

**LUTHER TOTUS NOSTER EST:
THE RECEPTION OF LUTHER'S THOUGHT AT THE
HEIDELBERG THEOLOGICAL FACULTY 1583-1622**

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Introduction

THE HISTORY AND THEOLOGY of the Heidelberg University and its theology-faculty in the period of 1583-1622 has been greatly neglected in scholarly research.¹ This is surprising since during this period the university was one of the major centers of Reformed education, attended by a large number of international students. One characteristic of this period is the theological position, in which professors—most of whom stood in the Melancthonian tradition—did not want to be called Calvinists and were eager to demonstrate that they were in line with Luther's thought.

Reading their works, one can come to this conclusion: The real Lutheran is a Calvinist. Or one can say: the real Calvinist is a Lutheran. In fact, the theology and the self-image of the Heidelberg theologians are captured in this short formula. The Heidelbergers appeal to Luther not only regarding the doctrine of election, but also regarding the Lord's Supper. The question now is not whether they did so rightly, but how they did that. And that

¹ See Herman J. Selderhuis, "Eine attractive Univ Eine attractive Universität—Die Heidelberger Theologische Fakultät 158-1622," in *Bildung und Konfession im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung*, eds., Herman J. Selderhuis und Markus (Tübingen, 2006), 1-30.

brings us to problems that are still relevant today, indicating that much historical theology is also practical theology.

Lord's Supper

For the difference in meaning about the presentation of Christ in the signs of bread and wine, we need to look at the foundation of Christology. The Lutheran side proposes that the two natures of Christ are so connected to each other that the human characteristics participate in the divine. This means that where Christ is God, he is also human, and thus one arrives at the doctrine of omnipresence (ubiquity) of Christ as human. If he is present in the Supper, therefore, then he is present also in his human nature, that is to say, tangible in bread and wine.

In 1585, a year after the public dispute in Heidelberg with the Lutherans, Quirinus Reuter,² professor of Old Testament, published a book about the doctrine of ubiquity.³ According to him, the problem is not with the word itself. Philip Melanchthon was the first to use the word in a letter to Frederick the Pious, elector of the Palatinate.⁴ However, as soon as the Lutherans supply this concept with the notion that the omnipresence of Christ means that he is also bodily present in the bread and wine, it becomes a debatable word. Reuter tries to establish the grounds for rejecting the notions behind this word by citing five reasons for such rejection. First, this idea departs from the apostolic confession of faith about Christ sitting at the right hand of God. Second, Reuter asserts that this doctrine is not in harmony with what the Bible teaches.⁵ Third, this doctrine is not logical. The conclusions one can derive from this doctrine are in conflict with

² For biographical data on the Heidelberg professors: Dagmar Drüll, *Heidelberger Gelehrtenlexikon 1386-1651* (Berlin/Heidelberg, 2002).

³ *Anascevastica diatribe de ubiqualitate ac orali manducatione corporis Christi...* (Heidelberg, 1585).

⁴ *Anascevastica*, 4, "Usus est ea, primum vere, Magnus ille Philippus Melanchthon...."

⁵ *Anascevastica*, 22, "...ab unanimi consensu Scripturae."

Scripture and with the intellect. Fourth, Reuter says that this doctrine welcomes old heresies, pointing to the concepts that the church rejected as heresies in which the divinity and the humanity of Christ were insufficiently distinguished and in which the corporality of Christ was not sufficiently embraced. Finally, Reuter notes that the ubiquity doctrine conflicts with the witness of the church fathers.⁶ In the second part of the book he elaborates on these arguments.

Georg Sohn, who had been a student of Melanchthon, gives in his lectures about the Augsburg Confession a dogmatic-historic overview of the debate on the Lord's Supper in the context of the discussion about ubiquity. He regards such a factual overview necessary since, in his opinion, the Reformed and the Lutherans misunderstand each other and accuse each other unjustly—and all of this because neither side is always clear on the other's position.⁷ According to him, the problem originated when Luther began to use the concept of “ubiquity” in his discussion with Zwingli.⁸ Sohn tries to demonstrate from Luther's writings that Luther meant something entirely different from the understanding of the present-day Lutherans. Luther emphatically renounced the concept,⁹ and it cannot even be found in the Augustana, neither in the later writings of Luther, nor in Melanchthon, nor in the Schmalkaldic articles. The concept was buried until Brenz dug it up again.¹⁰ Sohn then addresses a couple of pages against Brenz and Jacob Andrea, and indicts them for adding things to what Luther had said and presenting them as Luther's own words when

⁶ *Anascevastica*, 56-57.

⁷ *Exegesis Praecipuorum articulorum Augustanae Confessionis*, p. 348, “Nam plerique affectibus aut praeprejudiciis praecoccupati, sinistris interpretationibus, calumniis & convitiis indulerunt.”

⁸ *Exegesis*, 349, “...et Lutherus primus omnium Ubiquitatem corporis Christi contra adversarios suos duobus annis & duobus scriptis illis asseruit, hoc est, semina Ubiquitatis in Ecclesia sparsit.”

⁹ *Exegesis*, 355, “Lutherus ... etiam doctrinam Ubiquitatis, cujus antea quaedam semina sparserat, expresse rejecit.”

¹⁰ *Exegesis*, 357.

in fact they do not occur in Luther.¹¹ Moreover, Brenz and Andrea cite from the 1527/28 works of Luther, a period in which he was stridently polemical.¹² For that reason, according to Sohn, it is unfair to draw important conclusions from such writings that cannot be supported by citations from more thetical writings of Luther. After this overview, Sohn dedicates many pages to how the connection between both natures of Christ should be rightly understood.¹³

One finds in almost all the writings of the Heidelberg theologians featuring the Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper what is presented in Sohn, namely that the teaching on ubiquity is an invention coming after Luther's death and is not in keeping with the teachings of the Reformer. Bartholomeus Pitiscus offers, in his "Ausführlicher Bericht," 34 pages with citations from Luther's works; on the basis of those he cannot come to any other conclusion than that "doctor Luther in all of his life never taught such a view of the 'communiatio idiomatum' as is the practice today."¹⁴ That means that the Lutherans have parted ways with Luther and that the Reformed have stayed the course. This does not mean, however, that everyone in Heidelberg is in agreement with Luther's teaching on the Lord's Supper, for they remain convinced that he went too far in his notion about the presence of Christ. In the first place, when Jesus speaks of "This is my body," the word "is" must be interpreted differently from Luther's interpretation. Secondly, Luther's view that Christ is bodily present is in conflict with other parts of Scripture.¹⁵ Thirdly, it is a point of view that was not found in the early church and is in fact a later papal invention. That brings Pitiscus to the fourth objection,

¹¹ *Exegesis*, 367, "...ed etiam novis additionibus, de quibus nihil apud Lutherum reperitur...."

¹² *Exegesis*, 368.

¹³ *Exegesis*, 378-542.

¹⁴ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 193. Idem op, 157: "Und sind wirl wohl versichert/ daß Doctor Luther sein lebelang von gemeinschaft der Eigenschafften nie alos gelehrte hat/ wie itzund die Ubiquitisten davon lehren...." *De Luthercitatzen zijn te vinden*, 158-192.

¹⁵ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 84-85.

that this bodily presence remains to this day the most important pillar of the papacy. Finally, there is the objection that this view is damaging to the people's life of faith because they are likely to think that the celebration of the Lord's Supper is sufficient to receive Christ.¹⁶ Pitiscus emphasizes that regarding the rest of it, there is full agreement with Luther, and that this one point of difference does nothing to change the unity of the faith. When there is agreement about the basis of salvation, it shouldn't matter much if there's a difference in opinion on minor points.¹⁷ With reference to the discussion in Marburg in 1529, Pitiscus observes that in Heidelberg they have no difficulty with Luther, but with his successors.¹⁸

While Pitiscus keeps his distance from a canonization of Luther, he at the same time inserts an extensive apology for Zwingli.¹⁹ The accusation on the side of the Lutherans that Zwingli's vision of the Lord's Supper issued from a devil-inspired dream is attacked by Pitiscus with citations from Zwingli. In this way Pitiscus tries to bring Luther and Zwingli together again, even if it is posthumously.

Paul Tossanus also pursues the Christological aspect of the discussion. He proposes that what is confessed in Heidelberg regarding the ascension of Christ and his presence in heaven is in complete harmony with the teachings of the Catholic Church of the past and present.²⁰ That Jesus is physically in heaven is the

¹⁶ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 122, "Daß wir sehen/ daß derselbe auch in den Evangelischen Kirchen nichts guts anrichtet/ sondern die Leute je lenger je mehr abführet von dem rechten Weg zum ewigen Leben...."

¹⁷ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 64, "Drumb so betrifft der Unterscheid zwischen unserer und Doctor Luthers Lehre vom heiligen Nachtmal nicht den Grund der Seeligkeit."

¹⁸ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 148, "Mit Doctor Luthers Nachfolgern seind wir zwar itzund in mehrern puncten streitig. Aber mit Doctor Luthern selbst gar nicht."

¹⁹ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 127-140.

²⁰ Tossanus, *Ascensio* [19], "Nos igitur de Ascensu Christi in caelum religiose et cum tota vetere, et hodierna Catholica Ecclesia loquimur et sentimus...."

teaching of Luther and also of the Augustana. Brenz and his followers have come with new ideas about Christ's ascension, but they are ideas not found in Scripture, not by the priests, not in the Augustana, and not in Luther.²¹ Tossanus points out in his sermon on this matter that a distinction must be made between the "unio sacramentalis" and the "unio personalis," a concept that played such an important role in the controversy about the Lord's Supper in the sixteenth century.²² The "unio sacramentalis," according to Tossanus, means to tell us that the believers who celebrate the Lord's Supper receive more than just the signs of bread and wine.

In the Lord's Supper the body of Christ and his shed blood are not only signified and represented, but in the right use of it Christ, the bread of eternal life, is surely passed to our hungry souls when we receive with hand and mouth the holy sign. And that is what all pious, Christ-believing hearts in fact feel along with special comfort, since it is through such use of Holy Communion that they are fed and strengthened through Christ himself as if with real heavenly bread unto a certain hope of eternal life.²³

David Pareus also spent much of his time on the theme of the ubiquity doctrine. It is characteristic of his work that he approaches the matter through the church fathers in order to show that the Lutheran presentation of this matter is new, deviating from the thinking of the old church. This approach can be found, for example, in the overview which he writes as a service to

²¹ Tossanus, *Ascensio* [35], "Sed quis unquam ita locutus est? An sic scriptura? An sic Patres? An sic Augustana Confessio? An sic Lutherus in Catechesi? Imo in Postilla, ubi de Ascensione disserit?"

²² 3 *Predigt*, 46-47, "Dann ja die Sacramentliche vereinigung nicht also beschaffen ist wie die Persönliche vereinigung dat Gott ist in Christo und der Sohn Gottes die Menschliche natur Persönlich und unzertrenlich angenommen hat und stets tregt und erhelt."

²³ 3 *Predigt*, 48.

students,²⁴ and in which he addresses the propositions that Martin Chemnitz had published on the two natures of Christ.²⁵ In 1603, Pareus published an overview of the various points of view on the Lord's Supper.²⁶ The structure of the work clearly indicates the style of a docent, with Pareus enunciating in his foreword the arguments for which the content of this work should have served. As far as the teaching of the Supper is concerned, the book contains nothing new; it is an overview of the differing points of view. But the amount of space that Pareus gives to the testimony of theologians from the middle ages as support for the Reformed view of the Lord's Supper is striking. Besides Duns Scotus and Paschasius, it is especially Berengarius who is quoted in this regard.²⁷ Pareus pleads for a restoration of this theologian because he shows that both Catholics and Lutherans deviated from tradition.

Practice of the Lord's Supper

An important point in the discussion about the Supper concerned the manner in which the bread was passed.²⁸ The Lutheran practice was not to break the bread at the celebration, but to pass the bread to participants in the form of a consecrated wafer. The Reformed practice, however, was to break the bread and pass to the participants in separate pieces. The Lutherans proposed that the Reformed had arrived at this practice to create more distance from the thought that Christ should be bodily

²⁴ *Methodus totius controversiae ubiquitariae brevis et perspicua: in usum studiosae iuventutis modeste instituta* (Neustadt, 1586).

²⁵ *These quaedam de unione duarum naturarum in Christo...* (Leipzig, 1581).

²⁶ *Davidis Parei Silesii Controversiarum Eucharisticarum una de litera et sententia verborum Domini in s. Eucharistia* (Heidelberg, 1603).

²⁷ *Controversarium*, 181-187.

²⁸ Bodo Nischan, *Ritual and Protestant Identity in Late Reformation Germany*, in: *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe* 2nd ed., Bruce Gordon (Aldershot, 1996), 142-158; *idem*, "The 'Fractio Panis': A Reformed Communion Practice in Late Reformation Germany," in *Church History* 53 (March 1984): 17-29.

present in the bread. Thus the breaking of the bread (*fractio panis*) indicated a visible rejection of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

But the Reformed defended themselves by pointing out that the breaking of the bread was in direct conformity to the command of Jesus. Besides, this method would make it more evident to the congregation that Christ died for us. According to Pitiscus, there are still more objections by the Lutherans to the Reformed practice of the Supper. They thought it wrong that the Reformed celebrated the sacrament at a table and not on an altar, and that the bread is not placed in the mouth but in the hands of the participants. There is also the criticism that no confession precedes the celebration of this sacrament, a notion that Pitiscus objects to by saying that the Reformed do not go to confession individually, but that they do confess as a body as can be seen in the liturgy in which the confession of sin precedes the celebration.²⁹ Against the objection that the Reformed do not practice a communion for the sick, Pitiscus proposes that the Supper is emphatically a communal meal and that it would not be in accord with Christ's example for someone to receive it individually. That does not mean that with the Reformed it is impossible to come to the home of one who has been sick for a long time and therefore unable to celebrate the Supper in the church. But then others should be present also as participants so that the sacrament is celebrated as in a "house church."³⁰

Pareus dedicates a whole book to the question of the practices surrounding the Lord's Supper, with special attention to the "fractio panis."³¹ Pareus says that he received a request from

²⁹ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 301-302.

³⁰ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 205, "Doch mit dem Bescheid/ daß nimmermehr der Krancke alleine communicire, sondern/ daß der gantze Umstand/ als eine Gemeine und Haußkirche mit communicire."

³¹ *Christlich und gründlich Bedencken vom Brot unnd Brotbrechen im H. Abendmal des Herren* (Amberg, 1600). *Kort daarna verschijnt een Latijnse vertaling: Davidis Parei de symbolis sacramentalibus, et de ritu fractionis in s. Eucharistia ...* (Amberg, 1601).

someone to delineate the practices and what is warranted for the liturgy of this sacrament. Thus Pareus explains in sequence what the practices are in the Roman Catholic Church, in the Lutheran churches, and in “the other evangelical churches, those of the Reformed faith which by the opposition are called Calvinistic.”³² The first part deals especially with the question of what kind of bread should be used and in which form, and if a drink other than wine is allowable. The second part takes up the discussion about the breaking of that bread. Pareus gives liturgical-historical overviews and conveys what the church fathers and the medieval theologians had to say about it. Regarding the question of the necessity of wine, Pareus joins Beza who says when there is wine, it should be used, but that there may be circumstances when no wine is available, in which case a drink that looks like wine is permissible. For otherwise no Supper could be celebrated because of the absence of wine.³³ On the discussion about leavened and unleavened bread, Pareus is a proponent of the first because that the use of leavened bread is much easier. If Jesus had instituted the Supper at another time than around Easter, he would have used leavened bread.³⁴ Pareus proposes that the form of the bread be left as a free choice within the Reformed churches.³⁵ This also pertains to the question if the Supper should be celebrated while sitting, standing, or moving. The Holy Spirit did not deem it necessary to give instructions and therefore it is not crucial.³⁶

That is different with the breaking of the bread. It’s not a matter here of an indifferent detail, but of a clear command of Christ. Thus Pareus cannot understand why the Lutherans object

³² *Christlich Bedencken*, [4].

³³ *Christlich Bedencken*, 84.

³⁴ *Christlich Bedencken*, 88, “Were es aber dem HERRN gefällig gewesen/ das Sacrament auff ein andere zeit außershalb deß Osterfests zu stifften/ hette er es ohne zweiffel auch mit anderm gewöhnlichem gesäwertem Brot zu halten/ kein bedenckens gehabt.”

³⁵ *Christlich Bedencken*, 95, “Zum fünfften/ gleicher gestalt erkennen sich die reformirte Evangelische Kirchen an keine gewisse form deß Brots gebunden seyn/ sondern haltens frey/ das Brot sey rund breit groß oder klein....”

³⁶ *Christlich Bedencken*, 152.

to this so strenuously. Their appeal to Luther does not help them much, for in one place Luther says that it should be done and in another place that the word Jesus uses here does not mean to break, but to pass.³⁷ The breaking of the bread is a central part of the Supper, and where that is missing there is a celebration of a “mangled Supper.”³⁸ Pareus summarizes many arguments in favor of the breaking of bread, but the most important for him remains that Christ commanded it at the institution of the sacrament. On this point Pareus concedes that Rome stayed with the truth, for even though it is a wafer, it is broken according to the word of Jesus. Here Pareus can even agree with Bellarminus.³⁹

Paul Tossanus’ Solution

The publication of Pitiscus’ *Ausführlicher Bericht* and the supplement to it result in a book of more than 700 pages as reaction to the *Bericht*, and a work of 230 pages as a response to the supplement. Both works are, according to the title page, a publication from the theologians in Württemberg.⁴⁰ The Lutheran theologians want to demonstrate from the works of Calvin, Zwingli, Beza, and Zanchius and from the works of a few Heidelberg theologians, how seriously the aforementioned

³⁷ *Christlich Bedenkcn*, 128-129.

³⁸ *Christlich Bedencken*, 157, “Sondern wir sagen/ daß sie durch unterlassung des Brotbrechens/ dem Sacrament ein grossen abbruch thun unnd es an seiner geordneten Ceremoni verstümmeln. Denn ohne das Brotbrechen/ bleibt es wol ein Abendmal/ aber nicht ein ganz sondern ein gestümmelt Abendmal.”

³⁹ *Christlich Bedencken*, 188, “So seynd jdoch unter so mancherley änderungen und verkehrungen der Lehr im Bapsthumb/ dise warhaffte Lehrpuncten vom Brotbrechen/ biß auff diese stund/ bey den Papisten unverruckt blieben/ wie auch droben auß Humberto, Bellarmino und anderen bewiesen.”

⁴⁰ *Examen und Gegenbericht/ Über das jüngsten zu Heidelberg geturckt Calvinische Büchlin/ nachfolgenden Tituls: Ausführlicher Bericht...Durch die Württembergische Theologen*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen, 1608); *Continuatio examinis, Das ist: Fernerer Gegenbericht auff der Heidelbergischen Theologen und Kirchendiener jüngsten publicirten Anhang ihres Ausführlichen Berichts...* (Tübingen, 1609).

Calvinists err, particularly in the doctrines of election and the Lord's Supper. Paul Tossanus attempts in his reaction⁴¹ to the "Examination" from Württemberg to handle this Lutheran critique in a different manner and at the same time to point a way toward unity with them. Tossanus says that the dispute has raged for thirty years already and that it's time to call it to an end.⁴² His complaint to the Lutherans is that they continually attack individual theologians—and sometimes even those who are not theologians at all⁴³—but that they fail to adduce arguments from the official Reformed Confessions. Thus he characterizes the writings of the theologians as individual, unofficial works, which according to that status do not even have to be defended point by point.⁴⁴ The Church has never bound itself to the writings of theologians; it has always been of a mind that those matters could be articulated better,⁴⁵ and that therefore it's not good to spend so much time discussing those writings. Tossanus introduces an argument here that so far has not been considered in the polemics. In this way Tossanus tries to limit the discussion to a dialogue about confessions instead of a discussion about and between theologians. In addition, Tossanus introduces a distinction between earlier and later Calvinists. Both groups teach the same, only the way they express themselves is different.⁴⁶ However,

⁴¹ *Recapitulatio deß Examinis der Württembergischen Theologen/ in welcher die Irthumb und Greuwel/ deren sie die Lehr der genannten Calvinisten beschuldigt/ ferner abgeleynt/ und auff alle und jede Zeugnissen/ mit welchen sie dieselbe zubeweisen sich unterstanden/ordentlich und gründlich geantwortet wirdt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1614).

⁴² *Recapitulatio*, 6.

⁴³ *Recapitulatio*, 9, "...auch derer/ so ex professo keine Theologi gewesen/ sondern sich mehr auff die Philosophiam und linguas begeben...."

⁴⁴ *Recapitulatio*, 8, "...nicht etlicher Privatschriften welche nicht allezeit so wol bedacht als sie solten seyn und man in allen Puncten zu vertheidigen nicht schuldig ist...."

⁴⁵ *Recapitulatio*, 140.

⁴⁶ *Recapitulatio*, 7. Tossanus repeats the argument in a reaction to Binders reply to the *Recapitulatio*: "Zum dritten/ so ist zwar unter den Unserigen/ so wol veteres als neotericos authores, ein Consens und Einhelligkeit/ was die Lehr an sich selbst anlangt: aber was die Erklärung derselben/ und die verba,

none of this prevents Tossanus from a thorough defense in his writings of theologians like Perkins, Zanchius, Beza, and Keckermann. This defense makes clear how much Tossanus saw this Reformed tradition as a unity and qualified the differences only as differences in terminology and method.

A second distinction is that between native and foreign theologians. Tossanus suggests that an important step toward unity of Lutherans and Reformed would be taken when each side ceased to call each other Lutheran and Calvinist.⁴⁷ These have become hateful terms and their use incites only more alienation. Let us just call each other Christian,⁴⁸ says Tossanus, and the dialogue will be much easier. Besides, what do we have to do with Calvin in Germany? He was a Frenchman who spent most of his time not in Germany but in France and Geneva.⁴⁹ Should we in Germany let ourselves be named after him? Should the name of a foreigner be an obstacle to the peace in the German Church?⁵⁰ We have been baptized in the name of Christ and not in the name of Calvin. We build on the Word of God and not on the word of Calvin. Tossanus is apparently eager to let go of this name, especially if that could be a means of accomplishing church unity. Tossanus is also prepared to retract or no longer use certain passages, formulations, and words that caused the Lutherans irritation. These are only words of men, says Tossanus, and if peace can be reached by not saying certain things or saying them

phrases und genera loquendi betrifft/ so thuts wol einer dem andern vor/ unnd brauchet bessere unnd bequemer Wort unnd Reden/nach den Gaben/ die ihm Gott verliehen/ unnd nach dem er mehr geubet/ unnd der Sachen fleissiger unnd embsiger nachgedacht hat/ als ein ander.“ *Abfertigung der Vermeynten Gründtlichen Antwort D. Christophori Binderi* (Franckfurt, 1615), 17.

⁴⁷ *Recapitulatio*, 137.

⁴⁸ *Recapitulatio*, 137, “...warumb sollen wir Calvinisten/ und nicht viel mehr Christen genennet werden?”

⁴⁹ *Recapitulatio*, 137-138, “Ja/ was haben die Kirchen in Teutschland mit Calvinio/ der ein Franzoß gewesen...zuthun?”

⁵⁰ *Recapitulatio*, 138, “Sol eben eines frembden name den Frieden der Evangelischen Kirchen in Teutschland verhindern?”

differently, then that should be done. For that, Tossanus is eager to appeal to Calvin himself.⁵¹

But to the abbot of Maulbronn, Christoph Binder, in his response to Tossanus's "Abfertigung,"⁵² these distinctions do not at all strengthen the position of Tossanus. Binder starts out by saying that, considering the nature of Tossanus's reaction, his peaceful intentions bode no ill, but then he shifts to the real question, namely the Lutheran proposition that the Calvinists in their doctrine of election make God the cause of sin. He thinks the distinction between old and new Calvinists wrong, for where they differ in the wording, they do remain essentially in agreement with each other on this doctrine. Binder goes on to cite in detail the works of others, among them Zwingli, Beza, Piscator, and Zanchius, and finds in all of them the same understanding of election and reprobation. Tossanus had furthermore argued that the Lutherans did Calvin injustice by giving a false image of him. After Binder presents a whole series of citations from Calvin's work, however, he cannot help concluding that the cause of reprobation, according to Calvin, lies within the reprobates themselves, but that they were destined by God to have that cause within themselves.⁵³ Tossanus himself interprets Calvin wrongly, for Tossanus can talk about God not wanting anyone to be lost, but that He allows it; whereas Calvin says very clearly that this is an artificial distinction, for what God allows is also what he wills.⁵⁴

⁵¹ *Recapitulatio*, 140-142.

⁵² *Gegenbericht/ Auff die vermeinte Abfertigung D. Pauli Tossani. Darinnen klärllich und zum Augenschein erwiesen würdt/ daß D. Binder in seiner Gründtlichen Antwort/ in Warheit geleistet/ was er versprochen: Er aber/ Tossanus, mit seiner heillosen Abfertigung/ und Außgesprengten Schmachschrift/ seine und seiner Anhänger Sach/ nicht allein nicht verbessert/ sondern noch vil ärger gemacht* (Tübingen, 1617).

⁵³ *Gegenbericht*, 239, "Habe also mit meiner Dolmetschung Calvini Sinn und Meinung/ nicht allein nicht verkehrt/ sondern vilmehr an Tag gegeben. Dann eben darumb würdt nach Calvini Meinung/ die Ursach und Materi in den Verstossenen gefunden/ weil es Gott also verordnet/ damit sie hiedurch als Mittel zur Verdammuß gerathen."

⁵⁴ *Gegenbericht*, 255.

The Luther Image

Just as each time period and each movement has had and has its own image of Luther, so also in Heidelberg. The difference between the Reformed and the Lutherans regarding the image of Luther can be traced back to that of Calvin and the Lutherans.⁵⁵ Calvin never viewed Luther's ideas as a closed system, while most of the Lutherans did. The image Calvin had of Luther's ideas, as a thought system in progress with insights to be further developed and built upon, was also the image those in Heidelberg had of Luther.⁵⁶ That's why Pitiscus warns against a canonization of Luther. One can find passages in Luther's works that clearly portray him as an ordinary person who, just like others, could make mistakes and stray. That means that his works could be used, but with the understanding that everything should be tested and only the good be saved.⁵⁷ That critique is also present in Simon Stenius. In his polemics with the Jesuit Jakob Gretser, he defends Luther where he can, but he expresses the criticism that the Lutherans regard Luther as a prophet.⁵⁸ What he means by that can be inferred, for example, from the words of Matthias Hoe, court preacher in Dresden, when he objects to the Reformed critique of Luther's Bible translation.

As far as Luther's translation is concerned, I would rather bite off my tongue a hundred times than concede to a Calvinist that Dr. Luther made a serious mistake in his edition. I view Dr. Luther's Bible as a genuine sacred work and I steadfastly believe that if all

⁵⁵ Bode Nischan, "Reformation or Deformation? Lutheran and Reformed Views of Martin Luther in Brandenburg's 'Second Reformation'," in *Pietas et Societas: New Trends in Reformation Social History*, ed. K.C. Sessions and P.N. Bebb (Kirksville, 1985), 203-215.

⁵⁶ Nischan, *Reformation*, 207, "The Luther picture that emanated from Heidelberg, the intellectual center of German Calvinism in the late sixteenth century, thus basically agreed with Calvin's."

⁵⁷ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 57.

⁵⁸ *Greitserus Triumphatus*, 366, "De Luthero igitur cum Lutheranis ages, qui eum pro Prophetam habent."

Calvinists had sat together in a heap, they would not have been able to translate the tiniest piece of Holy Scriptures as beautifully from the Hebrew, Chaldean, and Greek as Luther has done throughout the whole Bible with the rich gifts God has bestowed upon him.⁵⁹

That image comes to expression, among others, in the publication of the speech Quirin Reuter gave in 1606 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Collegium Sapientiae. In the pieces he adds in the appendix, he also takes up the positions of Luther's Heidelberg disputation and Luther's conclusions.⁶⁰ Luther held that disputation in the monastery housing the Collegium, and Reuter undoubtedly wants to make clear that those in the collegium have always followed in Luther's footsteps.

It's become clear from the above what image was held of Luther in Heidelberg. They observed a development in Luther's thoughts, distinguishing between the younger and the older Luther. Daniel Tossanus refers to this distinction in his introduction to the three sermons, which he published in 1591. Before the conflict with Karlstadt began, Luther's view of the sacraments was in complete agreement with the Reformed teachings of today.⁶¹ After this conflict, that view changed with the consequence, among others, that in 1529 an agreement was reached with Zwingli on all points, except on this point of the Lord's Supper. Still, in 1536, he consented to a Concord with the Swiss; and, according to Tossanus, he did that because he had seen how much ugliness had been generated by that quarrel over the sacrament. Nevertheless, many remarks can be found in the polemical writings of the later Luther that testify to a significant human weakness.⁶² Tossanus gives a number of examples, among

⁵⁹ *Gründtliche Ableinung zweyer Calvinischer Unwahrheiten ...* (Leipzig, 1615), 18.

⁶⁰ *Jubileus*, [64-80]

⁶¹ *3 Predigt*, 7.

⁶² *3 Predigt*, 8, "Was er aber sonst in den Streitschriften/ von diesem handel außgehen lassen/ ist also beschaffen/ daß/ wer nicht wider sein

which is Luther's remark that he would like to see the Lord's Supper celebrated in German, but that it would be no problem for him if it was done in Latin. Tossanus points out that Luther made these utterances in his argumentative writings and that in those he expresses himself now and then in anger and thoughtlessness. Is it wise, therefore, Tossanus asks, to appeal to those writings as the present-day Lutherans do?

Or, as Jacob Kimedoncius asks the Lutherans, have they never read Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio*? Or do they think that the memory of Luther should be erased?⁶³ The Lutherans accuse the so-called Calvinists of having landed in the camp of the pagans and Islamic with their doctrine of election. But do they now want to relegate Luther to that camp too, to indeed have him land in the camp of the Calvinists?⁶⁴

The same question is raised in the work of Abraham Scultetus. For example, in his *Vialia* it becomes clear that the Reformed immersed themselves intensively in the study of Luther for the purpose of demonstrating that the Lutherans often wrongly made their appeal to him. At the same time it should become clear that the Reformed did continue in Luther's tracks. When Scultetus in *Vialia* reports a conversation among four people about the differences between the Reformed and the Lutherans, many citations from Luther come to the fore. The citations that the Reformed participant refers to, about Luther's view of the Lord's Supper, makes the Lutheran participant exclaim suddenly: but that is Calvinistic!⁶⁵

Scultetus also takes up the difference between the younger and the older Luther. He does so in response to the Lutheran

Gewissen reden/ und muthwillig blind sein will/bekennen muß/daß grosse Menschliche schwachheit in ihm damals die uberhandt gehabt."

⁶³ *Praefatio*, [8], "Quid Lutherus, quo gloriamini? An Servum arbitrium nunquam legistis? Aut memoriam eius oblivione sepultam arbitramini?"

⁶⁴ *Praefatio*, [10], "Quid? An Lutherum tandem in Paganorum & Mahometistarum, ne dicam Calvinistarum, (ut vos appellare soletis) castra relegabitis?"

⁶⁵ *Vialia*, 54, "Das ist gar zu Calvinisch."

claim that Luther wrote a retraction of his book *On the Bondage of the Will*. That remark is made because the Reformed are so taken with this work by Luther and regularly appeal to it in their discussions with Lutherans. However, Scultetus asserts “that Luther never retracted this work and he neither could nor wished to retract it.”⁶⁶ Scultetus is informed about the Lutheran discussion regarding this question and eagerly sides with Schlüsselburg, a Lutheran theologian, who asserts that Luther later confirmed his earlier view on the bondage of the will in his commentary on Genesis.⁶⁷ Before Scultetus, Kimedoncius had reacted to this discussion in his foreword to the reissue of Luther’s *De servo arbitrio*.⁶⁸ Kimedoncius cites from Luther’s well-known letter of 1537 to Capito, in which Luther says that all of his works, with the exception of his Larger Catechism and *De servo arbitrio*, could be burned. Kimedoncius then reports in detail what Luther said in his commentary on Genesis 26, and comes to the conclusion that Luther opposes only the misuse of the doctrine of predestination, but not the doctrine itself. Thus there is no question of a “retractio” of what he had said in his book about the bondage of the will.⁶⁹

Luther, then, is not the problem between the Reformed and the Lutherans. Pitiscus makes it abundantly clear that, except on the point of the Lord’s Supper, there is full agreement with Luther.⁷⁰ But there is the problem that the Lutherans strayed away from Luther. According to Parcus, all was well so long as Luther

⁶⁶ *Vialia*, 79.

⁶⁷ *Vialia*, 80, “Daß Lutherus seine Lehr vom Knechtischen willen wiederhohlet und mehr bestäätiget habe in seinem letzten Buch, das ist in Außlegung Geneseos.“

⁶⁸ *Praefatio*, [11-16]

⁶⁹ *Praefatio*, [16], “In his non ait se retractare quae scripserit de praedestinatione & immutabili divinae voluntatis necessitate, sed tantum, quod multi abusuri essent ea doctrina & suis libris.“

⁷⁰ *Ausführlicher Bericht*, 297, “...daß wir nemlich mit D. Luthern eins sein/ in allen notwendigen Punkten der Christlichen Religion/ außgenommen eine einzige Frage vom Nachtmal: welche Frage aber den Grund der Seligkeit nicht antrifft.“

was still alive. In the dialogue at Marburg, there was agreement in everything, except on the matter of the Lord's Supper, but that was resolved in the Wittenberg Concord of 1536. However, "there were some who especially after Luther's death had trouble maintaining their view that the body of Christ truly was hidden under the bread."⁷¹ It was that group of theologians who came out with a ubiquity doctrine, and they thus abandoned the doctrine of the sacrament that had been agreed on with Luther.

Reuter also attempts to make this clear through a reissue of a part of the book that Casper Peucer wrote about Melanchthon,⁷² dealing with Melanchthon's view of the Lord's Supper and describing his part in the debate. The work of Peucer was intended to show from the writing of Melanchthon himself that he had not parted ways with Luther and that all accusations directed against Melanchthon from the Lutheran side were unjust. A reissue was of importance to Reuter, because Melanchthon was being indicted for having joined the so-called Calvinists. Reuter's work shows, however, "that Philippus as far as the article on the Lord's Supper was concerned had always been in agreement with Luther."⁷³ Thus Reuter tries to demonstrate that what is presently taught out of Heidelberg is in harmony with Melanchthon and, therefore, also with Luther. To reinforce this thesis, he added 28 letters, especially letters from Melanchthon and Luther. Reuter's criticism of the Lutherans is their erroneous handling of Luther. He cites quotations from Luther, which say that his words are not canonical and that nearly everything he had written may be

⁷¹ *Summarische Erklärung*, [5].

⁷² *Tractatus historicus de claris. Viri Philip. Melanthonis sententia, De controversia coena Domini: a D. Casparo Peucero: ante plures annos scriptus: sed iam primum separatim (boni publici ergo) excusus. Cum appendice selectarum epistolarum et iudiciorum aliquot Philippi aliorumque praestantium virorum de eadem materia, veritatis illustrandae gratia subjuncta. Studio M. Quirini Reuteri Mosbac. Palat.* (Amberg, 1596).

⁷³ *Tractatus*, [6]

destroyed after his death.⁷⁴ Reuter hopes through this reissue to finally make an end to the division among the Reformational Churches, for the present situation of strife and disunity gives the Catholic enemy a reason for scoffing.⁷⁵

Calvinists are Lutherans

On the journey in which the inheritance of Melanchthon is passed on to succeeding generations, the Heidelberg theological faculty serves as an important station in the years 1583-1622. The professors of this university cannot be characterized as Calvinists in the total sense of Melanchthon, but neither as Philippists. If it wouldn't be such a loaded and confessionally determined term, these theologians could sooner be called Lutherans. Georg Sohn makes that clear in the preface of his *Synopsis*, where he bemoans the fact that the Lutherans elevated Luther too highly and regarded Melanchthon too lowly. Meanwhile, he feels himself connected to those of the opinion that Luther and Melanchthon must remain in solidarity with each other. The Heidelberg theology represented this point of view. However, just as Melanchthon refused to form a school but consistently pursued in a non-polemical way the passing on of the faith of old, so we find the same attitude among the aforementioned Heidelberg faculty. And that after all is also the mark of Reformed theology. Reformed theology has the Bible as its source and norm and makes use in the articulation of the Biblical teaching of the insights received by church fathers and Reformers. It does not bind itself to one person, not to Luther nor to Calvin, but draws from the breadth of the Reformed tradition and is, therefore, precisely irenic and ecumenical.

⁷⁴ *Tractatus*, [5], “Ego ipse odi meos libros, & saepe opto interire, quod metuo ne morentur Lectores a lectione ipsius scripturae, qua SOLA omnis sapientiae fons est....”

⁷⁵ *Tractatus*, [11-12]

