

9

Calvinism at the Borders of the Empire

Johannes Wigand and the Lutheran Reaction to Calvinism

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In the second half of the sixteenth century the prospect of Calvinism at the borders of the Holy Roman Empire—and especially the prospect of its potential expansion within the borders of the Empire—was for the imperial princes a thoroughly disconcerting idea. That was due not only to the political and legal constellations within the so-called Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, though they certainly played a significant role. Since the Religious Peace of Augsburg of 1555 within the Empire, only those who had accepted the Augsburg Confession and were officially designated as the adherents of the Augsburg Confession were supposed to enjoy political toleration, along with the adherents of the traditional Roman faith. A principality or a free imperial city that could be suspected of Calvinism, or even of giving it preferential treatment, ran the risk of being excluded from the official Religious Peace and might well be subject to imperial penalties. Initially viewed as temporary, the Religious Peace can be seen as an epoch-making event in so far as it was the first time that politicians and legal experts had succeeded in setting aside the question of truth in determining the

legal order of society and guaranteeing a politically and legally based coexistence¹ of two competing religious groups.²

This did not mean, however, that intentional support for tolerance had been developed. Even those who demanded that they themselves have a hearing and that their own particular system of belief be accepted did not develop a concept of tolerance.³ Before and after the Religious Peace, a social system that viewed the political community and the *Corpus Christianum* as congruent with each other could in fact have only *one* religious option claiming to have the truth. Competition among systems of belief, especially when it threatened to promote public disorder and to call God-established authorities into question, endangered both common life in society and political stability. This is the reason why neither the struggle between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism nor the struggle between the confessional groupings that were establishing themselves within Protestantism came to an end. On the contrary, the passion for converting people from the other side on the part of Roman Catholicism, and especially of the Jesuits, sometimes supported by political leaders, led in certain regions to regular waves of transferring allegiance. There were also fairly frequent conversions from Lutheranism to Calvinism. This shows that no one was indifferent to questions of religious belief and that the understanding of decisive ecclesiastical dogmas could penetrate the levels of society that had no academic training and could become a part of people's thinking at those levels.⁴ The entire sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century were marked by the power of unshakable religious convictions, which in no way were limited in their impact to a theological elite. They were rather conveyed to the level of the common people by extensive use of preaching and by propaganda, which brought the controversies into the vernacular in the form of pamphlets. Many people were prepared to do battle in rigorous defense of their own convictions, to present them publicly in confessional documents, and to defend them without

1. Cf. Schreiner, "Toleranz," 528–31.

2. On European peace agreements regarding religion, see Kohnle, "Konfliktbereinigung und Gewaltprävention," 1–19.

3. Cf. Schreiner, "Toleranz," 530.

4. See the study of Robert Christman on the "Substantialists" and the "Accidentalists," in the controversy over the proper definition of original sin: "Heretics in Luther's Homeland," and Christman's "I Can Indeed Respond," 1003–19.

compromise. All of this set the stage for the debates that the confessional groups conducted as these groups consolidated. This explains the bitterness that marked such controversies.

This essay focuses on Lutheranism's polemic against Calvinism and attempts to place the mechanisms that were developing for the defense of confessional positions in their historical and theological context. This will above all bring the Lutheran perspective on Calvinism to light. It is obvious that one essay cannot cover the waterfront. Therefore, this investigation attempts to develop a model for analysis through a micro-study, which can serve as an example for the assessment of the confrontation between Lutheranism and Calvinism. Drawing on one of the most prominent producers of Lutheran polemic in the latter half of sixteenth century suggests itself as an appropriate approach. The writings of Johannes Wigand offer the necessary points for analysis in their construction, in their theological content, and in their argumentation. This chapter will first explicate Wigand's position in *history* before going on to address the Calvinistic challenge to the creation of the Lutheran confession of the faith. It concludes by looking at Wigand's developing the structure of his argument, which, depending on the situation, could be directed toward political authorities and was designed to legitimize the course of action he desired.

Johannes Wigand as a Spokesman against Calvinism

At first glance it may not necessarily be clear why the Lutheran theologian and later bishop of Pomesania and Samland in Prussia, Johannes Wigand, and his writings can be cited as an example for the long-lasting friction between Lutheranism and Calvinism. But for several reasons he can be taken as a typical representative of the second generation of reformers.⁵ Born in 1523, Wigand had studied under Luther, Melancthon, and Caspar Cruciger in Wittenberg and had experienced the Smalkaldic War and the Augsburg Interim of 1548, the imperial law of religion that aimed at recatholicizing the imperial principalities that had adopted the Reformation. Wigand did not evade the situation in which these controversies were ignited but rather developed into a controversial theologian who resolutely defended the teaching and per-

5. Cf. the overview on his life and work, Irene Dingel, "Johannes Wigand," in *TRE* 36:33-38.

son of Martin Luther, not only against the adherents of the old faith,⁶ but also against those within the Protestant camp who oriented their further development toward Melancthon, and against the Reformed alternatives to Luther.⁷ The necessity of securing the Lutheran theological legacy and the public teaching associated with it against every deviation led him to formulate clear dogmatic boundaries for Lutheran teaching. To maintain them he was prepared to go into exile on at least two occasions.⁸

Wigand's many years of work on the *Magdeburg Centuries*, in close cooperation with Matthaeus Judex and the organizer of the project, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, sharpened his historical consciousness, particularly of the history of dogma. This made its mark especially in a series of works produced late in his career, in which he traced the historical development of those who stood outside the theological mainstream or supported noticeable deviations in doctrine. He denounced them as false. These works include writings that in part also made sources on their subjects available: *De Servetianismo* (1575), *De Anabaptismo* (1582), *De Schwenckfeldismo* (1586), *De Manichaeismo renovato* (1587), and also the volume aimed at Calvinism, a volume in 598 quarto leaves, *De Sacramentariismo* (1585).⁹ It presented Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, Ulrich Zwingli, Johannes Oecolampadius, and John Calvin as "patriarchs of the sacramentarians." With this repertoire of writings Wigand tried to provide historical and dogmatic documentation on all the contemporary heterodox movements that had arisen from the Protestant camp.

At this time Wigand was among the most influential theologians in the Empire. He had served as professor in Jena before he received the theological doctorate from the University in Rostock and—after a seven-year exile—returned to the University of Jena in 1568. At this time

6. Among his first polemical writings was his treatise of 1550 against the Roman Catholic Michael Helling. He criticized Helling's *Mainz Large Catechism*, *Ex Sidonii Catechismo maiore* (1550) cf. also his *Verlegung aus Gottes wordt* (1556); *Synopsis. Oder Spiegel des römischen Antichrists* (1560); and *Warnung vor dem Catechismo D. Canisii* (1570).

7. The publications that belong to the period after the Interim are legion. On them, see the Datenbank des Projekts "Controversia et confessio."

8. Examples include his exile from Jena in 1561 and the refusal of the city council of Magdeburg to give him a position the following year.

9. *De Sacramentariismo, dogmata et argvmenta*.

he voiced his criticism especially of the budding Crypto-Calvinism (so-called) within electoral Saxony. From 1573 on, Wigand held the position of Chief Professor of Theology at the University of Königsberg; his colleague Tilemann Heshusius had worked hard to obtain this position for his longtime associate. As Heshusius's colleague, Wigand became bishop of Pomesania in 1575, and in 1577 he also assumed Heshusius's former position as bishop of Samland, after the two of them had fallen into a theological dispute over the doctrine of Christ's two natures.¹⁰

Even if his conduct earned criticism from his contemporaries, Wigand achieved success both in ecclesiastical office and in the context of the university as a recognized theologian in the midst of controversy and as a leading spokesman for Lutheranism. As such he dedicated himself in a host of writings to opposing all tendencies that appeared to place the Lutheran theological legacy in question or seemed to threaten it. Among these were, of course, in a most prominent way every development that, in the usage of the time, could be designated "sacramentarian," whether within the Empire or outside its borders.

The Calvinistic Challenge to the Formation of the Lutheran Confession of Faith

Upon closer inspection of the later anti-Calvinistic writings of Wigand that fall into this phase of confessional consolidation, three different geographical focal points emerge, which are of interest in this study: electoral Saxony, France together with the Netherlands, and Danzig, Königsberg's neighboring city in Royal Prussia.

First of all, the so-called philippistic tendencies in *electoral Saxony* inclined it toward the Reformed faith. This caused Wigand to take pen in hand and to develop a heightened sensitivity to the threat he believed that Calvinism posed to the Wittenberg theological legacy. Against the background of this experience, he viewed the developments in Western Europe as a challenge that he must meet. Finally, he turned his gaze to

10. Heshusius had maintained that it was permissible to say that the divine attributes of omnipotence and omniscience not only "in concreto," that is, to ascribe them to the concrete person of Christ, but also "in abstracto," that is, to ascribe them to human nature of Christ. This caused animosity between Wigand and Heshusius and led to Wigand's demanding a retraction from Heshusius. Heshusius' refusal to issue a retraction led to his removal from office by the duke of Prussia (Dingel, "Wigand," 36).

the east, where in the neighboring city of Danzig, subject to the Polish crown, Reformed ways of thinking threatened to undermine the established confession of the church.

Of fundamental significance for Wigand's opposition—and for that of Lutheranism in general—to Calvinism was the realization that a way of thinking inspired by Melanchthon's theology but perceived as a form of Calvinism had secretly spread in the homeland of the Wittenberg Reformation. This development fostered in Wigand a deep mistrust, sharpened his sensitivity to all deviations from Martin Luther's teaching, and caused him to publish on the subject of the Lord's Supper. After a series of developments between 1546 and 1548 (Luther's death in 1546, the military defeat of the Evangelical Smalkaldic League in 1547, and the promulgation of the imperial policy aimed at eradicating the Reformation, dubbed the Augsburg Interim), a group of Philip Melanchthon's followers established their control at the University of Wittenberg.¹¹ Their publications in the 1570s revealed that they no longer understood the reformational doctrine of the Lord's Supper exclusively from the standpoint of Luther's theology but rather were striving to connect it with Melanchthon's teaching and bring these two doctrinal authorities into agreement to the greatest extent possible.

At the beginning of 1571 the publication of a new catechism, put together by Christoph Pezel,¹² which was advertised as a work of all the Wittenberg theologians, added to the tensions over these issues. This Wittenberg catechism was supposed to build upon the foundational education given in Luther's catechism and to replace the catechism of the Lutheran theologian David Chytraeus, who regarded himself as a

11. They included Georg Major (1504–1574), up to his death “Decanus perpetuus” of the faculty, Paul Eber (1511–1569) along with his successor after 1570 Friedrich Widebram (1532–1585), and Paul Crell (1531–1579, who was transferred to the leadership of the consistory in Meissen in 1569 and returned to a professorship in Wittenberg from 1574 on). Christoph Pezel (1539–1604) replaced Crell in 1569. In addition, the faculty included Johannes Bugenhagen the younger (1524–1592), who first served in the philosophical faculty, and Caspar Cruciger the Younger (1525–1597) and Heinrich Moller (1530–1589). Cruciger entered the theological faculty in 1569; Bugenhagen and Moller in 1570, as they earned their doctorates in theology. On this, see details in Dingel, “Historische Einleitung,” 3–15.

12. *Catechesis continens explicationem*; the text is found in Dingel, *Controversia et Confessio* 8:79–289.

faithful disciple of Melanchthon but taught the Lord's Supper in a significantly different way from Pezel.¹³

Other publications during these years, among them the "Consensus Dresdensis" (1571), the *Grundfest (The True Church's Firm Foundation: on the Person and Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ [1571])* and the anonymous *Exegesis perspicua* (1574)¹⁴ also aroused suspicion among the strict Lutherans that the theologians of electoral Saxony had been infected by the Genevan Calvinists and particularly by the Christology of Theodore Beza. The theological collegium of the University of Jena, to which Wigand had belonged in the years 1560/1561 and 1569–1573, argued against the electoral Saxon position. Even after moving to Königsberg Wigand joined the battle to expose the theology propagated in electoral Saxony as dangerous Calvinism and to decisively warn against it.¹⁵ He labeled these Wittenberg colleagues "the new ravers about the sacrament," who with the introduction of the Wittenberg Catechism were setting the stage to intentionally educate young people in Calvinistic teaching.¹⁶ This makes it clear into which confessional camp he placed his electoral Saxon colleagues.

Philippism, that is, the theological tendency identified by Wigand as Crypto-Calvinism, lost its political dominance in electoral Saxony in 1574. The Saxon elector August changed the direction of his religious policy as he initiated the project to establish concord among the Lutherans, led by Jacob Andreae, with its conclusion in the Formula of Concord and the Book of Concord.¹⁷ The acute danger of Calvinism appeared to have been headed off, even if those sympathetic to the movement remained in various territories and cities.

13. The *Catechism* of David Chytraeus, the first edition of which appeared in Wittenberg in 1554, was the most widely distributed textbook in Latin in the second half of the sixteenth century; up to 1614 it appeared in at least 114 Latin editions and translations; see Kaufmann, *Universität und lutherische Konfessionalisierung*, 622. On its being taken out of circulation, see Dingel, "Historische Einleitung," 10 n. 22.

14. An edition of the most prominent documents of each phase is found in Dingel, *Controversia et Confessio* 8.

15. Cf. e.g., *Christliche Erinnerung and Analysis Exegeseos Sacramentariae*.

16. A citation from B2b ("*fursetzlich junge Sacramentschwermerlein*") in [Johannes Wigand, Tilemann Heshusius, Timotheus Kirchner], *Von den Fallstricken Etlicher newer Sacramentschwermer zu Wittenberg*. The title alone of this publication says much; Wigand was the chief author of the treatise.

17. See Ludwig, *Philippismus und orthodoxes Luthertum*.

Nonetheless, Wigand encountered new points of entry through which Calvinist teaching could make its way into the Empire. This brought him to alter his view of where and how Calvinism was threatening. He began to focus on the borders of the Empire. For as it became known that the Formula of Concord contained repudiations of doctrines that directly concerned the Reformed churches, particularly in article 7, "On the Lord's Supper," and article 8, "On the Person of Christ," Western European Protestants lodged objections. Indeed, an initiative by Johann Casimir, duke and later elector of the Palatinate, attempted to bring European Calvinist churches together in a conference in Frankfurt am Main in 1577¹⁸ and to unite them in a *Harmonia Confessionum*,¹⁹ but that effort was not able to significantly counteract the Lutheran efforts to establish concord that had just been completed. Many Western European Calvinists suspected that the consolidation of Lutheranism around the confession of faith found in the Formula of Concord would have an impact on the Religious Peace in the Empire. This posed a problem because the Formula reverted to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, with its article on the Lord's Supper, which presented Luther's theology of the sacrament. Thus, this clearly reduced those who could claim legal status as adherents of the Augsburg Confession to those who held to its "unaltered" version of 1530.

Calvinists also feared that the Formula of Concord could have an impact outside the borders of the Empire in renewed persecution of Protestants. If within the Empire the Calvinists could be defined as not adhering to the Augsburg Confession and thus outside the law, such status would only strengthen the argument of Roman Catholic political authorities elsewhere for the persecution of Calvinists. A letter from Dutch pastors to the authors of the Formula of Concord illustrates this fear. The Dutch viewed their situation as one in which they shared the fate of their fellow believers in France, the Huguenots.²⁰ The letter's author was the court preacher of William of Orange, Pierre Loyseleur de Villiers.²¹ During the course of 1577 he published a penetrating call for

18. On Johann Casimir's efforts, see Dingel, *Concordia controversa*, 115–29.

19. *Harmonia Confessionum Fidei*, esp. 123–27, 136–41.

20. *Sendbrieff Der Kirchen Diener*.

21. Loyseleur (ca. 1530–1590) served as court preacher of William of Orange. He had fled France and studied theology there. He became William's court preacher in the mid-1570s.

the unity of the various Protestant parties. His treatise, *Ratio ineundae Concordiae*, highlighted the political danger that was feared, and which was a real threat, as a result of the perception of Calvinism that the Lutheran confessional position had created.²² Wigand reacted immediately to Loyseleur's appeal.

The situation in the city of Danzig, next door to ducal Prussia and under the Polish crown, also gave Wigand concern.²³ In 1562 the city had attempted to settle ongoing disputes over the understanding of the Lord's Supper by issuing a decree, a *Notula* or "Formula of Concord," which appealed to Holy Scripture and the Augsburg Confession as the norms for public teaching. Thirteen years later, one year after the collapse of the Philippist—labeled by many "Crypto-Calvinist"—movement in electoral Saxony, the city introduced the *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum*,²⁴ which had set the doctrinal standard for Melanchthon's followers in electoral Saxony and beyond its borders. It was the standard to which the so-called Crypto-Calvinists had appealed. At the same time the duchy of Prussia, with the city of Königsberg, was finding its orientation in the *Corpus Doctrinae Prutenicum*,²⁵ a document authored by Wigand's fellow Lutherans Joachim Mörlin and Martin Chemnitz,

22. Loyseleur, *Ratio ineundae Concordiae*.

23. In 1454 Prussia and Danzig revolted against the Teutonic Order and submitted to the king of Poland. Danzig belonged to royal Prussia, not to ducal Prussia, where Wigand served. See Neumeyer, "Danzig," in *TRE* 8:354.

24. This publication was originally a private undertaking edited by the Leipzig printer Ernst Vögelin and contained only writings of Philipp Melanchthon, with the exception of the three ancient creeds (Apostles, Nicean, and Athanasian). In its German edition it contained the version of the *Confessio Augustana* published in 1533 (*prima variata*); the first Latin edition contained the edition of 1542 (*tertia variata*). Later editions in Latin printed the *Confessio Augustana invariata* (1531) and the *Confessio Augustana variata* (1542). Then followed the *Apology* of the Augsburg Confession (German 1540, Latin 1542), the *Confessio Saxonica* (1551), the *Loci Theologici* of 1556, the *Examen Ordinandorum* (1554), the *Responsio ad articulos Bavaricae inquisitionis* (1559), and the *Refutatio erroris Serveti et Anabaptistarum*, which Melanchthon had originally conceived as an appendix to the *Responsio*. In the Latin editions of this *Corpus Doctrinae* was also published the *Responsio controversii Stancari* (1553). What appears in the Melanchthon *Studienausgabe*, volume 6, under the title *Corpus doctrinae christianae* is therefore not the authentic *Corpus doctrinae Philippicum* (see *Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl*, 6:3–377; see also Dingel, *Concordia Controversa*, 15–16, n. 4).

25. Joachim Mörlin was at that time bishop of Pomesanien and Samland, Martin Chemnitz served as superintendent of the churches in the city of Braunschweig. On this document, see Kolb, "The Braunschweig Resolution," 67–89.

and therefore a document representing a strict Lutheran position. This meant that in contrast to its neighboring territory, Danzig had decided for a theology oriented toward the teachings of Melancthon.

Wigand, the bishop of Pomesania, regarded Danzig's teaching as crypto-Calvinistic and as a bridge to Calvinism. Danzig did not accept the Book of Concord; Wigand favored its acceptance.²⁶ Rather, in Danzig Calvinistic tendencies gradually took hold (even if, it turned out, only temporarily²⁷) with the calling of two theologians: Peter Praetorius,²⁸ as pastor of the large parish church, Saint Mary's; and Jacob Fabricius,²⁹ rector of the municipal secondary school, in the middle of the 1570s and the beginning of the 1580s. With their presence in Danzig, Reformed innovations were introduced.³⁰ The immigration of Dutch exiles to the region strengthened these tendencies.³¹ Nonetheless, the city tried to remain pledged to the Augsburg Confession, which achieved the full recognition of the Polish king, Stephan Bathory, in December 1577.³²

Viewed from the standpoint of confessional allegiance, the situation in Danzig was fundamentally confused, and such lack of clarity was reason enough for concern in Wigand's eyes and for those who shared his viewpoint. They viewed the situation as a Calvinistic threat to the true teaching of the Book of Concord, which had found acceptance in many Evangelical principalities in the Empire. They sought to clarify the matter with polemical writings and to denounce those who opposed their clarification.

26. See Mager, "Aufnahme und Ablehnung des Konkordienbuches," 295-96.

27. In the first half of the seventeenth century they were decisively suppressed; Müller, "Unionsstaat und Region," 135-37.

28. Praetorius came to the main parish church in 1575. On Praetorius and his interesting career, see Manfred Knedlik, "Praetorius, Peter," 1183-84, and the brief reference to Praetorius as a Philippist exile, in Müller, *Zweite Reformation*, 82 n. 207.

29. Fabricius had studied with Pezel in Wittenberg and later in Heidelberg, received his doctorate in Basel, and returned to Danzig in 1578. On Fabricius, see Klueting, "Reformierte Konfessionalisierung," 46-47.

30. Since 1569 the abolition of the exorcism in baptism became an issue of dispute again and again. Praetorius tried to introduce the Heidelberg Catechism and the Lobwasser Psalter through devious methods. See Hartknoch, *Preussische Kirchen-Historia . . .*, 710 and 721.

31. See Mannhardt, *Danziger Mennonitengemeinde*.

32. See Neumeyer, "Danzig," 355.

The labels that keep appearing in these denunciations and similar contexts (“sacramental raver,” “profaner of the sacrament,” “sacramentarian,” “those who adulterate Christ’s testament”³³) are not only the frequently used insults of the time, but they also identify the point of dispute that determined the interconfessional controversies and the dividing lines between the two groups (Calvinists and Lutherans) at the time: the understanding of the Lord’s Supper as the central sacrament of Protestantism. Designations such as “Zwinglian” or “Calvinist” were used more seldom, probably because they did not present the content of the dispute at issue in the controversies clearly enough.³⁴ The precise differentiation between these two groups was not a concern at this time, since those associated with Calvin and Beza had been identified as Zwinglians in the general polemic after the agreement between Calvin and Bullinger in the Consensus Tigurinus of 1549. Wigand and all his Lutheran contemporaries spoke most often—following Luther—of the “*sacramentarii*,” and Wigand explained the term in one of his publications from 1579 as those “who are called in the vernacular Calvinists.”³⁵ Calvin, Beza, and Bullinger won his designation as “the true, public sacrament-wolves.” He warned the Christian church against them.³⁶ This designation that drew the line between the confessions indicates how dangerous the other confessional position was thought to be. The label was supported by arguments regarding the content of the doctrine, which could focus on different concerns depending on the context of the specific dispute.

Wigand’s Argumentation against Calvinism

The structures of the argument that Wigand developed against Calvinism are clearly determined by the historical and geographical targets set by his own circumstances. There is, on the one hand, a certain thematic spectrum, in which not every one of his arguments is

33. See Wigand’s treatise addressed to the mayor of Danzig, *Vrsachen*, passim *Sacramentschender*, *Sacramentschwermer*; *Sacramentirer*, 4, 19, etc.; “*Testamentsverfelscher*,” 6. Wigand’s *Christliche Erinnerung* does, in contrast, speak of “Zwinglischen vnd Caluinischen Jrthum,” 1a.

34. See Wigand, *Christliche Erinnerung*, 8a–b: “Zwinglianer.”

35. Wigand, *Commonefactio*, 1.

36. See Wigand, *Christliche Erinnerung*, 1a.

necessarily applicable to the broader gamut of questions. On the other hand, as a general comparison of his work with writings of his contemporary like-minded theologians demonstrates, his views can be seen as quite typical. The influence of his judgments is at any rate— to some extent up to our own time—immense.³⁷

Before Wigand's treatments of the Calvinism of western Europe and of the events in the east, at ducal Prussia's borders in Danzig, come into our purview, his perspective on developments in Wittenberg and electoral Saxony deserve attention because only from this perspective can his later refusal to compromise be explained. That precisely in the place where the Lutheran Reformation began Calvinists had secretly been able to gain a foothold—from the point of view of his Lutheran contemporaries—was taken as a special provocation. From Königsberg in 1574 Wigand looked back to the development of so-called Crypto-Calvinism, which had in recent months been purged in electoral Saxony. He presented readers with a penetrating reminder of the ways in which a real infiltration of Calvinism had become possible there. His treatise *A Christian Reminder of the Confession of Theologians in Meissen on the Lord's Supper*, which was approved and subscribed by his colleagues in Prussia, particularly in Königsberg, presented nothing other than a warning in the face of possible points of entry through which Calvinism might advance³⁸ on the borders of the Empire.

The anonymously published *Exegesis perspicua*,³⁹ which offered a spiritualistic interpretation of the words of institution of the Lord's Supper (in fact the work was written by a physician, Joachim Curaeus) elicited Wigand's response. This volume had aroused the reaction of elector August of Saxony against Calvinizing tendencies in his lands, and Wigand commented:

The insidious *Exegesis*, with its ravings about the sacrament, made its horrible attempt to take everything captive to its

37. That is true above all of the estimation of Melancthon as sympathetic to Calvinism.

38. Subscribers to this document included Tilemann Heshusius, bishop of Samland, Benedictus Morgenstern, pastor of the "Domkirche" in Königsberg; Philippus Caesar, pastor in the "Altstadt" of Königsberg; Hieronymus Mörlin, pastor of the church of the "Löbenicht" in Königsberg; Johannes Weidmann, court preacher in Königsberg. See *Christliche Erinnerung*, 19a.

39. Edited in Dingel, *Die Debatte um die Wittenberger Abendmahlslehre*, 1015–89.

Zwinglian and Calvinistic error, to take hold of everyone's mind. But our wonderful God and Lord turned the tables in a wonderful fashion, so that several of these deceivers, those snakes, were revealed and exposed. Others, on the other hand, were moved to make a clearer confession of the truth regarding the holy, blessed Testament of Jesus Christ than they previously had, and to warn the Christian church about the real, public sacrament-wolves, Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, and others, to name names.⁴⁰

Wigand saw Christ himself at work making it possible to eliminate the "Calvinistic and Bezan raving," and he thanked the government that had followed its duty so conscientiously that it was able to obligate its theologians to a renewed confession of the unadulterated doctrine of the Lord's Supper of 1530.⁴¹ Wigand alluded to the "Torgau Articles" of 1574, a document that attempted in fact to demonstrate that the positions of Luther and Melancthon on the Lord's Supper were in harmony with each other, and to avoid playing off the authority of one of the reformers against the other.⁴² The electoral Saxon government had had this document composed with the purpose of laying it before its theologians for their subscription after the discovery of the spiritualizing efforts of the so-called Crypto-Calvinists.

Nonetheless, for the bishop of Pomesanien it was more than clear that someone had seduced Philip through "sacramentarian raving." Wigand regarded it as wrong to place Melancthon's theological formulations alongside the biblical testimony and Luther's writings on the Lord's Supper, particularly if they were to be judged on the basis of

40. Wigand, *Christliche Erinnerung*, 1a. In 1574 Wigand had also published a refutation specifically dedicated to the *Exegesis perspicua*, his *Analysis exegeteos Sacramentariae*.

41. See Wigand, *Christliche Erinnerung*, 1a–b: Dafu[e]r dancken wir dem frommen getrewen Herrn Christo von grund vnsers hertzen / das er in dieser betru[e]bten letzten zeit der Welt / noch ein solch Liecht seinem heiligen Testament / in Deuschlandten auffstecket / vnd die Caluinische vnd Bezische Schwermereyen / etlicher massen außsteupert / vnd zu ru[e]cke treibet. Wir dancken auch der Oberkeit / das sie dem Herrn Christo (wie sie denn auch schuldig ist) darin dienet / vnd die Theologen darzu ermanet / vnd angehalten / die reine Lere vom Abendmal des Herrn / wie sie auff dem Reichstage zu Augspurg Anno Domini, 1530. bekant / vnd von Luthero gantz herrlich vnd gewaltig / aus vnd nach Gottes Wort erstritten / zu widerholen vnd zu bekennen.

42. See Dingel, "Die Torgauer Artikel," 119–34. The text of the *Torgauer Artikel* is edited in Dingel, *Die Debatte um die Wittenberger Abendmahlslehre*, 1103–51.

Luther's fundamental understanding of the sacrament. The basis for his judgment and the arguments he introduced in his claim have shaped the negative estimation of Melanchthon as one who paved the way for Calvinism, a proto-Calvinist, and therefore made it difficult to take him seriously as an independent thinker in his own right, who had formulated his own understanding of the Lord's Supper. Not only, according to Wigand, had Melanchthon altered the Augsburg Confession without consulting Luther. He had also approved of the teaching of sacramentarians such as Albert Hardenberg of Bremen, and he had also failed to reject and repudiate the sacramentarian position in his Saxon Confession of 1551 and in his Examination of Candidates for Ordination of 1552.⁴³ (Wigand had accepted the former document as a worthy confession when it was first issued two decades earlier.) Melanchthon's disciples and colleagues in Wittenberg, such as Caspar Peucer, Christoph Pezel, Caspar Cruciger the Younger, and Heinrich Moller, had "become acquainted with the ravings of the Zwinglians through him."⁴⁴ Especially Melanchthon's son-in-law Caspar Peucer, according to Wigand, had gotten his ideas from Melanchthon's own mouth and therefore knew precisely "that he had held the position of Bullinger, Calvin, and Beza, and had apostasized from Luther's teaching."⁴⁵ The final definition of the Lord's Supper that Melanchthon offered was so "slippery, that is, as smooth as a marble," that both sides, Lutherans and Calvinists, had been able to appeal to it.⁴⁶ Wigand regarded this as one of the most disastrous developments of his time, for public teaching and confession had to be clear and unambiguous. Here there was no room for play in trying to reach consensus or for formulations that could be interpreted in more than one way. This touched both the usefulness and the clarity

43. See Wigand, *Christliche Erinnerung*, 3a–18b. Wigand extended his argument at this point (3a): Das der herr Philippus wol im anfang wider Oecolampadium / vnd in der Augspurgischen Bekentniß / vnd andern schriften / etwas wider die Sacramentirer gethan. Aber darnach fast zeitlich hat er sich sehr geneigt zu den Sacramentirern / vnd ist endlich gar zu jnen getretten / vnd jre schwermerische meinung gebilliget / vnd solche ding vom Abendmal geschrieben / welche stracks wider die Lere vnd wort Lutheri sind / vnd ko[e]nnen nimermehr fu[e]r Gottes Augen vnd der Christenheit / mit einander gleich gestimmet oder vereiniget werden / vnd solches ist klar zu beweisen.

44. Wigand, *Christliche Erinnerung*, 8a–b.

45. *Ibid.*, 9a.

46. *Ibid.*, where the citation is found.

of the confession of the faith, and that was Wigand's chief concern in the disagreement with Western European Calvinism.

Pierre Loyseleur de Villiers served as the spokesman of all those at the western borders of the Empire who strove for interconfessional understanding and viewed the very existence of Protestantism as continually under threat. They also felt themselves theologically and politically isolated when efforts to consolidate the development of the Lutheran confession of the faith attained the acceptance of the Formula of Concord in 1577.⁴⁷ Loyseleur called for a general synod in which everyone would abandon the use of party labels and personal insults. This synod was to differentiate necessary from unnecessary articles of faith and to create a confession to bridge the rival positions.⁴⁸

That this proposal lay outside the possibilities of Wigand's grasp of the situation is clear from his reaction to the developments in electoral Saxony. In 1579 the Prussian clergy subscribed to the Formula of Concord and unanimously adopted the Book of Concord as its new *Corpus doctrinae*, its standard for public teaching. Among them only the professors at the University of Königsberg hesitated and withheld their subscription.⁴⁹ Against this background, Loyseleur's proposal had to sound like a serious step backward, an effort to stop the process of the Lutheran consolidation of public teaching and to call it into question. Wigand insisted on the purity of the confession of faith and public teaching, and he focused quickly on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Public teaching was to be guaranteed not through ambiguous formulations but rather with carefully targeted repudiations of false teachings, which by their very nature cultivated not true fellowship in the faith but rather blasphemous dogmas.

"Our theologians do not condemn entire churches, which exist in great kingdoms and well-populated cities, but they condemn dogmas taught in an impure and blasphemous fashion, at odds with the words of the Lord's testament, and those who teach these dogmas provocatively and with an ill-will. They do not ignore the fact that in these kingdoms

47. Fears of an alliance of the pope with the French and Spanish crowns against European Protestantism ran high; see Dingel, *Concordia controversa*, 161–67.

48. On the exchange of polemics between Loyseleur and Wigand, see Dingel, *Concordia Controversa*, 176–83.

49. See Hartknoch, *Preussische Kirchen-Historia*, 487–89.

there are not a few who disapprove of these false dogmas as they groan under the cross.”⁵⁰

Wigand reproached the Calvinists represented by the Dutch court preacher for their veiled tactics: seeking to avoid the kind of process for clarifying issues that had successfully brought concord to a majority of Lutherans, attempting to claim that they were adherents of the Augsburg Confession, or asserting that at the end of his life Luther had abandoned his insistence that the body and blood of Christ are truly present in the Lord’s Supper.⁵¹ Wigand also sharply rejected the idea of a general synod, referring to examples from Holy Scripture, particularly the examples of Christ and the apostles, which demonstrated the necessity for decisive confession of the truth rather than discussions aimed at compromise. In Wigand’s eyes it was clear that the guarantee of faithful teaching and an appropriate exclusion of error could not be produced through attempts to find consensus at a synod: “Certainly the patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and the apostles did not wait for the authority and decisions of general or provincial synods before they propagated divine teaching and condemned all false dogmas and worship. Indeed before the synod in Acts (the council of Jerusalem, Acts 15) Paul would never have withheld his anathema of the dogmas of the false apostles.”⁵² It was totally unthinkable for Wigand, and for Lutherans in general, that it might be possible to produce a new confession through the deliberations of a synod in which participants could feel compelled to make concessions to the Calvinists on the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper.

In the confrontation of these positions, which cannot be rehearsed here in detail, two things become clear. First, Lutheran confessional

50. Wigand, *Commonefactio*, 14: Neque etiam integras Ecclesias, quae sunt in regnis amplissimis & vrbibus populissimis nostri Theologi damnant, sed tantum impure & blasphema dogmata, cum verbis Testamenti Dominici discrepantia, & eorum doctores vehementes & maledicos: Neque ignorant in illis regnis non paucos, esse, illa falsa dogmata serio improbantes, licet sub cruce gemant.

51. Wigand probably was thinking of the attempt of the elector of the Palatinate, Friedrich III, to prove that his teaching agreed with that of the Augsburg Confession. He did so at the imperial diet in Augsburg in 1566, on the basis of Heinrich Bullinger’s *Confessio Helvetica posterior*. In his *Wider die Landlügen*, Joachim Mörlin sharply criticized the rumor that Luther had revised his teaching on the Lord’s Supper shortly before his death. See Dingel, *Die Debatte um die Wittenberger Abendmahlslehre*, 608 n. 17.

52. Wigand, *Commonefactio*, 14.

consciousness placed the Augsburg Confession at the center of public confession of the faith because these Lutherans prized this confession as an expression of correct teaching. Its position was ranged against the urgent attempt by the Calvinists, in view of the political threat of the time, to reach an all-embracing minimal consensus with a summary of the heart of the faith. Against the background of the electoral Saxon experience Wigand emphasized the priority of the purity of public confession over the attainment of integration in theology and political stance.⁵³

Second, there was a clear difference in the evaluation of the authority attributed to public doctrinal formulations. While Wigand appealed uncompromisingly to Holy Scripture, to examples he gained from it, and to Luther as its interpreter during the increasingly sharp dispute, his opponents appealed again and again to the vehicle of the synod, which among Calvinists had been used a number of times. This difference certainly did not mean that consultation in a synod was foreign to Lutheranism, or that Calvinists avoided arguing on the basis of Scripture. Calvinists were indeed biblical theologians, while in the process of consolidating public teaching Lutherans utilized a number of such meetings and consultations in synods. But it is interesting that Wigand played off “divine teaching,”⁵⁴ which he viewed as vouchsafed in Holy Scripture, and which he believed could be clearly grasped thanks to the “clarity” of Scripture, against human exchange of ideas.

By the time Wigand published a sharply anti-Calvinist work a few years later, aimed to defend the legitimacy of governmental action against “sacramentarians,” a number of further controversies had contributed to the hardening of the fronts between the two sides. All these exchanges in print were part of the experience that formed Wigand. The situation in Danzig described above brought him to dedicate to the mayor of the city at that time, Georg Rosenberg, his *Reasons Why Christian Governments May Not Tolerate Sacramentarian Teaching or Teachers*.⁵⁵

53. See Wigand's preface to *Analysis exegeseos sacramentariae*,)(2a -)(4b.

54. Wigand, *Commonefactio*, 17.

55. Wigand, *Vrsachen*. The argumentation referring to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper and the understanding of the words of institution in this treatise is not new. In a similar fashion Wigand had already commented on the matter, e.g. in his *Causae*.

In the dedicatory preface Wigand's entire mistrust of his confessional opponents, whom he viewed as dangerous not only for proper public teaching of the faith but also for the social order, found expression:

Your Excellency knows what kind of unrest, nastiness, and other evil fruits the spirit of the sacramentarians brings to those places in which they make their nests. This spirit creates factions, divisions, and turmoil at all levels of society, hate and envy among both teachers and hearers, and fosters disturbances. It speaks with a forked tongue, and it deals with the words of Christ in his testament in a deceptive and misleading fashion. It steals and robs the poor little lambs of Christ of their most precious and salutary treasure from the testament, and it dares to claim that the body of Christ is as far from his testament as the heaven is from the earth, and that the words of Christ are not true as they stand and sound. This spirit is hard to pin down in what it confesses, and it fools the people in a mischievous manner.⁵⁶

This alone demonstrated for Wigand the necessity of refuting this spirit. For, he believed, his confessional opponents' interpretation of the words of institution called into question the pastoral consolation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which the Lutherans prized so highly. Wigand and his fellow Lutherans insisted on the true presence of the divine and human natures, that is, of the divinity and humanity of Christ in, under, and with the elements of the Lord's Supper. They also maintained the necessity of receiving the elements in a way that brought about an experience of consolation, especially in situations of spiritual struggle. His confessional opponents had countered this position with a statement of Beza at the religious colloquy in Poissy in 1561: that since the ascension of Christ to the right hand of God, the exalted humanity of Christ was as far from the bread and wine as the highest heaven was from the earth.⁵⁷ The doctrine of the two natures of Christ had been debated already in the first controversy over the Lord's Supper between Luther und Zwingli (1524–1529) and also in the second between Joachim Westphal and John Calvin (1552–1558). It was used by many, but not all, on the Lutheran side, which interpreted Christ's

56. Wigand, *Vrsachen*, A2a–b.

57. On Beza's role at the colloquy of Poissy, see Nugent, *Ecumenism in the Age of the Reformation*, 125–60; Dufour, "Das Religionsgespräch von Poissy," 117–26.

exaltation to the right hand of God as an exaltation to the full use of the omnipotence of God. This position served Lutherans as a subsidiary argument to support the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacramental elements,⁵⁸ so it was disparaged by the Calvinist opponents as "the doctrine of ubiquity," which became the subject of countless disputes. But Wigand largely set this issue aside, returning to Luther's original concern. Wigand did not belong to the group that had been eager to use such arguments. That in the recent past related questions had plunged him into disagreements with his longtime friend in the more radical Lutheran camp, Tilemann Heshusius, may have only strengthened his reluctance to use this argumentation.⁵⁹

Most important was the clarity of the literal sense of the words of institution as a hermeneutical basis for defending the real presence and as the foundation for a clear—precisely not a "slippery"—confession of the truth. Temporal authorities had to bear responsibility for maintaining that confession since, as Wigand declared, "Anabaptists and defilers of the Sacrament" were leading Christianity away from proper teaching, and especially those who "rave about the Sacrament" were growing in numbers in villages, towns, and at noble courts.⁶⁰ On the basis of this interpretation of the clarity of the literal sense of the words of institution, Wigand labeled all other hermeneutical approaches as seductive attempts that would finally result in making Christ himself a liar and in denying his "witness to the truth and his omnipotence."⁶¹ "The sacramentarians call the words of Jesus Christ our Savior lies. He makes an affirmative statement and says clearly, 'this is my body.' The sacramentarians make a negative statement and deny that [presence], against Christ's words, just as in Paradise in Genesis 3 the accursed devil, God's enemy, denied God's Word and presented the opposite against it."⁶² Wigand found that his Calvinist opponents were continually invalidating the words of Christ, robbing Christ's body and blood from his testament, through which he bequeathed salvation.

58. Dingel, "Joachim Westphal," in *TRE* 35:712–15.

59. *Ibid.*, 714. Wigand addressed this doctrine at another place and referred to the deprecatory nature of the term "ubiquity," see *De vbiqvitae*, esp. 1a.

60. Wigand, *Vrsachen*, 2.

61. *Ibid.*, 9.

62. *Ibid.*, 4.

Against such views governmental authorities had to proceed with definitive action, because in Wigand's opinion, it was "a dubious and inconsistent doctrine,"⁶³ which in terms of Christ's omnipresence went so far as to set human reason against God's order revealed in the New Testament.⁶⁴ Indeed, Wigand accused his opponents of intentional perversion of the clear word of God, which made the matter a governmental responsibility as a crime of "lese-majesty"⁶⁵ and would thus have to invite governmental suppression. Wigand expanded with a number of further arguments to justify governmental intervention against the so-called sacramentarians. He charged them with evading the article of faith expressed in the Creed through their interpretation of the right hand of God as a geographically determinable place,⁶⁶ and he did not neglect mentioning the danger of Arianism, which, he feared, might possibly result from the christological argumentation of the Calvinists. Misinterpreting patristic arguments regarding the Lord's Supper; setting aside Luther's catechism; changing the numbering of the Ten Commandments; rejecting private absolution and the accompanying instruction of the penitent, which were practiced as important elements

63. "Derwegen sollen solch Sacrilegium / Kirchenraub vnd Diebstal des Leibs vnd Bluts Christi / aus dem heiligen Testament Christi / da die wort klar vnd lauter fu[e]r augen stehen / keine Christliche Oberkeit noch Gemeine in keinem wege leiden," *Vrsachen*, 6. A bit later Wigand continued: "Alle vngewisse / zweiffelhafftige / vnd mit sich selbst streitige Lehre in der Kirchen Gottes / sol Christliche Oberkeit vnd Gemeine / abschaffen vnd nicht dulden" (Wigand, *Vrsachen*, 7). The idea that the government had the duty to intervene against unjustified ambiguity in interpreting Holy Scripture, against confusing doctrine, and against the accusation that God deceived in the words of institution is a constantly recurring theme in this treatise.

64. See Wigand, *Vrsachen*, 10: "Jtem / sie sagen / es sey dem HERRN Christo vnm[u]glich mit aller seiner allmacht / das er ko[e]nne seinen wesentlichen / waren Leib / gegenwertig geben zu essen vnd sein Blut zu trincken / an allen den orten / da sein Abendmal laut seiner ordnung / gehalten vnd gebraucht wird. Denn es sey wider die natu[e]rliche eigenschafft eines Co[e]rpers / oder eines menschlichen Leibs / zugleich vnd auff einmal mehr als an einem ort wesentlich sein / welches denn alles aus der blinden menschliche[n] vernunft herfleust / die aus jren sinnen daher Schwermet vn[d] treumet / vnd sihet nicht / das solches im Abendmal / da wir sollen den leib Christi nicht allein im glauben / sondern auch mit dem munde essen / vnd sein Blut trincken / eine ordnung Gottes ist / der ein Herr ist vber alle Creatur / vnd alles wz er will macht vnd wircket / vnd kein ding / was er nur ordnet / bey jm vnm[u]glich / wie Gottes wort zeuget / Psalm 115. 135. Luce 1."

65. Wigand, *Vrsachen*, 9.

66. *Ibid.*, 14-15.

in Lutheran pastoral care; misinterpreting the Augsburg Confession; reviling the Lutherans as “cannibals, who eat human flesh and drink blood and consume human beings”;⁶⁷ the “zerzausen, zermartern, und zerpeitschen” (“tousling, torturing and whipping”) of Martin Luther;⁶⁸ publishing religious works anonymously and pseudonymously; maintaining divisions within communities; the mobs’ practicing iconoclasm; These and many others were the charges Wigand lodged against Calvinism.⁶⁹ Any government that took seriously its responsibility toward God simply could not tolerate them. For “God the Lord, whom we rightly are to fear and honor to the highest degree, cannot dwell with his grace and blessing where false teaching and teachers, blasphemers and enemies of his testament are tolerated, but there one will experience his disfavor and wrath . . . For Christian governments and communities cannot and should not tolerate sacramentarian teaching and teachers if they do not wish to bring the stern curse and great punishment of the Lord Christ upon themselves and their children.”⁷⁰

This book addressed to a temporal government by Wigand shows—without doubt reflecting the background of his own experiences and his development as a theologian—a clear intensification of his arguments against these opponents. Indeed, it was no longer only the theologian Wigand who expressed his position, but the watchman standing at the city wall, the one charged with prophetic admonition, who viewed it as his duty to make it clear to political authorities the direction they should pursue and the maxims they should follow in their actions.

Conclusion

Our consideration of the reactions of Lutheranism to Calvinism through the example of one theologian, whose writings, despite the uniqueness of this or any author, can be considered a suitable example of the larger interconfessional scene, has shown that interaction with confessional opponents at the borders of the German Empire were shaped by experi-

67. *Ibid.*, 22.

68. *Ibid.*, 23.

69. *Ibid.*, 18–25.

70. *Ibid.*, 26.

ences that Lutheranism had had with similar developments on its own territory. Without question, the rise of Philippism, which was identified quickly as leaning in the direction of Calvinism—and that in the land of the origin of the Reformation—had intensified sensitivities and heightened the inclination to regard confessional opponents beyond the borders of the Empire as stealthy deceivers motivated for political or other self-serving reasons simply to strive to disguise their teaching as that of the Augsburg Confession.

At every turn the publications of Johannes Wigand reveal his mistrust that began with the so-called Crypto-Calvinist developments in electoral Saxony. The strident polemic born there fed itself even on the ways each group labeled the others. Calvinism was perceived as an insidious threat, which placed Martin Luther's theological legacy in question at one of its most decisive and distinctive points: the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The clarity of the literal sense of the words of institution, upon which Luther himself had laid great emphasis, was an essential element of the body of public teaching for Lutherans. This had led to an emphasis on the clear, unambiguous confession of that doctrine as it was to be found in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Confessional consciousness, and connected to it, the active confession of proper teaching, appeared in open conflict with the Calvinist appeal for doctrinal consensus, often—with good reason—fed by political necessities.

Lutheranism was not in a situation in which understanding of those necessities could be developed, given its completely different political and juridical situation according to the law of the Empire, especially according to the Religious Peace of Augsburg of 1555. Holy Scripture and the Augsburg Confession, grounded upon the Scripture, were accentuated as authorities over against what was seen as a misguided biblical hermeneutic and flawed ways of dealing with the church fathers. In this process the Augsburg Confession, which Melanchthon had composed, that is, in its unaltered form, became ever more the guarantee of Martin Luther's theology. At the same time, the simplistic assignment of Melanchthon to the camp of Luther's opponents in the controversies over the sacrament intensified the focus on Luther as the person who identified confessional Lutheranism.

Calvinism, on the other hand, as it could be observed across the imperial borders, aimed for a pluralism in so far as it was represented

by a variety of territorial or national confessions of faith. It was strongly compatible with Genevan theology, but Genevan theology never gained the position as a secondary authority for doctrinal interpretation. In spite of the Calvinists' heightened awareness of the importance of their confessional documents for their identity, they were ready, in view of the prevailing distress, to negotiate new political alliances on the basis of new expressions of their confession. Nevertheless the controversies between the two consolidating confessions did not represent a simple search for political protection or the maintenance of the authority of different leaders of the Reformation but rather arose from deep theological perceptions and convictions as they took form in specific historical circumstances.