pretense for slithering away from its duties to the divine. Ten years later, Flacius would return to such self-deception in his *Refutation of the Long Comments of the Adiaphorists*, pointing to an example from pagan philosophy of the disciples of Anaxagoras, who stuck fast to their master's claim that snow was really black.[73] Flacius's representation of the reasoning of Anaxagoras is actually not so far off from his own rhetoric of appearance. He summarizes it as follows: "the truth and essences of any given thing must be internally viewed, examined, and judged and not sought according to its outer dignity, appearance, or luster, things that often serve to deceive."[74] Yet Flacius's own suspicion of fine appearances does not lead him to Anaxagoras's conclusion; indeed, he holds up the example of Anaxagoras and his student for ridicule: "whenever people hear of this today they are astonished at the craziness and presumptuousness of these people, who might hold to something and

[73] *Gründliche Verlegung des langen Comments der Adiaphoristen* […] (Jena: Donat Richtzenhan, 1560).
[74] "[D]as er die warheit vnd Naturen eines iglichen dinges / inwendig nach seinem wesen besichtiget / angesehen vnd geurteilet / nicht gefraget nach dem auswendigen ansehen / schein / oder glantz / der offt pfleget zu betriegen" (A ij [r]).

dispute for it against the evidence of their own eyes and ears, all on account of one person."[75] How can Flacius maintain his skepticism with regard to appearance together while professing his faith in experience?

Stubborn adherence to something so counterintuitive as 'snow is black' arrives through blind loyalty and partisanship, what Flacius calls *Prosopolipsia,* a Latinized Greek word for favoritism, which he glosses as "a devil" that "has possessed the people" through exaggerated esteem and loyalty toward human beings and worldly pomp. Of course this fits in with his discussion of false appearances, since overblown esteem for worldly status is its own form of idolatry. Furthermore, if it were stupid for partisanship to overrule ordinary experience in the trifling question of the true color of snow, the foolishness is all the "greater, cruder, and more abominable" when it comes to the most important of matters, the true religion, which is in the process of being desecrated by the enemies of the Gospel.[76] This is indeed a moment when what appears white (the alb) really is stained and sooty! The characteristic sign of these enemies (and their victims) is that they allow themselves to be led around by the nose and made fools of just like beasts of burden, to the extent that they no longer wish to hear or ask after "clear experience" [*helle erfarung*] and even "that God himself witnesses to the contrary in his Word, calling out to them and shouting."[77] These last remarks about the willful ignorance of his opponents in the face of such clear experience and testimony expresses much of Flacian rhetoric. God's Word announces its presence in the world as audibly as the ringing of a fire

[75] "Wenn jtzt die Leute solches hören / so verwundern sie sich der wansinnigkeit vnd vermessenheit der Leute / die da wider jr eigen Augen vnd Ohren haben vmb eines Menschen willen / etwas halten vnd disputiren dürffen" (A ij ^{r} – ^{v}).

[76] "Aber / lieber Gott / wie viel eine grössere / gröbere vnd greulichere Thorheit jtzt vnter den Leuten regiert / da sie der massen mit dem Teufel der Prosopolipsia oder ansehen der Personen besessen sind / das sie nicht in geringen sachen / wie jene von dem Schnee / sondern in der Religion" (A ij ^{v}).

[77] "[D]as sie gar nicht fragen noch hören wöllen / das die helle erfarung / ja auch Gott selbst in seinem Wort / das gegenspiel bezeuget / zu jnen ruffet vnd schreiet" (Ibid.).

alarm. It enters into awareness at a sensory level; its testimony presents an impossible truth in all of its self-evidence, and points to things as they really are.[78] *Helle erfarung* comes forward not just in the 'shouted-preaching' that was at the heart of Flacius's controversialist writings, but also in attempts to contradict the Word, in the persecutions set out in the name of the Interim. Flacius studied reports of the oppression undergone by the Evangelical churches in the southern German lands in the aftermath of the Schmalkaldic War, after having come to Wittenberg as a refugee from persecution in Croatia.[79] Further still, Flacius points throughout his writings to the documents he had intercepted and printed for all to see from the Interim negotiations over *adiaphora* in Saxony—they were supposed to be the factual record of the betrayal of the Reformation. 'Clear experience,' calls out with its strong voice [*experientia clara uoce clamet*], narrating this record while expressing the anguish it produces in the souls of Illyricus and his compatriots. [80] In this way, it corresponds with Luther's criteria of the external signs of the Church combined with "the testing of the spirits" in moments of doubt and discernment.[81] In this case, Flacius's spiritual judgment of the situation was grounded on the fact that the Evangelical churches were being coerced and destroyed. His claim to "clear experience" depended on the assertion that the visible Church, an important ground for religious experience, was being erased. Simply to countenance the suffering that persons such as Didymus had undergone in order to protect worship grounded on "the pure Word of God" would be enough to persuade his opponents. Flacius admonishes his opponents to "direct your eyes and ears to the

---

[78] *Reformation of the Image*, 191, 197, 204. It is important to note that in Koerner's analysis, the outward exclamation of the Word is the represented for Luther and in the artwork of Cranach the Elder in the outstretched finger of John the Baptist, which points to the messiah.

[79] *Eine entschůldigung MAtthiae Flacij Jllyrician einen Pfarherr* […] (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549) B 1 ^{r} – B 1 ^{v}. Cf. Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform*, 106 – 111.

[80] *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris*, (G 7 ^{v} – G 8 ^{r}).

[81] Schreiner, 302.

churches that are just nearby and look at the sorrow and hear the sighs of the consciences of those who in their Christian hearts are astonished and have been led astray through your vicious unification of Christ and Belial."[82] Being unwilling or unable to do so signaled a moral as well as psychological failure.

VI. Vipers, Cuckoos, and the German descendants of Ham—figuring loyalty and disloyalty in a time of theological controversy

Flacius's criticism of the illusion of *Prosopolipsia* or respect for persons rather than God, is a reaction to the accusation that the dissidents of the *adiaphora* controversy were traitors to their teachers at Wittenberg. For example, Johann Pfeffinger attacked Flacius and Gallus by name for their treachery and ingratitude toward their former *praeceptores*, their teachers back in Wittenberg. At a time when the dissidents in Magdeburg and Hamburg were obliged to defend their disobedience of the Interim with the vocabulary of natural and divine law, Pfeffinger sought to expose their perversion of the natural order—one ought to honor his or her elders and superiors, and by extension one's teachers of the pure religion. Not only did Pfeffinger condemn the dissidents by the fourth/fifth statute of the Decalogue, but he also used the imagery of fables and the descriptions of natural philosophy to make his point about their disloyalty. Regarding such ingratitude, Pfeffinger invokes Pliny's description of the birth of vipers, "which are called colubrid snakes [*Natterschlangen*]," and Pliny writes, according to Pfeffinger, "that since they no longer wish to remain [*verharren*] in the body of their mother up to the point of birth, they gnaw away at [*auffnagen*] and tear apart her sides so that they may reach the light."[83] In

[82] "Wendet ewre augen vnd oren auch zu den kirchen die gerings vmb euch her liege / sehet den jamer an / hoeret das seuffzen der gewissen / die in jhem Christlichen hertzen durch ewre lesterliche vereinigung Christi vnd Belials / kleglich verwundet vnd irre gemacht worden sind" (*Widder die newe Reformation D. Pfeffingers* [Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550] F i ^{r}).
[83] "Gründlicher und Wahrhafftiger Bericht," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* ed. Irene Dingel (*Controversia et Confessio* vol. 2, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 659.

addition to its graphic evocation of ingratitude, this image also suggests a premature desire to usurp the role of the parent, to reach the light before one is really ready, and thus the dissidents' polemic is simply an especially pernicious form of "adolescent" rebellion. A skeptical participant in this controversy from distant Königsberg, Andreas Osiander the Elder quips to his new master Albrecht of Brandenburg that perhaps Pfeffinger had not thought through this charge, "which alone applies to the Devil and his children," since "the teachers themselves must also be venomous serpents [*gifftnatern*], since one serpent begets the other."[84] Osiander demonstrates the double-edged quality of these metaphors, which may readily be taken up and used against their author.

Another biting fable reference employed by Pfeffinger involves the story of the cuckoo, whose eggs are placed in the nests of other species of birds, and who proceeds to push its adopted siblings out of the nest in order to gain the better part of food. Pfeffinger actually flips the roles, describing a cuckoo who adopts a small nettle creeper and fattens it up only to devour the unfortunate creature.[85] Such comparisons play not an insignificant role in the theological polemic of the period. In partisan propaganda imagery, opponents were frequently depicted as donkeys, cats, and rodents, in order to make them ridiculous and inhuman. Becoming associated with such a mocking image threatened a writer's credibility, and it also reduced them to the bestial level of fallen creation that squirmed and clawed against the holy order of things. Melanchthon identifies the first "proclamation" of the Gospel in Genesis 3.15, when God explains to Eve that her children will trample upon the head of the serpent. For Philipp, this meant that the divine promise of forgiveness and salvation would be restored by the incarnation,

[84] *GA 9*, 375
[85] "vnd wie der Guckuck das liebe Grasmücklein, so jnen ausgehecket vnd erneret, auff fressen wöllen" ("Gründlicher und Wahrhafftiger Bericht," 686).

with the identification of dust-scarfing serpent with evil persisting in early modern polemic. Pfeffinger links the shamefulness of bestial disregard for the family order to Ham's mockery of Noah's nakedness, using the paradigmatic authority of the biblical narrative to punctuate his denunciation of ingratitude.[86]

Such an accusation could not be ignored by the dissidents. They countered by invoking a higher loyalty than one's "flesh and blood," drawing on New Testament lessons about the Gospel dividing the apostles from their natural families (e.g., Luke 18.28 – 30; Matthew 10.21). This was their last resort, however. More immediately, they argued for their critiques of Melanchthon and the rest of the Wittenberg faculty as the truest sign of obedience and emulation. Flacius asks what the worth of being loyal to one's parents and teachers is, if one is simply going to let them fall into the pit of error and perish there: "isn't it true that if your father or school master fell into the water and you couldn't save them except by grasping hold of their hair or beard, and you left them there because you didn't want to subject your parent or schoolmaster to the indignity of being drawn out by the hair, do you really mean to deny that you would be considered insane for allowing them to perish for such a reason?"[87] Flacius's rather contrived simile reveals his bitterness about his inability to rouse the Wittenbergers out of their stupor during the *adiaphora* negotiations—in this hypothetical comparison, they are senile, helpless, and foolish enough to have be dragged out by their beards, since they wouldn't heed good advice in the first place.

Joachim Westphal is not so flip about the matter, and answers each of Pfeffinger's accusations, taking each of the animal-associations very seriously. Honing in on the unflattering

[86] Ibid..
[87] *Entschüldigung Matthiae Flacij Illyrici geschrieben an der Vniversität zu Wittemberg* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549) A iiij [r]

comparison with the *Natterschlangen*, Westphal links this image back to John the Baptist's condemnation of the Pharisees as a "brood of vipers," and in a similar way as Osiander, questions Pfeffinger's judgment in so rashly rushing to this accusation.[88] It is inaccurate first because the dissidents are actually defending the principles taught to them by their teachers. Second, by critiquing their teachers, the dissidents honor them and God by defending the purity of sacred doctrine: "we don't do this for our own honor but instead for theirs and for the sake of God's honor."[89] Moreover, the *praeceptores* are at risk from much worse birds than the alleged "cuckoos" in Magdeburg and Hamburg: there are vultures, goshawks, and eagles circling overhead, ready to swoop in and carry off the meek nettle creepers of Wittenberg.

Westphal's real masterstroke is turning the association with Ham back on Pfeffinger. By obstinately defending Melanchthon and the rest of the Wittenberg faculty, men like Pfeffinger, who are closer to Ham than Shem, expose [*entblössen*] them all the more to the mockery of the godless (N iij ^{r}). Westphal continues to employ a binary image of exposing-cloaking to attack Pfeffinger, explaining that from the beginning, he and his colleagues wished to shield their teachers from shame and worked very hard to prevent this from coming to pass by admonishing them in private and leaving their names out of printed condemnations of the *adiaphora* compromises. They acted as the true disciples, who, out of "concern for their teachers and for the sake of God's honor, would have gladly have allowed this situation to be covered [*gedeckt*]" (N ij ^{v}). He charges that had "our hated chastiser" [read: Pfeffinger] and his ilk worked as hard as the dissenters to correct the situation, then the shame of their teachers would have remained covered, but now it stands out in the open for all to see [*öffentlich fur augen stehet*], to the

[88] *Verlegung des Gründlichen Berichts der Adiaphoristen* […] (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1551) *Verlegung* M i ^{v} - M ii^{r}.
[89] Drumb thun wir solches nicht vns / sondern ihnen zu ehren / der ehre Gottes willen" (*Verlegung des Gründlichen Berichts der Adiaphoristen* […] (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1551) M ij ^{r}).

distress of the faithful (ibid.). Westphal renders the situation tragic: the love of the disciples is not enough to correct the blindness of their old teachers: "what are they supposed to cloak [*decken*], if their fathers do not allow themselves to be covered [*sich nicht lassen decken*], and do not want to comprehend their error?" (Niij ^{r}).

Similar to Flacius's simile, Westphal's profession of honor and reverence for his former masters sounds backhanded—they are being compared to the drunken, lewd figure of Noah from Gen. 9. Moreover, the rhetorical logic of "covered-ness" links up very closely to the ominous proclamation from Paul which serves as the epigram of Westphal's book: "And even if our gospel is veiled [*verdecket*], it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2. Cor. 4: 3 – 4). This is as if to signal that by allowing themselves to become such pathetic, mocked figures, the professors of Wittenberg have been blinded to the gospel—their uncovered shame is the sign of the gospel being veiled from their eyes. Thus in the very act of professing their loyalty to their old teachers and colleagues, these writers signal the very finite limits of that loyalty and indeed its expiration in this particular state of emergency. They also contrast it with their stubborn adherence to the doctrine and pugnacious persona of Luther, who was ready to give up his body to the Devil's jaws rather than yield to papal legates and imperial courtesans.

VII. Melanchthon's Dream: Divine Insight, Divine Curse

Perhaps the greatest frustration for the critics of the compromises was their sense that God was still sending special testimonies to the Adiaphorists, and that these were going unheeded. Perhaps the most striking examples of these special manifestations of the Holy Spirit was a dream Philip Melanchthon had in December 1548 shortly before a meeting with theologians at Jüterbog for the negotiation of *adiaphora* compromises.[90] Flacius managed to get his hands on a report of this dream, since Melanchthon was in the habit of interpreting dreams and sharing them among his circle of fellow humanists. At the tail end of his apology to the University of Wittenberg Flacius decided to print a version of this dream-report together with two interpretations, one allegedly by Melanchthon, and the other his own summation. In the dream, Melanchthon is a glazier, who is visited by his neighbor the bailiff. The bailiff wants some windows made, and Philip obliges him. However shortly thereafter the bailiff returns and harasses Melanchthon. When asked by his interlocutors for the reason behind this confrontation, Melanchthon allegedly reported that: "the rogue wanted me to sing a papist's Mass for him; what kind of man does he take me to be, one who would be willing to sing Mass?"[91] According to Melanchthon's own interpretation of the dream, as provided by Flacius, "the bailiff was M. [Maurice of Saxony] and I was the glazier. He wanted me to make some windows for him, that is, to give the appearance of something, [*id est, aliquid in speciem*], *etwas zum schein*." Melanchthon then allegedly admits in the report that this meant the reinstitution of the papal

[90] For Sdzuj's brief gloss on this "*berühmte[r] Traum*" consult *Adiaphorie und Kunst*, 165 – 166.

[91] "[R]espondisse, ille nebulo uoluit me sibi papisticam Missam recitare, num me talem hominem esse existimat, qui uelim papisticam Missam recitare," *Epistola apologetica…ad quendam Pastorem Item Dvo Somnia Philippi* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549) A 7 [r].

Mass and the papacy.[92] Flacius's commentary on this passage encapsulates a crucial aspect of this chapter, the contradiction between divine manifestations and fraudulent appearances:

> Thus you have the opinion of the very craftsman himself on this matter. Therefore how could you doubt any more about such splendid doings, or that is to say, the actual evil thing, for which he would use hypocrite's paint [*heuchelfarb*] against his own conscience? It is hardly worth mentioning that dreams, especially this very one, appear to have something divine about them [*diuinum quiddam habere videantur*]; and thus it may be that he was given a divine warning [*diuinitus monitus*] concerning the fraud being perpetrated presently [*de praesentium fraudum*]…[93]

The image of the "windows for the papacy" stretches back to the anxieties about compromised Church boundaries, expressed in the pamphlet written for the ministers in Meißen. Yet windows take on another meaning, of offering a distorted view, or an ornamental distraction. Their role in this dream thus expresses an important aspect of the Protestant critique of "human ceremonies" together with fine rhetoric—they are both inventions fabricated by humans to impress the senses, and in so doing, lead the soul away from God.[94] Indeed, Flacius suggests that this dream-figuration of the problem was sent by God, an intervention on the part of the Holy Spirit in the image-generating faculty of Melanchthon's soul, which produces truth-

---

[92] A 7 ^{r}. The German "etwas zum Schein" appears in the Latin original.

[93] In this quotation I interpolate a clause from the German version about the *heuchelfarb* into my rendering of the Latin, since it only exists in the German. *Epistola apologetica*, A 7 ^{r} – ^{v}; *Eine Entschůldigung*, B iij ^{v}.

[94] Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 223 – 239.

telling visions to represent and critique false appearances.[95] At the same time, Flacius scorns Melanchthon for covering up his bad conscience with the paint of hypocrisy. Not only does Melanchthon see the divine message in his sleep, he even draws the correct conclusion about its meaning, and all the same he does not halt the deception. Divine communication is simultaneously effective and inoperative, just as the paints and dyes of delusion are simultaneously recognized and preserved. Flacius cautions the heedless that God is capable of sending warnings and encouragements to the faithful, but also illusions to the reprobate, who thus fall even farther away from the divine light.[96]

VIII. Conclusion:

One of the important claims of this chapter is that examining some important examples of Luther's thinking on the ambiguities of appearance reveals that even on its own terms perseverance in the Evangelical faith was a perilous affair. The supreme power of the universe is completely obscured from view, and the saving offer of mercy steps forward in the realm of appearances, which is the Devil's realm. The Word was still on offer, yet most obscurely, under the appearance of contradiction. One of the ways Luther attempted to compensate for this was by streamlining the liturgy, gradually translating it into the vernacular, and emphasizing its pedagogical function and experiential dimension.[97] If the message of salvation, experience and affirmation of which being crucial to the entire endeavor, was obscured, or "striped over with a prostitute's adiaphoristic makeup," there would be even graver consequences.

---

[95] Claire Gantet, "Dreams, Standards of Knowledge and Orthodoxy in Germany in the Sixteenth Century," 69 – 70.
[96] Drawing on Romans 1. 21-28. Flacius: "Item immittet eis Deus efficaciam illusionis, ut credant mendacio" (*Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris,* H 1 [r]).
[97] For the German Mass, consult WA vol. 19.

Even as they proclaim themselves as the loyal students of Luther (Gnesio-lutherans), these writers re-articulate the contradictory aspect of the Word's appearance in human affairs, giving it a different emphasis than Luther's dialectical theology. They retain the notion that this appearance was something to be experienced, something that became manifest and encountered, whether through preaching, propaganda, dreams, or the shouting in one one's conscience. However if the appearance of the Word is a contradiction here, it is the contradiction of critique, or protest. The Gospel becomes even more of a provocation, an attack, a refusal of satanic mirages. In Schreiner's analysis, Luther taught that the world of appearances was an idolatrous mirror of divine creation, so that there was a paradoxical coincidence between the image of God and the image of the Devil: "to summarize, the devil does not become, and is not, a devil without first having been God. He does not become an angel of darkness unless he has first been an angel of light. For what the devil speaks and does must first have been said and done by God…I know the devil's word must first become the delicate truth of God before it can become a lie. I must grant the devil his hour of godliness and ascribe the satanic to our God."[98] What comes to pass in the controversies that followed Luther's death was that this world of mirror became warped, distorted, and eventually began to crack under the seismic pressure of eschatological experience. This is why the controversialists can point to the obviousness of the satanic disguise and in same moment lament its obscurities. They find themselves rummaging through a ramshackle funhouse on the verge of collapse.

[98] Luther, WA 31 I 249 – 250, quoted and translated by Schreiner on 299 – 300.

Conclusion: Consequences of the *Adiaphora* controversy and implications for future research

In this dissertation, I have shown how ritual became a site of anxiety for Protestants at the beginning of the second generation of the Reformation. This was a critical transition in the history of reform, as communities sought ways to institutionalize teachings and practices of their founders in order to structure life as well as to establish boundaries over and against rival confessions. What gets called the first *adiaphora* controversy represents the beginning of a series of debates that culminated in the establishment of binding confessional norms. This concern with safeguarding Luther's legacy from external contamination, which first threatened in the form of re-Catholicization and later in the alternative path of reform offered by the Genevan "second Reformation,"[1] engendered a polemic constituted around images of pollution, stain, and plague. These tropes were not new to Christian controversy, yet, they were redeployed for the particular purposes of showing the invisible stains of idolatry left on ritual practices, paraphernalia, practitioners, spectators, and even those who would offer hypothetical rationales for compromise.

The first chapter of this dissertation examined the nature of the "stain" of idolatry, with pollution represented as consisting of the "false speech" of idolatrous teaching as they appeared in ritual acts through prayers and blessings. This conceptual and rhetorical approach to ritual was shown to have been shared by both sides of the controversy. Nevertheless, while the advocates of "servitude in *adiaphora*" limited their condemnation of corruption to such instances of speech that manifestly contained references to Catholic theories of sacrifice and consecration, the

[1] Bodo Nischan, "The Second Reformation in Brandenburg: Aims and Goals," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 14 (1983): 173 – 187.

dissidents magnified the force and scope of this ritual pollution. That is, they worried about the possibility that the Melanchthon and colleagues were concealing papist doctrine under the guise of *adiaphora*. More importantly, they developed a theory of corruption which argued that contingent and non-binding ceremonial objects and gestures could transform into impious, infectious acts of idolatry in certain historical circumstances, the *casus confessionis et scandalis*. In Chapter III, I contextualized this theory of idolatrous pollution with developments in the ethics of ritual being worked out in Protestant communities in Switzerland, France, and England around the same time as the *adiaphora* controversy.

The dissidents did not just make an argument about how *adiaphora* transformed into *impia,* but, as I demonstrated in the second chapter, also relied on a specific rhetorical strategy and construction of authority built around appeals to the legacy, spirit, and teaching of Martin Luther. Along with displaying their piety toward Luther and drawing on his writings to bolster their own arguments about compromise in ceremonies, the dissidents also emulated his combative approach to theological controversy, which Oberman epitomizes as "hurling the Devil's filth back in his face."[2] Thus the dissidents not only relied on Luther's memory and prophetic status, but also appropriated the prophetic technique of using verbal filth to mark the bodies and reputations of their opponents, as I demonstrated in the fourth chapter. Another key borrowing was their reliance on Luther's understanding of the role of illusion and devilish trickery in this "closed world of idolatry." Verbal staining was complemented with elaborate scenes of unmasking the betrayal of the Adiaphorists, figured in Pancratius Kempf's woodcut image of the "innocent alb" badly covering up the body of a demon, analyzed in Chapter V. The problem at the center of this persuasive strategy was the tension in the dissidents' claims that the

[2] "Teufelsdreck: Eschatology and Scatology in the "Old" Luther," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19 (1988): 435 – 450, at 443.

disguises of ritual and rhetoric were transparently facile, and at the same time, that they were utterly dangerous in a world already plunged into shadows and illusions. If the dangers of "adiaphoric corruption" were so obvious, why did venerable Protestant intellectuals such Melanchthon tolerate them? This could only be explained if the corruption had already destroyed their ability to reason as well as discern the divine messages being sent to them through dreams, ominous portents, and the prophecies of the Antichrist available in scripture.

Polemic about the use of *adiaphora* during the Interim continued after the surrender of Magdeburg to Maurice of Saxony in 1551. In 1557, lingering disagreements and resentments prevented the Gnesio-Lutherans from presenting a united front with the Philippists in negotiations with the Catholics at the Colloquy of Worms.[3] The renewed charges of disloyalty and idolatrous pollution prompted the theologians of Wittenberg to publish the protocols of the negotiations that led up to the publication of the Excerpt of the Leipzig Articles in 1549. These documents, the *Ex actis synodocis* of 1559, were meant to prove that Melanchthon and his supporters had never been party to the chicanery alleged by Flacius, Gallus, and Amsdorf. Indeed, this publication was an important source of information for the negotiations described in Chapter I, and its protocols were reliable enough to be reprinted and cited in Melanchthon's *Omnia opera*. Yet these records did not settle the debate, but only kept it alive. At the same time, the disagreements about the nature of the *adiaphoron* and its application in the uncertain years of 1548 – 1552 blended into a new set of controversies about doctrinal subjects such as the freedom of the will ("Synergistic Debate," 1555 – 1561), the necessity of good works for the Christian life ("Majoristic Debate," 1552 – 1570), the substance of the *imago dei* after the Fall (1560 –

[3] Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 323 – 336.

1561), and the nature of divine presence in the Eucharist (1570 – 1574).[4] For the Gnesio-Lutherans, the *adiaphora* controversy was not a discrete disagreement, but the beginning of Wittenberg's disintegration as the center of Lutheran reform. As I have argued across the dissertation, Protestant ritual, even if it had banned most miraculous manifestations, was understood to make theological teaching physically present and effective. Thus the seemingly minor compromises proposed by Maurice's counselors and the Saxon theologians were the first crack in the theological foundation of the Reformation. To paraphrase Westphal: "big problems have small beginnings." The majority of this second generation of the Reformation had to die off before the Lutheran confession could consolidate, yet they are credited with bringing the assumptions, tensions, and contradictions of the Wittenberg reformation most clearly into view, which in turn led to debate and consensus building, and eventually, the Formula of Concord.[5]

These consequences might be considered the proximate, local effects of the *adiaphora* debate. But how does the controversy figure into larger developments in the history of Christianity in early modern Europe? Did it contribute to the patterns of rationalization and disenchantment observed by sociologists and historians such as Weber, Karant-Nunn, Gorski, and Brad Gregory? Even if the apocalyptic mood prevents the historical setting of my research from being an obvious moment of rationalization, the *adiaphora* controversy does seem to initiate a project of critical knowledge production with its gestures of iconoclastic revelation. The dissidents' concern with sorting through the material elements of religion in order to assess the stains of pollution is at the root of a genealogical impulse in Protestant thought. This was seen as an important strategy for coping with what Susan E. Schreiner calls "the closed world of

[4] Irene Dingel, "The Culture of Conflict in the Controversies Leading to the Formula of Concord (1548 – 1580)," *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550 – 1675,* ed. Robert Kolb (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008) 15 – 65.
[5] Ibid..

idolatry."[6] Though this project was only just beginning during the Interim crisis, it would become much more developed in the ensuing decades as the theological dissidents turned to their pioneering ecclesiastical history, the *Magdeburg Centuries*.[7] The *Magdeburg Centuries*, originally known as the *Ecclesiastica Historia*, draws on an enormous range of primary sources in order to reconstruct the customs, teachings, and challenges of the Christian church from century to century.[8]

The *Magdeburg Centuries* takes on two projects in reconstructing sacred history. The first is to show the perseverance of the true Church in the face of error and persecution; the second is to show the roots of impiety, superstition, and idolatry from within the visible Church itself. On the one hand, temporal distance from the apostolic period seems to account for the distortions, while on the other, the Centuriators[9] affirm that there was a diabolic push to corrupt the Church from its inception. The tipping point comes in the sixth century, when the Roman church, under the guidance of Gregory the Great, begins to institute innovations that mark a radical departure from the true doctrine that was promoted in the old customs.[10] The Centuriators are particularly concerned with what they see as a period when the cult of the saints became preeminent, when the possibility of sacred matter extends from the Eucharist to the mysterious contents of the reliquaries.

---

[6] Susan E. Schreiner, *Are You Alone Wise: The Search for Certainty in the Early Modern Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 392.

[7] Harald Bollbuck, *Wahrheitszeugnis, Gottes Auftrag und Zeitkritik: Die Kirchengeschichte der Magdeburger Zenturien und ihre Arbeitstechniken* (Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2014) 364 – 366.

[8] "Precisely because of the *adiaphora* controversy, the history of church ceremonies and liturgy obsessed Flacius throughout his stay in Magdeburg, which explains their prominence in the scheme of the Magdeburg Centuries" (Gregory B. Lyon, "Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries," *Journal of the History of Ideas 64* (2003): 253 – 272, at 257).

[9] The Centuriators included Flacius, who was the chief organizer, and also Johann Wigand, Mathew Judex, Basil Faber, Martin Copus, Eblinek Alman, along with many more ancillary and junior staff. Cf. Bollbuck, *Wahrheitszeugnis*, 403 – 415.

[10] Harald Bollbuck, Testimony of True Faith and the Ruler's Mission. The Middle Ages in the Magdeburg Centuries and the Melanchthon School," *Archiv Für Reformationsgeschichte* 101 (2010): 238-62, at 251.

In the dedicatory preface to the sixth century, the Centuriators lament the spread of excess ceremonies in the Church, using metaphors that connect to Westphal's discourse against the pseudo-*adiaphora* from thirteen years prior.[11] In describing this break from true apostolic tradition, these writers describe a creeping "calamity and plague to the estate of Christ," a slow accumulation of dead materials and meaningless habits that gradually extinguishes the "light of doctrine." In their explanation of the detrimental effects of such "excess," they attempt to explain the uncanny power human-invented observances possess from both a theological-anthropological perspective as well as a historical. Their problem is not with practices such as the sacraments, but rather with what they call "human ceremonies." The paradox they face is that while "freedom" in such practices has been granted to Christian communities in the new dispensation, human nature tends to pervert their proper use: "such *adiaphora* or ceremonies did not so much subvert the pure doctrines and beget the cult of saints: at the same time, they persisted as the cause and source of the seeds of idolatry and innumerable other errors in the all of the centuries that followed."[12] There is a striking disjunction here: in the beginning, these *adiaphora* were simply normal objects and practices, yet their beginning was close to the point when "the roots [of idolatry] grew so deeply, so that they could not be extirpated."[13] What's so odd about this claim is that throughout the *adiaphora* controversy, the opponents of compromise made the argument, rehearsed above by Westphal, that the smallest things could become the greatest, as though it were simply the pressure to conform to the Interim that mutated the non-binding ceremonies into

[11] *Sexta Centuria Ecclesiasticae Historiae* (Basle: Johann Oporinus, 1562).

[12] "Eiusmodi igitur calamitas & pestis fundi Christi, in ipsa Ecclesia, & inter eos quo custodes & vigiles Ecclesiae praecipui volebant perhiberi, nascebantur: nempe vt Adiaphororum receptione, cumulatione, defensione, templa occuparentur, ac lux doctrinae horribiliter obfuscaretur. Imo ista Adiaphora seu ceremoniae non tantum ibi sinceritatem doctrinae labefactarunt, & cultum sanctorum immodicum pepererunt: verum etiam sequentibus seculis omnibus causa, fons, seminarium idolatriarum et innumerabilium errorum extiterunt" (ibid., 6).

[13] "quae mala licet fulgore Euangelij hisce postremis mundi temporibus nonnihil reuelari & corrigi coeperunt, tamen radices tam profunde egerunt, vt extiprari radicitus nequeant" (ibid.).

sacrilege. And yet as Westphal's allies discuss the origin of corruption in the Church here, they claim that such human ceremonies always-already held the seeds of corruption within them.

Is this suspicion of all human participation in Christianity the opening act of the progressive narrative of Enlightenment or rather the cause of a more cyclical conception of church practices in need of periodic reformation? In Brad Gregory's *Unintended Reformation*, the culture of doctrinal controversy discredits Christian theology from being a solid authority for mediating conflict.[14] One of the antecedents to this culture of destructive theological critique was what Gregory refers to as "metaphysical univocity" from medieval nominalists such as Occam. According to Gregory, this shift in scholastic thinking displaces God from being the source of all being, present and active in creation, to a being among other beings. Protestants such as Zwingli and Calvin employed this metaphysics to critique the Catholic teachings and practices of a sacramentalized world. God, or Christ in this case, could either be here or there, but not "at the right hand of the Father" and simultaneously materialized in the host during Mass. Gregory observes that this spatial logic ironically reduces God to a kind of "crypto-spiritual presence" which is crudely idolatrous in its own valorization of God-as-object.[15] As Leo Joseph Koerner points out, such an attitude re-invests the "dumb idols" with subjectivity and power over the iconoclast, which incites violent reaction.[16] Such violence banishes God from the world in order to remain consistent with this idolatrous spatial understanding of the divine: "Desacramentalized and denuded of God's presence via metaphysical univocity and Occam's razor, the natural world would cease to be either the Catholic theater of God's grace or the playground of Satan as

[14] *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).
[15] Ibid., 42 – 3.
[16] *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) 102.

Luther's *princeps mundi*. Instead, it would have become so much raw material awaiting the imprint of human desires. This would have to be called an "objective" view of the world."[17]

Gregory's own sense of the post-Reformation world as "raw material awaiting the imprint of human desires" actually gestures toward the intervention of this dissertation. I have argued that is precisely the way in which theologies and idolatries imprint themselves upon materials, practices, and bodies in the *adiaphora* controversy which should direct our attention toward the incarnationalist, if not sacramentalized, understanding of ritual and material culture operative during the transition between the first generation of Protestant reform and the age of confessionalized absolutism.[18] Gregory reads the Reformation as producing a hyperpluralized world where no effective moral critique may challenge the violence perpetrated by international capital and ruthless states.[19] But what if it was the "raw material" of Christian theology and fantasy that not only caused but also persists as the lifeblood for this these systems of violence?

The real question, then, is what does it mean for a given community, idea, or practice to be Christian? When do motifs, vocabularies, and associations that are rooted in Christian discourses cease "being Christian?" Is that impossible, or is there some sort of *tertium quid*, a gray zone dividing (or uniting?) secularized modernity with its Christian past? What's striking about contemporary theorizing on the influence of Christianity, late-medieval or Protestant, on the origins of modern forms of power is how the question of "what counts as Christian" echoes the questions at the heart of the *adiaphora* controversy: what counts as polluted? What is a pseudo-

[17] *The Unintended Reformation*, 57

[18] The distinction I wish to draw between the incarnational and the sacramental takes Luther's claim that after the life and ministry of Jesus, God only becomes flesh and blood in the incarnation and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; the Devil does not have this same power to take flesh in a direct and miraculous way, but instead has power over the false appearances that suffuse our social worlds and individual psychologies. Thus, the idolatry-polluted ceremonies of the *adiaphora* controversy are the false images of sacraments, which gain power in the world through the bodily practices, allowing falsehood to materialize.

[19] *The Unintended Reformation*, 375 – 377.

adiaphoron? How does one discern the traces of idolatry? Both are attempts to sort through the implications of ideas and practices in the present being "tainted" by something powerful, old, and ultimately destructive. Both are anxious about whether this intrusion of a dangerous past into the present can ever be avoided, and whether discourse and practice may be purified in order to make a new beginning possible.

A recent and useful example of an attempt to think through the traces of Christianity in the West is Gil Anidjar's *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*.[20] In this work, Anidjar poses the question of how Christianity flows through different systems of power in the present. He takes a development in medieval piety centering on the miraculous appearance of the blood of Christ in the sacrament and shows how this coincides with and promotes a new paradigm of kinship, nationality, and race: "the sharing of blood fostered by the Eucharist gave rise to the community of blood, from which was extrapolated a universal anthropology. Accordingly, the perceived exceptionality of a community discriminating and excluding on the basis of blood (the *limpieza de sangre* of medieval Spain, the Nazi race laws) must be reconsidered in light of the rule, the constitution of the community of blood shared by all Christians of the Middle Ages and thereafter."[21] The community of the blood of Christ becomes a figure (and cause) for Christianity's multifariousness: "Christianity circulates through, over, and beyond a number of other spheres, and ultimately *as* law and culture, from economics to science, and beyond. It divides itself as, and distinguishes between, these different spheres."[22] Thus the diffusion of Christianity across myriad domains of human activity originates in the cultural and political significance of a specific aspect of medieval Eucharistic piety. The sacrificial blood of Christ

[20] Gil Anidjar, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).
[21] Ibid., 32.
[22] Ibid., 257.

pumps through the chambers of Western modernity's heart in spite of the demystification and iconoclasm that are often used to mark the beginning of European modernity.[23]

Yet if so much depends on the sacrificial blood of Christ, what happens when the repetition of that sacrifice is discredited and forbidden by the reformers? How should one explain the circulatory power of Christian (and Antichristian) ideas and practices in such a context? Sacrificial blood remains charged in the Reformation, either as made present in the lay chalice (especially for Lutherans) but also with the act of sacrifice being strictly delimited to the moment of the Passion. This was a singular, unrepeatable sacrifice, to which Christians only had access, according to Luther, through the promised sacramental signs given by Christ at the Last Supper. Therefore no more cults of relics or "wonderful blood," even for those Evangelicals like Luther who affirmed the reality of Christ's physical presence in the sacramental elements.[24] Blood remains relevant for my research as the stain of old abuses, the blood of Christ that so suffuses priestly vestments that Jan Łaski could not abide their sanction in the Church of England.[25] The polluted trace is thus visualized by Łaski as the blood of Christ being carelessly spread around, and even forged, by an unscrupulous clergy. Flacius, writing the year before, prefigures Łaski's sense of the abused blood of Christ with his image of "the crown of *adiaphora* thorns" [*adiaphoricarum spinarum corona exornatus*] adorning a newly-scourged Christ who has been betrayed back into the hands of his enemies through compromises in ceremonies (*Liber de veris*

[23] Carlos Eire, *The War Against the Idols* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 312.
[24] This theological position did not entail that apotropaic uses of the elements of the sacraments disappeared overnight. However, these shifts in doctrine and ritual policy did put pressure on these folks practices. Cf. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, 89 – 132. At the same time, the laity itself was concerned with the use and abuse of the elements on the part of their pastors. During the 1555 Saxon visitation for the district [*Ephorie*] of Kemberg, in the parish of Meura, the pastor was accused by the community of spilling the sacramental wine too frequently during the service. This signals the supernatural importance still attached to these material elements (Ed. Karl Pallas, *Die Registraturen Der Kirchenvisitationen Im Ehemals Sächsischen Kurkreise*, vol 2.1 (Halle: O. Hendel, 1906), 250.
[25] Quoted in Constantin Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946) 165.

et falsis adiaphoris A 1 ^{v} and later E 4 ^{v}).[26] Pseudo-*adiaphora* do violence to God's body by corrupting Christian worship and therefore Christian souls.

Indeed, as we have seen in Chapter I, corrupted language that activates the priest's performance of Eucharistic sacrifices constitutes the essence of idolatry pollution during the *adiaphora* controversy. The greatest anxiety was that whether through purposeful betrayal or willful ignorance, the Mass would be reinstated, at first covertly, and later openly, through the acceptance of pseudo-*adiaphora*—recall Flacius's remark, "the entire papacy resides in the Canon of the Mass." If idolatry pollution consisted of corrupted language, then the source of that corruption was the counterfeited claim upon the blood of Christ.

As evident from the example of the *Magdeburg Centuries*, anxiety about the legitimacy such claims provoked a genealogical impulse, one shared by Catholic thinkers eager to establish the legitimacy of specific traditions. Such confessionalized anxieties about pure access to divine grace worked together with the political ambitions of absolutist leaders to set off violent conflicts across Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries. If anticipations of the eschaton fed into these pollution-anxieties, what happens to the project of purifying Christian communities when the Riders of the Apocalypse keep away in spite of the rising tide of blood in Central Europe during the Thirty Year War?[27] In the aftermath of cataclysmic bloodshed fueled by

[26] "De veris et falsis adiaphoris," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548 – 1560)*, ed. Irene Dingel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 188, and "Proinde, cum adiaphoristiae eis proponent *Chorrock* statim illi id telum arripiunt, ac uociferantur tantum agi de ueste alba, totumque Christum veste alba inuolutum Romanae cohort illudendum, flagellandum, crucifigendumque proprinant" (ibid., 284).

[27] Estimates vary as to the deaths caused by the series of armed conflicts that comprise the Thirty Year War, from 15 – 20 % to 40 % of the inhabitants of German-speaking countries losing their lives as a result of the fighting. Added together with the casualties in the French Wars of Religion and the English Revolution, the hardening of confessional oppositions produced immense bloodshed in Europe. Cf. Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided*, 485.

confessionalization,[28] with the onset of new and competing interpretations of the meaning of reformation, what happens to these representations and arguments about purity in the practice of Christianity that were developed during the Interim?[29]

In the historical imaginations of Reformed and Pietists thinkers, the project of reforming and purifying the churches did not culminate with Luther, but instead began with him anew. Reformation became a cyclical process, suggesting a different understanding of the relationship between a Christian community and its historical, "human" traditions. This orientation stood in contrast to an orthodox Lutheran emphasis on the Luther's career as the decisive and singular reform event. Thus two notions of Christian purity predominate in the post-Thirty Year War: perpetual, cyclical reform, encapsulated in the slogan *ecclesia semper reformanda est*, as opposed to the veneration of Luther's reform as the unique, necessary, and sufficient act of cleansing the Church and uncovering the Gospel.[30] Both visions of the temporality of reform may have included moments of eschatological intensity, yet the pervading certainty about the history's immanent conclusion that organized the rhetoric of the *adiaphora* controversy was lost. What remains to be seen is whether the fading away of the apocalyptic mood causes or coincides with an erasure of the theological-idolatrous trace on practices, materials, and ritualized bodies, or whether this notion of the materialized traces of ideas and affective dispositions shifts into different contexts.

Understanding the relationship between these competing senses of history and the purification of Christian practices and institutions is vital if one is to get a grip on how

---

[28] Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1 – 45, especially 41 – 43.
[29] Robin Bruce Barnes sees the devastation of war as contributing to the dissolution of the importance of the apocalyptic for German Lutherans (*Prophecy and Gnosis* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988] 249 – 260.
[30] Eike Wolgast, "Reform, Reformation," *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* Vol. 5, ed. Otto Brunner, Wener Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 1984) 313 – 360, at 331 – 2.

Christianity participates in and constitutes modern discourses of power and governance. Investigating shifts and continuities in the early modern rhetoric of ritual and communal purity is all the more crucial if one follows Foucault and Anidjar in conceiving of Christian moral and ritual practices as fundamental to the governance of life and death in modernity.[31]

The goal of this dissertation was to explain how ritual practices that had been designated as unimportant to the religious life (supposedly the quintessential Protestant gesture) became extremely important and even dangerous. I have sought to show how this worked internal to the discourses of the participants, as well as the ways in which they deployed rhetorical language to explain, construct, figure, and expose "the dangers of ritual." My purpose has been to examine this perilous nexus of ceremony and rhetoric in the representation of Protestant moral responsibility and "Protestant politics" at the end of history as a way of contesting mainstream claims about rationalization and de-ritualization during the Reformation.

[31] For Foucault, consult *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977 – 78* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

Appendix: Dramatis Personae

Nicholas von Amsdorf (1483 –1565): Amsdorf was born into a noble family in Torgau and the nephew of prominent Augustinian and Luther patron Johann von Staupitz. Amsdorf did his primary schooling and early university work in Leipzig but later moved to Wittenberg to earn his bachelors and complete his theological education. After graduating, he remained as a faculty member and moved into more administrative roles, becoming the dean of the faculty of the arts and later the rector of the university in 1522, and was thus involved in the curricular reform being pushed by Luther and Melanchthon. In 1524, he became the superintendent of Magdeburg and oversaw the reformation of that city, all the while involved in controversies with Catholic and Spiritualist representatives in the area. With the death of the Catholic bishop of Naumburg in 1541, Amsdorf was selected by Saxon elector John Frederick to fill the vacancy and supplant the elected successor Julius Pflug, the cathedral provost. With the defeat of the Schmalkaldic League, Amsdorf was forced to withdraw from his bishopric and take up residence in Magdeburg, where became allied with Flacius and Nicholas Gallus in the propaganda war against the Interim and the "Saxon solution." It was also there that he helped formulate an influential statement of justified resistance to godless worldly authority in the "Magdeburg Confession," the prototype of later Calvinistic theoretical justifications of violence against state power. After the city's surrender to Maurice of Saxony, and the release of John Frederick from prison in 1552, Amsdorf resettled in Eisenach, where he oversaw the ecclesiastical governance of what remained of Ernestine Saxony, which also entailed taking an organizational role at the new college at Jena, which became the educational center of Gnesio-Lutheranism.[1]

[1] "Amsdorf, Nikolaus," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*. Ed. Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/f0a069af-3b2f-4c5e-a93e-99be23108286. For a full biography, consult Robert Kolb,

Matthias Flacius Illyricus (1520 – 1575): In Croatian, his native language, Flacius was known as Matije Vlačić. Born near Trieste in what is now Croatia, but was then under the hegemony of Venice, Flacius was urged to study theology in Germany by his mentor, Baldo Lupetina, the Franciscan provincial in Venice. After having studied in Basle and Tübingen, Flacius matriculated at Wittenberg University as a pauper, and thus paid no tuition. His skill in biblical languages, especially Hebrew, brought him to the attention of Luther and Melanchthon and eventually to a professorship there. Witness to what he believed to be the betrayal of Luther's reform through the negotiations over ceremonial *adiaphora* in the aftermath of the 1548 Diet of Augsburg, Flacius left Wittenberg for Magdeburg, where he would lead a propaganda campaign against the Interim and its Saxon "offspring." After the capitulation of Magdeburg, Flacius continued to live an itinerant existence, always involved in controversies with his former colleagues in Wittenberg and new colleagues at Jena about issues such as the status of the *imago dei* after the Fall, the freedom of the will, and good works. Not simply a polemicist, Flacius also organized a massive historical endeavor, known as the *Magdeburg Centuries*, which was pioneering in its use of primary sources. Flacius's position on the obliteration of the God's image in the human soul would eventually be rejected in the Formula of Concord and he died impoverished and embattled in Frankfurt am Main. However, his position regarding *adiaphora* had a lasting impact on the Lutheran confession.[2]

Nikolaus von Amsdorf (15483 – 1565): Popular Polemics in the Preservation of Luther's Legacy (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1978).

[2] The most recent biographies of Flacius are by Luka Ilić, *Theologian of Sin and Grace: The Process of Radicalization in the Theology of Matthias Flacius Illyricus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2014) and Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002).

Prince George III of Anhalt-Dessau (1507 – 1553): Born a prince of Anhalt-Dessau, George was influenced by his especially pious mother, Margaretha to pursue formation for the priesthood and a course of study in canon law at Leipzig University. Subsequently, he became Canon at Merseburg cathedral. Becoming coadjutor at Merseburg and eventually the provost in 1524, George earned the recognition of his old patron archbishop Albrecht of Mainz for his expertise in canon law and became a member of the council on the ecclesiastical governance of bishopric of Magdeburg, another part Albrecht's domain. After the death of his mother, George became increasingly entangled in the Evangelical experiment taking place in Wittenberg. Anhalt-Dessau did not subscribe to the original version of the Augsburg Confession, yet he was active in the reformation of Albertine Saxony as coadjutor to the Merseburg cathedral along with Maurice of Saxony's brother, Augustus. George was much liked by Luther and influenced by Melanchthon's theology. After the Schmalkaldic War, George was forced out of Merseburg in favor of bishop Michael Helding. After this, Maurice established George as cathedral provost in Meißen, though he preached frequently in his home community in Dessau. George's approach to ritual during the Interim negotiations in Saxony centered upon the *consensus catholicus*, the idea that he could draw on older traditions from across church history to repair the damage of the Protestant schism, even while adhering to Protestant theological claims.[3]

Maurice of Saxony (1521 – 1553): Maurice came of age in a time when the political rivalry in the Wettin dynasty between the Albertine branch of the family, and the Ernestine branch was especially intense, with the latter promoting the Wittenberg Reformation. Under the leadership

[3] Franz Lau, "Georg III. Der Gottselige," *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 6 (Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, 1964) 197; Otto von Heinemann, "Georg III.," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 8. (Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1878) 595 – 596.

of George of Saxony, Albertine Saxony (encompassing Leipzig, Dresden, and Chemnitz) remained staunchly Catholic. With the death of George, his brother Henry assumed leadership of Ducal Saxony. Henry converted to the Evangelical faith in 1536; in 1539, Ducal Saxony became Protestant, and in 1541, Maurice succeeded his father as duke. Despite his own Evangelical faith, and being married to the daughter of one of the foremost members of the Schmalkaldic League (Philip of Hesse,) Maurice stayed out of this Protestant defense alliance. Under the guidance of his traditionally-minded advisers in Dresden, he kept his political interests in harmony with the Catholic Hapsburg dynasty who ruled in the Holy Roman Empire, fighting for the emperor against the Ottomans, French, and eventually, the Schmalkaldic League itself in 1546. With the defeat of the League and the imprisonment of his cousin, John Frederick, Maurice was awarded the title of imperial elector. In turn, he was supposed to promote the emperor's religious policy by accepting and implementing the Augsburg Interim. Maurice resented this imposition and the awkward position it put him in with respect to the Protestant religious culture that had taken root across Saxony. Content for the short term to placate the emperor with revised versions of the Interim and by obeying his orders to subjugate rebellious Magdeburg, the site of the propaganda and theological dissent against the Interim, Maurice eventually turned against Charles, organizing a rebellion of Protestant princes that redefined the balance of power in the empire with the political recognition of the Lutheran confession within its boundaries. Maurice did not live to see the effects of this new order, as he was killed in the battle of Sievershausen against Margrave Albert Alcibiades in 1553.[4]

[4]Wilhelm Maurenbrecher, "Moritz, Herzog und Kurfürst von Sachsen," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 22 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1885) 293 – 305. For a full biography, Johannes Herrmann, *Moritz von Sachsen (1523 – 1553): Landes-, Reichs- und Friedenfürst* (Beucha: Sax-Verlag, 2003).

Philipp Melanchthon (1497 – 1560): Melanchthon, whose last name was Hellenized from the German Schwartzerdt, was Luther's partner in the Wittenberg reformation and chiefly responsible for bringing Luther's insights about justification and faith into a systematic form in his *Loci communes*. In the *Loci*, Melanchthon developed the hermeneutic of reading scripture as being revealed in two complementary but distinct modes: Law and Gospel, the former being what is commanded by God, and the latter being what is promised by God. Though a gifted linguist, Melanchthon stuttered and frequently had his more oratorically gifted students declaim his texts. In the period of time covered in this dissertation, Melanchthon had reached the mature phase of his thinking, which meant a more synergistic understanding of the human will in relationship to divine grace than Luther accepted, as well as a less pronounced emphasis on the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament. With Luther dead in 1546, Melanchthon was looked on as Luther's successor in the leadership of the Wittenberg reform movement. This authority was called into question as a result of his participation in the negotiations with primarily political counselors, but also some Catholic leaders, during an attempt to adapt the Augsburg Interim for use in Saxony.[5]

Wolfgang Musculus (1497 – 1563): Born in Dieuze in the region of Lothringen, Musculus was the son of a cooper and possessed talents in music and language. He entered the Benedictine convent at Lixheim when he was fifteen years old. By 1518, he was reading Luther's writings, but only left the convent in 1527 and relocated to Strasbourg, where he learned Hebrew and studied under Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito. In 1531, Musculus accepted a call to succeed

[5] Heinz Scheible, "Melanchthon, Philipp," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. Vol. 3, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 41 – 45. For a full biographical accounts of Melanchthon, consult Heinz Scheible, *Melanchthon: Eine Biographie* (Munich: Verlag CH Beck, 1997) and Clyde Manschreck, *Melanchthon: The Quiet Reformer* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwoord Press, 1975).

Urbanus Rhegius as the preacher at the Church of the Holy Cross in Augsburg and later became the cathedral preacher of this important center of trade. Musculus participated in the Wittenberg Concord (1536) between Lutheran and Reformed German Protestants. During this time, Musculus made the long journey to Wittenberg and was taken aback by the persistence of what appeared to be Catholic practices in the Protestant churches in Saxony. With the implementation of the Augsburg Interim, Musculus was forced to flee Augsburg with his family. By this point, he had become an important biblical commentator and translator of Greek patristic sources into Latin. He moved across Switzerland from Basel, to St Gallen and Zurich, finally settling in Bern, where he spent the rest of his life as a professor at the local university. In addition to a sizable and philologically in-depth commentary on the Psalms, Musculus contributed to the development of Reformed dogmatics by producing his own *Loci Communes*, which would be reprinted across Western Europe.[6]

Johann Pfeffinger (1493 – 1573): Pfeffinger came from Wasserberg am Inn in Bavaria, but was educated in Saxony at the Latin school in Annaberg. From there, he set upon the vocational path to the priesthood in Salzburg at a young age. Occupying an endowed preaching position in Passau, Pfeffinger came into contact with Luther's writings, became sympathetic to the cause of reform, and was forced to flee to Wittenberg, where he matriculated in 1524. The bishop of Meißen drove him out of his first Evangelical preaching post in Sonnenwald, and he resettled as the preacher for the cloisters at Eicha, close enough to Catholic Ducal Saxony so that the residents of Leipzig could attend his services on Sundays. After the death of Duke George,

[6] Rudolf Dellsperger, "Leben und Werk," *Wolfgang Musculus und die oberdeutsche Reformation*, ed. Rudolf Dellsperger, Rudolf Freudenberger, and Wolfgang Weber, (Berlin: Akadamie Verlag, 1997). Cf. Reinhard Bodenmann, *Wolfgang Musculus (1497 – 1563): destin d'un audodidacte lorrain au siècle des Réformes* (Geneva: Droz, 2000).

Pfeffinger took an active role in the reformation of ducal Saxony, becoming superintendent of Leipzig in 1540. By 1543, he earned his doctorate in theology from Leipzig university, and later rose to become a professor and academic administrator. After the Schmalkaldic War, Pfeffinger was one of the chief parties in the negotiations around adapting the Augsburg Interim for Saxony, and represented the loudest "Adiaphorist" voice in the controversy against the dissident theologians of Magdeburg and Hamburg. By taking the position that the human will cooperated in receiving divine grace in conversion, Pfeffinger ignited a new controversy with the Gnesio-Lutherans, known as the synergistic controversy, which further divided the followers of Luther.[7]

Joachim Westphal (1510 – 1574): Born in Hamburg to an artisan family, Westphal received a scholarship to study for his masters degree at Wittenberg and toured the universities of Erfurt, Tübingen, Strasbourg, and Heidelberg between 1535 – 1537. In 1540, Melanchthon recommended him for a position as professor in Rostock, but he was obliged to pastor the St. Catherine church in his home city on account of the financial support he had received from the Hamburg community for his education. Westphal became the literary representative of the Hanseatic cities' critique of the Augsburg Interim and the resulting Saxon attempts to adapt it. Along with Johannes Äpinus, Westphal was the first to articulate the overlap between what was once an *adiaphoron* and impiety and superstition during the "situation of confession and scandal." Westphal's hardline confessional stance resulted in a literary war over the real presence in the Eucharist with the Polish Reformed theologian Jan Łaski (1552), during which Westphal prevented Łaski, Albert Hardenberg, and other Protestants fleeing London from taking

[7] "Pfeffinger, Johann," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*. Ed. Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/c52dcd8c-d73f-48a7-b3c3-fae006af962a. Cf. Gotthard Lechler, "Pfeffinger, Johannes," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 25. (Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1887) 624 – 630.

refuge in Denmark and the Hanseatic cities of northern Germany. Reformed luminaries such as Calvin and Bullinger found their way into the ensuing controversy, and Westphal thus established himself as theological fighter for the Gnesio-Lutheran cause, though he retained some ties with "Philippist" Wittenberg. From 1562 to his death in 1574, Westphal worked as the provisional superintendent of Hamburg before being elected to that role in 1571.[8]

[8] "Westphal, Joachim," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*. Ed. Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/bbaebe43-09c9-4dde-9517-4b138fd63f13. Cf. Derek Visser, "Westphal, Joachim." "Westphal, Joachim," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. Vol. 4, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 268.

.

Bibliography:

Archival Sources

Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Germany

Loc. 7434 / 07. "Torgauer und Grimmaer Tag"

Loc. 10298/02. "Gabriels Didymi Buch wider das Interim darneben auch ein kurzer Bericht und Antwort auf die neue Kirchenordnung des Jahres 1549."

Loc. 10599. "Visitationsakta, die Kirchen und Schulen im Lande zu Meissen und Thüringen 1540 – 1559."

Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany

Codex Guelf. 6.5 2° Aug. fol. Heinemann-Nr. 2078: "Centuria XVI historiae ecclesiasticae per centuriatores Magdeburgenses collecta"; De Ceremoniis Ecclesiae": f. 369 – 398.'

Codex Guelf. 12.9 Aug 2°: "Leipziger Handlung des Interims halbens," 413 – 427; "Acta seu colloquia in arce Wittenbergensi" 428 – 438.

Primary Printed Sources

Note: For sixteenth-century print sources not available in modern editions, I include the signature reference given by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for each work, known as the Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts (VD 16). All of these are available as Pdf. ebooks at the website of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek:

https://www.bsb-muenchen.de/literatursuche/spezialbestaende/alte-und-seltene-drucke/16-jahrhundert-vd-16/

Augustine of Hippo, *De Civitate Dei Contra Paganos*. *Patrologia Latina* Vol. 41, edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. Paris: Imprimmerie Catholique, 1864.

Amsdorf, Nicholas. *Auff die Künstliche Spöttische und Bitterhönische ORATION So D. Ziegler zu Leiptzig am Ostermontag widder die bestendigen Lutherischen recitirt hat…Beurische und einfeltige antwort.* Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 A 2327.)

— — —. Bekentnis Unterricht vnd vermanung der Pfarrhern vnd Prediger der ChristlichenKirchen zu Magdeburgk. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 A 2333.)

— — —. *Dass diese Worte Christi "Das ist mein leib etc" noch feststehen* (*Das die zu Wittenberg im andern teil der bucher Doctoris Martini im buch das diese wort…mehr den ein blat vier gantzer Paragraphos vorsetzlich aussgelassen haben wie folget.* Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf.

Ebook (VD 16 L 4281.)

— — —. *Daß nie nöter gewest ist wider den Römischen Antichrist zu schreiben.* Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1551. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 A 2347.)

Calvin, John. *Interim Advltero Germanvum Cui adiecta est. Vera Christianae pacificationis, & Ecclesiae reformandae ratio.* Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 D 954; VD 16 C 323.)

— — —. *Omnia Opera* vol. 6, edited by Edouard Cunitz, Johann-Wilhelm Baum, and Eduard Wilhelm Eugen Reuss Brunswick: C.A. Schwetschke, 1867.

— — —. *Calvin-Studienausgabe*, vol. 3, edited by Eberhard Busch et al. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner, 1994.

Flacius, Matthias Illyricus. *Apologia Matthiae Flacii Illyrici ad Scholam Vitebergensem* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549). Pdf. Ebook (VD16 F 1266.)

— — —. *Bericht […] von etlichen Artikeln der christlichen Lehr.* Jena: Thomas Rebart, 1559. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 F 1280.)

— — —. *Christiana Admonitio Matthiae Flacij Illyrici de uitando impij Adiaphoristarum fermenti contagio secundum regulam Christi de admonendo fratre peccante institutia*. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 F 1297.)

— — —. *Disputatio de originali peccato et libero arbitrio*...Basle: Johann Oporinus, 1562. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 F 1352.

— — —. *Ein Buch von wahren und falschen Mitteldingen, darin fast der ganze Handel von Mitteldingen erkläret wird*. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 F 1447.)

— — —. *Entschüldigung Matthiae Flacij Illyrici geschrieben an der Vniversitet zu Wittemberg.* Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 F 1266.)

— — —. *Gründliche Verlegung des langen Comments der Adiaphoristen* […] Jena: Donat Richtzenhan, 1560. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 F 1412.)

— — —. "Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548–1560)* Vol. 2, edited by Irene Dingel, Jan Martin Lies, and Hans-Otto Schneider, 112 -- 353. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.

— — —. *Liber de veris et falsis adiaphoris, in quo integre propemodum adiaphorica controversia explicatur*. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 F 1444.)

— — —. *Omnia Scripta Latina Matthiae Flacij Illyrici, hactenus sparsim contra Adiaphoricas fraudes & errores*...Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 F 1296.)

— — —. "Wider den Auszug des Leipsischen Interims," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548–1560)* Vol.

2, edited by Irene Dingel, Jan Martin Lies, and Hans-Otto Schneider, 16 – 37. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.

— — —. *Wider den Schöden Teuffel der sich jtzt abermals in einen Engel des liechtes verkleidet hat* […]. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 ZV 5899.)

— — —. *Widder die neue Reformation Pfeffingers / des Meisnischen Thumbherrn. Durch Matth. Fl. Jllyr.* Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 F 1562.)

Flacius, Matthias and Gallus, Nicholas. *Antwort M. Nicolai vnd M. Fla. Jllyrici auff den brief etlicher Prediger in Meissen von der frage Ob sie lieber weichen den den Chorrock anziehen sollen.* Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 G 252.)

Flacius, Matthias Illyricus, Wigand, Johann, and Richter, Matthaeus. *Sexta Centuria Ecclesiasticae Historiae.* Basle: Johann Oporinus, 1562.

Gallus, Nicholas. *Eine Disputation von Mitteldingen und von den itzigen verenderungen in kirchen / die Christlich und wol geordent sind.* Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 ZV 6351.)

George III, Prince of Anhalt-Dessau. *Agenda, wie es In des Churfürsten zu Sachsen Landen In den kirchen gehalten wirdt*: *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Interims*, edited by Emil Friedberg Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1869. Pdf. Ebook.

Helding, Michael. *Sacri Canonis Missae Paraphrastica Explication, Cum Declaratione Ceremoniarum.* Augsburg: Philipp Ulhart, 1550. (VD 16 H 1621.)

Kempf, Pancratz; Flacius, Matthias Illyricus, "The Alb of the Innocent Adiaphoris," *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut*, Vol. 2, edited by Walter L. Strauss, 507. New York: Abaris, 1975.

Łaski, Jan. "Letter to Bucer, October 26 1550," *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation*, edited by Constantin Hopf, 164-166. Oxford: Blackwell, 1946.

Luther, Martin. *Aliquot Epistolae Reverendi Patris Piae Memoriae D. Martini Lutheri…* edited by Matthias Illyricus Flacius. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 L 3724.)

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 1, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 7, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1897.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 9, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1893.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Vol. 18, ed. Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al, 37-214. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1908.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 19, edited by Joachim Karl

Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1897.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 27, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1903.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 31 I, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1913.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 39 II, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1932.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 40 I, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1911.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. *Briefwechsel* Vol. 5, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1934.

— — —. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. *Briefwechsel* Vol. 10, edited by Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1947.

— — —. *Des Ehrwirdigen vnd tewren Mans Doct. Marti. Luthers seliger gedechtnis meinung / von den Mitteldingen*, edited by Joachim Westphal. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 L 3471.)

— — —. *Etliche Brieffe, des Ehrwirdigen Herrn D. Martini Luthers seliger gedechtnis, an die Theologos auff den Reichstag zu Augspurg geschrieben, Anno M.D. XXX. Von der vereinigung Christi und Belials*… edited by Matthias Illyricus Flacius. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 L 3726.)

— — —. *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings,* edited by John Dillenberger. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1961.

— — —. *Selected Writings of Martin Luther,* Volume 3, edited by Theodore G. Tappert. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

— — —. *Sententia Reverendi Viri D. M. Luth. Sanctae memoriae de Adiaphoris*… edited by Joachim Westphal. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 L 3469.)

Lutheran Church. *Triglot Concorida: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1923.

Maurice, Duke and Elector of Saxony. *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen*, Volume III, edited by Johannes Hermann and Günther Wartenberg. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1978.

— — —. *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen*, Volume IV, Edited by Johannes Hermann and Günther Wartenberg. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992.

Melanchthon, Philipp. *Melanchthons Briefwechsel – Regesten Online*, edited by Heinz Scheible and Christine Mundhenk, last modified December 17, 2014, http://www.haw.uni-heidelberg.de/forschung/forschungsstellen/melanchthon/mbw-online.de.html

— — —. *Melanchthon deutsch*, vol 4, edited by Michael Beyer et al. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012.

— — —. *A Melanchthon Reader*, translated by Ralph Keene. American University Studies. Series VII, Theology and Religion ; v. 41. New York: Peter Lang, 1988.

— — —. *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume VI, edited by Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider , and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil. Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1839.

— — —. *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume VII, edited by Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider , and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil. Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1840.

— — —. *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume IX, edited by Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider , and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil. Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1842.

— — —. *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume XI, edited by Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider , and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil. Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1843.

Musculus, Wolfgang. *PROSCAERUS. Liceat ne homini Christiano, euangelicae doctrinae gnaro, papisticis superstitionibus ac falsis cultibus externa societate commnicare. Dialogi quatuor* Basle: Jakob Kündig, 1549.

Osiander, Andreas. *Andreas Osiander D.Ä Gesamtausgabe* Volume 8, edited by Gerhard Müller and Gottfried Seebaß. Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 1994.

— — —. *Andreas Osiander D.Ä Gesamtausgabe* Volume 9, edited by Gerhard Müller and Gottfried Seebaß. Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 1994.

Pastors of Hamburg. "Concionatoribus Hamburgens." *Corpus Reformatorum. Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia.* Volume 7, edited by Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil, 367-382. Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1840.

Pfeffinger, Johann. "Gründlicher und wahrhaftiger Bericht," *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548–1560)* Vol. 2, edited by Irene Dingel, Jan Martin Lies, and Hans-Otto Schneider, 643 --730. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.

— — —. *Von Den Traditionibvs, Ceremoniis, Oder Mitteldingen, Christlicher Warer Bericht: Allen Lieben Christen in Disen Letzten Und Gefehrlichen Zeitten, Nützlich Zu Wissen*. Frankfurt an der Oder: Wolrab, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 P 2357.)

Pflug, Julius. *Julius Pflug Correspondance.* Vol. III, Edited by J.V. Pollet, O.P. Leiden: Brill, 1977.

Quintilian, Marcus Fabius. *Quintilian's Institutes of Oratory*. Vol. 1. Trans. John Selby Watson.

London: Henry G. Bohn, 1856.

Die Registraturen Der Kirchenvisitationen Im Ehemals Sächsischen Kurkreise, Vol. 2.1, edited by Karl Pallas. Halle: O. Hendel, 1906.

Sarcerius, Erasmus. *Creutzbüchlein. Darinnen vier und zweinzig Ursachen vermeldet werden Warumb die reyne lere des Evangelii trewe Prediger vnd frome Christen ohne Creutz vnnd Leyden nicht seyn mögen.* Nuremberg: Daubmann, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 S 1739.)

— — —. *Ein warnung büchlein wie man sich für der alten Papisten groben vnd dölpischen vnd nornemlich für der newen listigen vnnd teuschenden leren hüten sol*. Leipzig: Jacob Berwaldt, 1551. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 S 1790.)

Westphal, Joachin. *CONFVTATIO SOPHISTICI ADIAphoristarum scripti Lyps*. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 W 2279.)

— — —. *DVO SCRIPTA M. IOACHIMI WESTPHAL HAMBVRG*. Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 W 2304.)

— — —. *Historia vituli aurei*. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 W 2291.)

— — —. *Verlegung des Gründlichen Berichts der Adiaphoristen*. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1551. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 W 2280.)

— — —. *Zwo Schrifften M. Joachimi Westphali, Pfarherrn zu Hamburg*. Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550. Pdf. Ebook (VD16 W 2307.)

Ziegler, Bernhard. *Oratio De Coniunctione Et Unitate Christianorum, contra non necessarias separationes, & aemultationes peruersas recitata in templo collegij Paulini a Bernardo Ziglero S. Theologiae Doctore, feriis secundis paschalibus.* Leipzig: Valentin Bapst, 1549. Pdf. Ebook (VD 16 M 3750.)

Secondary Sources:

"Amsdorf (Amsdorff), Nikolaus," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*, edited by Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/f0a069af-3b2f-4c5e-a93e-99be23108286, accessed 01.18.2016.

Anidjar, Gil. *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Arend, Sabine. ""Lassets alles züchtiglich vnd ordentlich zugehen": Vorstellungen von "guter Ordnung" in den evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Gute Ordnung: Ordnungsmodelle und Ordnungsvorstellungen in der Reformationszeit*, edited by Irene Dingel and Armin Kohnle, 31 – 48. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsansltalt, 2014.

Asad, Talal. *Formations of the secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity*. Stanford:Stanford University Press, 2003.

— — —. *Genealogies of Religion : Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

Assmann, Jan. *Religion and Cultural Memory : Ten Studies*, translated by Rodney Livingstone. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006.

Barnes, Robin Bruce. *Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988.

Bell, Catherine. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice.* New York: Oxford UP, 1992.

Berbig, Hans Joachim. "Zur rechtlichen Relevanz von Ritus und Zeremoniell im romisch-deutschen Imperium," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte Stuttgart* 92 (1981): 204-249.

Blösch, Emil. "Musclus, Wolfgang." *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* Vol. 23, edited by Rochus von Liliencron, 95-97. Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1886.

Blumenberg, Hans. *Paradigms for a Metaphorology*, trans. Robert Savage. Ithaca: Cornel University Press, 2010.

Bodenman, Reinhard. *Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563): Destin d'un autodidact lorrain au siècle des Réformes.* Geneva: Droz, 2000.

Bollbuck, Harald. "Testimony of True Faith and the Ruler's Mission. The Middle Ages in the Magdeburg Centuries and the Melanchthon School." *Archiv Für Reformationsgeschichte* 101, no. 1 (2010): 238-62.

— — —. *Wahrheitszeugnis, Gottes Auftrag Und Zeitkritik : Die Kirchengeschichte Der Magdeburger Zenturien Und Ihre Arbeitstechniken*. Wolfenbütteler Forschungen ; Bd. 138. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2014.

Bossy, John. *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Brady, Thomas A. *Protestant Politics: Jacob Sturm (1489-1553) and the German Reformation*. Brill, 1995.

Brecht, Martin. *Martin Luther. Zweiter Band: Ordnung und Abgrenzung der Reformation 1521 bis 1532.* Stuttgart: Calwer, 1986.

Buc, Philippe. *The Dangers of Ritual : Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Burke, Peter. *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Bynum, Caroline Walker. “The Sacrality of Things: An Inquiry into Divine Materiality in the Christian Middle Ages,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 78 (2013): 3 –18.

— — —. *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

Chalybaeus, Albert. *Die Durchführung des Leipziger Interims*, Phd dissertation, Universität Leipzig, 1904.

Chia-Hsia, Ronnie Po. *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550-1750.* Milton: Taylor & Francis, 1992.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. “The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon,” *Past and Present* 90 (1981): 40 – 70.

Dellsperger, Rudolf. “Leben und Werk,”*Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563) und die oberdeutsche Reformation*, edited by Rudolf Dellsperger, Rudolf Freudenberger, and Wolfgang Weber, 23 – 36. Berlin: Akademie, 1997.

Delumeau, Jean. *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: a new view of the Counter-Reformation*, translated by Jeremy Moiser. London: Burns & Oates, 1977.

Dingel, Irene. *Concordia Controversa : Die öffentlichen Diskussionen Um Das Lutherische Konkordienwerk Am Ende Des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Quellen Und Forschungen Zur Reformationsgeschichte, Bd. 63. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996.

— — —. “ “Controversia Et Confessio” –the Culture of Controversy Leading to Confessional-Consolidation in the Late Sixteenth Century,” *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550-1675*, edited by Robert J. Kolb, 15-64. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

— — —. “Die Kultivierung des Exulantentums im Luthertum,” *Nikolaus von Amsdorf (1483-1565),* edited by Irene Dingel, 153-175. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2008.

— — —. “"Der rechten lehr zuwider" : die Beurteilung des Interims in ausgewählten theologischen Reaktionen,” *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaftskrise Und Glaubenskonflikt*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte, 292-311. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005.

Dockhorn, Klaus. "Luthers Glaubensbegriff und die Rhetorik." *Linguistica biblica* 21 (1973): 19 – 39.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An analysis of the concept of pollution and taboo.* Abingdon: Routledge, 2007.

Elwood, Christopher. *The Body Broken*: *The Calvinist Doctrine of the Eucharist and the Symbolization of Power in Sixteenth-Century France.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Evans, G. R.,"Sancta Indifferentia and Adiaphora: "Holy Indifference" and "Things Indifferent"."

Common Knowledge 15 (2008): 23-38.

Fernandez, James W. “Introduction: Confluents of inquiry.” *Beyond Metaphor: The Theory of Tropes in Anthropology*, edited by James W. Fernandez, 1-13. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Fleck, Ludwik. *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, translated by Fred Bradley and Thaddeus J. Treun. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

Eire, Carlos. “Calvin and Nicodemism: A Reappraisal,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 10 (1979): 44 – 69.

— — —. *The War Against the Idols: the reformation of worship from Erasmus to Calvin.* New York: Cambridge, 1986.

Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977 – 78.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Fraenkel, Pierre. *Testimonia patrum: the function of the patristic argument in the theology of Philip Melanchthon*. Geneva: E. Droz, 1961.

Friedrich, Markus. "Orthodoxy and Variation: The Role of Adiaphorism in Early Modern Protestantism." *Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Early Modern German Culture: Order and Creativity, 1500-1750*, edited by Randolph Head and Daniel Christensen, 45-68. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Furey, Constance M. "Invective and Discernment in Martin Luther, D. Erasmus, and Thomas More." *Harvard Theological Review* 98, no. 4 (2005): 469 – 88.

Gantet, Claire. “Dreams, Standards of Knowledge and Orthodoxy in Germany in the Sixteenth Century,” *Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Early Modern German Culture: Order and Creativity, 1550-1750*, ed. Randolph Head and Daniel Christensen, 69 – 88. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

— — —. *Der Traum in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ansätze zu einer kulturellen Wissenschaftsgeschichte*. Berlin: De Gruyer, 2010.

Gorski, Philip S. “Historicizing the Secularization Debate: Church, State, and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000): 138 – 167.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-fashioning* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984

Gregory, Brad. *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012

Gross, Daniel M. "Melanchthon’s rhetoric and the practical origins of Reformation human science." *History of the Human Sciences* 13 (2000): 5-22.

Haußleiter, Johannes. “Matthias Flacius als Herausgeber von Luthers Koburger Briefen und

Trostsprüchen (1530)," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 28 (1917): 149 –187.

von Heinemann, Otto. "Georg III.," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* Vol. 8, edited by Historische Commission bei der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 595 – 596. Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1878.

Hendrix, Scott. *Recultivating the Vineyard: The Reformation Agendas of Christianization.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.

— — —. "Re-rooting the Faith: the Reformation as Re-Christianization," *Church history* 69 (2000): 558 – 577.

Herrmann, Johannes. *Augsburg - Leipzig - Passau : Das Leipziger Interim Nach Akten Des Landeshauptarchives Dresden 1547-1552*, Phd. dissertation Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig, 1962.

— — —. *Moritz Von Sachsen (1521-1553) : Landes-, Reichs- Und Friedensfürst*. Beucha: Sax-Verlag, 2003.

Heschel, Susannah. "Race as Incarnational Theology: Affinities between German Protestantism and Racial Theory," *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating race, gender, and ethnicity in early Christian studies*, edited by Laura Nasrallah and Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, 211 – 234. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.

Hoke, Rudolf. "Ein theologisches Gutachten von staatsrechtlicher Tragweite," *Ex Aequo Et Bono : Willibald M. Plöchl Zum 70. Geburtstag*. Forschungen Zur Rechts- Und Kulturgeschichte, edited by Willibald M. Plöchl, Peter Leisching, Franz Pototschnig, and Richard Potz, 107 – 117. Innsbruck: Univ.-Verl. Wagner, 1977.

Hopf, Constantin "Hooper's 'Notes' to the King's Council 3 October 1550," *The Journal of Theological Studies* (1943): 194 – 199.

— — —. *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946.

Horkheimer, Max, Adorno, Theodor W. *Dialectic of Enlightenment : Philosophical Fragments*, edited by Gunzlein Schmid Noerr; translated by Edmund Jephcott. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002.

Ilić, Luka. *Theologian of Sin and Grace : The Process of Radicalization in the Theology of Matthias Flacius Illyricus*. Veröffentlichungen Des Instituts Für Europäische Geschichte Mainz ; Bd. 225. 2014.

Irwin, Joyce. "Music and the Doctrine of Adiaphora in Orthodox Lutheran Theology." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 14 (1983): 157-172.

Issleib, Simon. *Aufsätze Und Beiträge Zu Kurfürst Moritz Von Sachsen (1877-1907)*, edited by Reiner Gross. Mitteldeutsche Forschungen. Sonderreihe Quellen Und Darstellungen in Nachdrucken ; Bd. 8. Köln: Böhlau, 1989.

Jaquette, James. *Discerning What Counts : The Function of the Adiaphora Topos in Paul's Letters*. Dissertation Series (Society of Biblical Literature) ; No. 146. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1995.

Jay, Martin. *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme.* Berkley: University of California Press, 2005.

Jones, Colin. "Plague and its metaphors in early modern France," *Representations* 53(1996): 97 – 127

Junghans, Helmar J. "Augsburg Confession," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, Vol. 1, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 93 – 97. New York, Oxrod: Oxford University Press, 1996,

Kahn, Victoria. "Revising the history of Machiavellism: English Machiavellism and the Doctrine of Things Indifferent," *Renaissance Quartlery* 46 (1993): 526-561

Karant-Nunn, Susan C. *The Reformation of Ritual : An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*. Christianity and Society in the Modern World. London ; New York: Routledge, 2007.

Jöcher, Christian Gottlieb. "Ziegler, Bernhard," *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon.* Volume 4, 1751. De Gruyter World Biographical Information System, http://db.saur.de.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/WBIS/welcome.jsf, accessed 12.01.2015

Jordan, Mark D. *The invention of sodomy in Christian theology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Kaufmann, Thomas. *Das Ende Der Reformation : Magdeburgs "Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1548-1551/2)* Vol. 123. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.

— — —. "'Erfahrungsmuster' in der frühen Reformation," *Historische Zeitschrift. Beihefte* (2001): 281 – 306.

— — —. *Konfession und Kultur: Lutherischer Protestantismus in der zweiten Hälfte des Reformationsjahrhunderts*. Spätmittelalter und Reformation Neue Reihe 29. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006.

Keane, Webb. *Christian Moderns : Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter*. The Anthropology of Christianity ; 1. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Klassen, Pamela E. *Spirits of Protestantism: Healing, Medicine, and Liberal Protestantism.* Berkley: University of California Press, 2011.

Koch, Ernst. “Lutherflorilegien zwischen 1550 und 1600: Zum Lutherbild der ersten nachreformatorischen Generation,” *Theologische Versuche* XVI (1986): 105 – 117.

Koerner, Leo Jospeh. *The Reformation of the Image*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Kolb, Robert. "Altering the agenda, shifting the strategy: The Grundfest of 1571 as Philippist program for Lutheran Concord." *The Sixteenth century journal* 30 (1999): 705-726.

— — —. “Controversia perpetua: Die Fortsetzung des adiaphoristischen nach dem Augsburger Religionsfrieden,” *Politik und Bekenntnis: Reaktionen auf das Interim von 1548*, edited by Irene Dingel and Günther Wartenberg, 191-210. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2006.

— — —. "Dynamics of Party Conflict in the Saxon Late Reformation: Gnesio-Lutherans vs. Philippists." *The Journal of Modern History* 49 (1977): 1289-1305.

— — —. "Formula of Concord," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. Vol. 2, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 117 – 121. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

— — —. *Nikolaus von Amsdorf (1483 – 1565): Popular Polemics in the Preservation of Luther’s Legacy.* Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1978.

— — —. *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, Hero : Images of the Reformer, 1520-1620*. Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books : Paternoster Press, 1999.

Kusukawa, Sachiko. *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy: The Case of Philip Melanchthon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Lang, Matthias. ““Der Vrsprung aber der Pestilentz ist nicht natürlich, sondern übernatürlich…": Medizinische und theologische Erklärung der Seuche im Spiegel protestantischer Pestschriften 1527-1650," *Die leidige Seuche. Pest-Eälle in der Frühen Neuzeit,* edited by Otto Ulbricht, 133 – 180. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2004.

von Langenn, Friedrich Albert. *Christoph von Carlowitz: Eine Darstellung aus dem XVI. Jahrhundert.* Leipzig: J.C. Heinrich’sche Buchhandlung, 1854.

Lakoff, George and Johnson, Mark. *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Jaquette, James L. *Discerning What Counts: The Function of the Adiaphora Topos in Paul’s Letters*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.

Largier, Niklaus. "Mysticism, Modernity, and the Invention of Aesthetic Experience." *Representations*, no. 105 (2009): 37 – 60.

Lau, Franz. “Georg III. Der Gottselige,” *Neue Deutsche Biographie* Vol. 6, edited by Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 197. Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, 1964.

Lechler, Gotthard. “Pfeffinger, Johannes,” *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* Vol. 25, edited by Historische Commission bei der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 624 – 630. Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1887.

Lentes, Thomas. “Andacht und Gebärde. Das religiöse Ausdrucksverhalten,” *Kulturelle Reformation. Sinnformationen im Umbruch*, edited by Berhard Jussen and Craig Koslofsky*,* 29 – 68. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1999.

Leppin, Volker. *Antichrist Und Jüngster Tag: Das Profil Apokalyptischer Flugschriftenpublizistik Im Deutschen Luthertum 1548-1618*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1999.

Lyon, Gregory B. "Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64, no. 2 (2003): 253 – 272.

MacCulloch, Diarmaid. *Reformation: Europe’s House Divided 1490 – 1700.* London: Allen Lane, 2003.

Manschreck, Clyde Leonard. "A critical examination and appraisal of the adiaphoristic controversy in the life of Philip Melanchthon." PhD diss., Yale University, 1948.

— — —. *Melanchthon: The Quiet Reformer.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwoord Press, 1975.

— — —. “The Role of Melanchthon in the Adiaphora Controversy,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 48 (1957): 165-181.

Marty, Martin. *Martin Luther*: *A Life.* New York: Penguin, 2004.

Maurenbrecher, Wilhelm. “Moritz, Herzog und Kurfürst von Sachsen,” *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* Vol. 22, edited by Historische Commission bei der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 293 – 305. Leipzig: Duncker & Humboldt, 1885.

Mayer, Thomas F. "Starkey and Melanchthon on Adiaphora: A Critique of W. Gordon Zeeveld." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11 (1980): 39-50.

Michalski, Sergiusz. *The Reformation and the Visual Arts*: *The protestant image question in Western and Eastern Europe.* Abingdon UK: Routledge, 2013.

More, Robert I. “Heresy as disease.” *The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst. 1-11. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1973.

Moritz, Anja. *Interim und Apokalypse: Die religiösen Vereinheitlichungsversuche Karls V. Im Spiegel der magdeburgischen Publizistik 1548-1551/52*. Vol. 47. Mohr Siebrek Ek, 2009.

Muir, Edward. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*. 2nd ed. New Approaches to European History ; 33. Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Nirenberg, David. *Anti-Judaism : The Western Tradition*. 1st ed. New York: W. W. Norton &, 2013.

— — —. *Communities of Violence : Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Oberman, Heiko Augustinus. *The Dawn of the Reformation : Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986.

— — —. *The Impact of the Reformation: Essays*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1994.

— — —. *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*. Yale University Press, 2006

— — —. "Teufelsdreck: Eschatology and Scatology in the "Old" Luther." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19, no. 3 (1988): 435 – 450.

— — —. "Thesen zur Zwei-Reiche-Lehre," *Luther und die politische Welt*, edited by Erwin Iserloh and Gerhard Müller, 27 – 34. Stuttgart: F Steiner Verlag, 1983.

Olson, Oliver K. *Matthias Flacius and the survival of Luther's reform*. Vol. 20. Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002.

— — —. "The Three-headed Dragon, Scourge of the Reformation'."*Lutheran Quarterly* 7 (1993): 293-314.

Osbourne, Thomas A. *Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham.* Washington D.C.: Catholic University Press, 2014.

Otto-Schneider, Hans. "De rebus adiaphoris epistola—Einleitung." *Der Adiaphoristische Streit (1548-1560)* ed. Irene Dingel, Jan Martin Lies, and Hans-Otto Schneider, 43 – 59. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.

Peterson, Luther David. "The Philippist Theologians and the Interims of 1548: Soteriological, Ecclesiastical, and Liturgical Compromises and Controversies within German Lutheranism." The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1974.

Pettegree, Andrew. *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion.* Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

"Pfeffinger, Johann," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*, edited by Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/c52dcd8c-d73f-48a7-b3c3-fae006af962a, accessed 02.15.2016.

Primus, John Henry. *The Vestments Controversy: An Historical Study of the Earliest Tensions Within the Church of England in the Reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth*. PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 1960.

Rabe, Horst. *Reichsbund Und Interim:* Die Verfassungs- und Religions-politik Karls V. und der Reichstag von Augsburg 1547/1548. Köln, Wien: Böhlau, 1971.

— — —. "Zur Interimspolitik Karl V," *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaft und Glaubenskonflikt*, edited by Luise Schorn-Schütte, 127 – 46. Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 2005.

Rein, Nathan B. *The Chancery of God : Protestant Print, Polemic, and Propaganda Against the Empire, Magdeburg, 1546-1551*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.

— — —. "From the History of Religions to the History of 'religion': The Late Reformation and the Challenge to Sui Generis Religion." *Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Early Modern German Culture: Order and Creativity, 1500-1750*, edited by Randolph Head and Daniel Christensen, 27-44. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Reinhard, Wolfgang. *Glaube Und Macht : Kirche Und Politik Im Zeitalter Der Konfessionalisierung*, Freiburg Im Breisgau: Herder, 2004.

Remer, Gary. *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration.* University Park: Penn State University Press, 1996.

Roper, Lyndal. "Martin Luther's Body: The Stout Doctor and His Biographers." *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 2 (2010): 351-84.

Sabean, David Warren. "Soziale Distanzierungen: Ritualisierte Gestik in deutscher bürokratischer Prosa der Frühen Neuzeit," *Historische Anthropologie* 4, no. 2 (1996): 216-33.

Scheible, Heinz. "Melanchthon, Philipp," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. Vol. 3, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 41 – 45. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

— — —. *Melanchthon: Eine Biographie.* Munich: Verlag CH Beck, 1997.

Schilling, Heinz. "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1 – 45.

— — —. *Konfessionskonflikt und Staatsbildung: eine Fallstudie über das Verhältnis von religiösem und sozialem Wandel in der Frühneuzeit am Beispiel der Grafschaft Lippe*. Gütersloh: Mohn, 1981.

Schneider, John R. *Philip Melanchthon's Rhetorical Construal of Biblical Authority--oratio Sacra*. Texts and Studies in Religion ; v. 51. Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1990.

Schorn-Schütte, Luise. *Die Reformation: Vorgeschichte, Verlauf, Wirkung*. Munich: CH Beck, 1996.

Schreiner, Susan Elizabeth. *Are You Alone Wise? : The Search for Certainty in the Early Modern Era*. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Scott, Joan W. "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1991): 773 – 797

Screech, Michael A. *Laughter at the Foot of the Cross*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.

Scribner, Robert W. *For the Sake of Simple Folk : Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

— — —. *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*. London ; Ronceverte, WV, U.S.A.: Hambledon Press, 1987.

— — —. "The Reformation, popular magic, and the "Disenchantment of the World,"" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (1993): 475 – 494.

Sdzuj, Reimund B. *Adiaphorie Und Kunst : Studien Zur Genealogie ästhetischen Denkens*. Frühe Neuzeit, Bd. 107. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2005.

— — —. "Unvorgreifliche Überlegungen zur Bedeutung des Frühneuzeitlichen Adiaphorismus für die Genealogie des neuere Kunstverständnisses." *Daphnis-Zeitschrift für Mittlere Deutsche Literatur* 30 (2001): 645-663.

Seligman, Seligman, Adam B., Weller, Robert P., Puett, Michael J., and Simon, Bennett. *Ritual and Its Consequences : An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Strauss, Gerald. *Luther's House of Learning : Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

Stearns, Justin K. *Infectious Ideas: Contagion in Premodern Islamic and Christian Thought in the Western Mediterranean.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2011.

Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, "Kneeling before God—Kneeling before the Emperor: The Transformation of a Ritual during the Confessional Conflict in Germany," *Resonances: historical essays on continuity and change,* edited by Nils Holger Petersen, Eyolf Østrem, and Andreas Bücker, 149-172. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.

Stout, Jeffrey. *Democracy and Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Street, Thomas Watson. "John Calvin on adiaphora: an exposition and appraisal of his theory and practice." PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary (New York, NY), 1954.

Strohmeyer, Arno. "Rituelle Kommunikation in vormodernen Herrschaftsordnungen: Kniefälle des oberösterreichischen und steirischen Adels" *zeitenblicke* 4 (2005): http://www.zeitenblicke.historicum.net/

Stuart, Kathy. *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts : Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany*. Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History. Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Stupperich, Martin. "Das Augsburger Interim als apokalyptisches Geschehnis nach den Königsberger Schriften Andreas Osianders." *ARG* 64 (1973): 225-245.

— — —. *Osiander in Preußen: 1549–1552*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973.

Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England.* Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Turner, Terence. ""We are Parrots," "Twins are Birds,"" *Beyond Metaphor: The Theory of Tropes in Anthropology*, edited by James W. Fernandez, 121 – 158. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Verkamp, Bernard J. *The Indifferent Mean : Adiaphorism in the English Reformation to 1554*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1977.

— — —. "The Limits upon Adiaphoristic Freedom: Luther and Melanchthon." *Theological Studies* 36 (1975): 52-76.

— — —. "The Zwinglians and Adiaphorism." *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 42 (1973): 486-504.

Vickers, Brian. "Repetition and Emphasis in Rhetoric: Theory and Practice," *Repetition*, edited by Andreas Fischer, 85 – 113. Tübingen: Narr, 1994.

Visser, Derek. "Westphal, Joachim," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. Vol. 4, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 268. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Walsham, Alexandra. "The Reformation and 'the disenchantment of the world' reassessed," *The Historical Journal* 51, (2008): 497 – 528.

Wartenberg, Günther. *Landesherrschaft Und Reformation : Moritz Von Sachsen Und Die Albertinische Kirchenpolitik Bis 1546*. Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1988.

— — —. "Philipp Melanchthon und die sächsisch-albertinische Interimspolitik," *Lutherjahrbuch* 55 (1988): 60-82.

Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Talcott Parsons. London: Routledge, 1992.

Wengert, Timothy J. "Not by Nature Philoneikos," *Politik und Bekenntnis: Reaktionen auf das Interim von 1548*, edited by Irene Dingel and Günther Wartenberg, 33-50. Leipzig: Evangelische

Verlagsanstalt, 2006.

"Westphal, Joachim," *Controversia et Confessio Digital*, edited by Irene Dingel. http://www.controversia-et-confessio.de/id/bbaebe43-09c9-4dde-9517-4b138fd63f13, accessed 08.13.2015.

Whitford, David M.. *Tyranny and Resistance: The Magdeburg Confession and the Lutheran Tradition.* St. Louis: Concorida, 2001.

Wilson, Thomas A. *Genealogy of the Way : The Construction and Uses of the Confucian Tradition in Late Imperial China*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Wolgast, Eike, "Biographie als Autoritätsstiftung," *Biographie Zwischen Renaissance Und Barock : Zwölf Studien*, edited by Walter Berschin, 41 – 71. Heidelberg: Mattes, 1993.

— — —. "Reformation, Reform," *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland,* Vol. 5, edited by Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhard Koselleck, 313 – 360 . Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1984.

— — —. *Die Wittenberger Luther-Ausgabe. Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte Der Werke Luthers, Im 16. Jahrhundert.* Nieuwkoop, De Graaf, 1971.

Zagorin, Perez. *Ways of Lying: dissimulation, persecution, and conformity in early modern Europe*. Cambridge: Harvard, 1990.