The Dispute over Images between Calvinism and Lutheranism

by Irene Dingel

Abstract

The prohibition of images as the second commandment of the Decalogue and the rejection of images in the church are considered one of the characteristics distinguishing Calvinism and Lutheranism that shaped the life of the congregations in the 16th century. In fact, the introduction of a Calvinist confession of faith was not only expressed by the introduction of the breaking of bread at Communion and the abolition of baptismal exorcism, but it also always brought about the removal of images from church interiors. However, even before the confessional groups formed, the treatment of images became a theological problem that could even lead to iconoclasm. Luther's debate with Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt in Wittenberg, Huldrych Zwingli's positions in Zurich, Jean Calvin's teachings in Geneva, and the Heidelberg Catechism show how the arguments of medieval theologians were either adopted or rejected. The Lutheran reactions to the Heidelberg Catechism and the later religious colloquies between Lutheran and Calvinist theologians show how the question of images gradually gained confessional relevance.

"What does God desire in the Second Commandment?" So reads the ninety-sixth question of the *Heidelberg Catechism*. The answer follows: "That we should not falsely depict (*verbilden*) God in any way, nor worship him in any way other than what he has commanded in his word."[1] In addition to the numbering of the Decalogue's commandments, with the prohibition of images as the second commandment, the handling of images in general became one of the features distinguishing Calvinism and Lutheranism. Martin Luther considered the prohibition of graven images to be classified under Jewish ceremonial laws[2] and thus included in the First Commandment (against having or worshipping other gods). But the *Heidelberg Catechism*, emerging as a confession of faith from a Calvinist center of influence, emphasized that God could not be represented in images, "following the presumable initial numbering,"[3] as an independent

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commandment itself. This standard was followed in congregational life, as seen in the removal of images from the worship spaces that took place with the introduction of the Calvinist confession. The removal of images along with the ritual breaking of bread during Holy Communion, the exclusion of the exorcism from the baptismal rite, and a new approach to church music and congregational singing, all were generally the outward marks of a congregational or territorial church's shift in confession from Lutheranism to Calvinism. The history of the Electoral Palatinate in the second half of the sixteenth century bears eloquent witness to this.[4] It was in the course of moving toward confessional consolidation that the "question of images" would become problematic. Indeed, this problem emerges again and again throughout all epochs of church history. In the age of the Reformation, it initially became a problem in the so-called Wittenberg Movement of 1521/22 during Luther's stay at the Wartburg. Iconoclasm arose at that time in Wittenberg itself. At this point began a longer consideration of the significance of images. Three examples highlighted its main features: the opposing viewpoints of Karlstadt and Luther,[5] the positions of Zwingli and Calvin, and finally the statements of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (part one below). The ensuing treatment of the reactions from the Lutheran side (part two) can cast light on the incipient confessional demarcations that finally and distinctly emerge in the Lutheran-Calvinist religious colloquies (part three), which had a broader scope than merely the consideration of images.

Images in the early Reformation through the Heidelberg Catechism

After the Edict of Worms, which imposed an imperial ban on Martin Luther, the Reformer went "incognito" as *Junker Georg* (Squire George) at the Wartburg Castle on the Thuringian border from 4 May 1521 to 1 March 1522. Yet the flame of the Reformation that he sparked continued without him in Wittenberg. Luther's former *Doktorvater* Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt[6] (1486–1541) was among those who believed that the movement had come to a standstill after relying solely on the transformative power of the Word and that it had to be seen through to its fulfillment and

translated into the reality of daily life through appropriate measures. He spearheaded a movement that aimed not only at proclaiming the doctrines of the Reformation but also at giving them concrete form by abolishing certain ecclesiastical customs and ceremonies and introducing replacements for them. His primary concerns were celibacy, the order of the Mass, and the veneration of icons (*Bildervereherung*). The atmosphere was further enflamed by the appearance of the "Zwickau prophets,"[7] three spiritualistic laymen from nearby Zwickau, and it culminated in outright tumultuous riots in Wittenberg in early 1522. Side-chapels in churches were demolished; paintings and statues of saints and images of Mary were torn down, smashed, and burned.[8] Shortly before this happened, Karlstadt had demanded the removal of images from the churches, justifying his actions on the basis of Exodus 20:4, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." His 1522 pamphlet, *On the Abolition of Images*, provides a literary prelude to and theological justification of iconoclasm.[9] His argument is based on three points: 1. The very fact of having images in church is a transgression of the First Commandment, in which God claims honor and worship for himself alone. 2. It is even more "diabolical" to find images upon altars. 3. Therefore, they should be abolished.[10] Karlstadt argued that those who bend the knee before images and statues, or even place them in a prominent position (such as on an altar), are effectively worshipping images and have turned their backs on proper worship. They are embracing idolatry. In doing so, he clearly opposed the foundation and basis laid by John of Damascus in the eighth century for the proper use of divine icons, which had placed the biblical prohibition of images in the historical context of the Jewish people and relativized it on the basis of the claim that Christians were no longer living under Mosaic Law, but under grace, on the firm foundation of faith. Karlstadt's position, however, called the argument of the Damascene into question.[11] Although he also understood that Jewish ceremonial law had been abolished by the New Testament, Karlstadt's view was that this did not apply to the Decalogue and its prohibition of images.[12] The Damascene had claimed that the prohibition of images in no

way opposed the veneration (*Verehrung*) of an image, rather only opposed the *προσκυνησις της λατρειας* (*proskynesis tes latreias*), namely, worshipping an image. He understood the biblical commandment to prohibit not all images, but only the image of God. Karlstadt reduced such nuances *ad absurdum*. According to him, the outward behavior of the people toward images unmasked their inner mindset, according to which veneration and worship (*Anbetung*) had merged. In his eyes, that this kind of unjustified treatment of images took place in houses of worship increased the gravity of the disregard for God's will. Karlstadt was influenced by late medieval spiritualism, grounded on his interpretation of the contrast between flesh and spirit, which devalued everything "carnal and tangible." A spiritual truth was only accessible via a spiritual path. He cited John 6:63 as evidence: "the flesh is no help at all." So Karlstadt admonished the civil authorities, to whom he said the "priests"[13] were subject *iure divino*, to proceed against the graven images in their responsibility for the spiritual welfare of their subjects. His call not to accept any hesitation on the part of authorities, read between the lines, fell on fertile ground among the people.[14]

Luther noticeably distanced himself from these proceedings. He was not only disturbed by their tumultuous nature—which circumvented the responsible political authorities—but also by the fact that external reforms were undertaken without being grounded in proper theological understanding. In this light, he advocated for "protecting the weak"[15] and predicted a rigid fight for reform slipping into insurrection and rebellion.[16] More important to the reformer than the outward destruction of images was their inner eradication from people's hearts. Luther regarded the veneration of images as an outward expression of the fact that people—borrowing the words of the Large Catechism—did not "look for all good and [. . .] a refuge in all need" to God; rather, they were looking elsewhere. They did not direct "trust and faith of the heart" toward the One who had presented himself in the First Commandment as the giver of all good things and the One who preserves in all troubles.[17] The veneration of images was false worship insofar as those who venerated images obviously scorned God's claim to be the sole guarantor and preserver of life. With this in mind, Luther placed the

prohibition of images under the First Commandment, that is, in the context of that commandment. On the other hand, he accused Karlstadt—with his biblicist insistence on scriptural evidence—of legalism and a new works righteousness. In his treatise *Against the Heavenly Prophets* (1525), Luther conducted an extensive debate with Karlstadt and his perspective.[18] For Luther, images were by no means abhorrent, *per se*. He believed, like Pope Gregory the Great, that they could be utilized for good pedagogical effect. Why should they not decorate the walls of churches when even the Reformation translation of the Bible included pictures! Therefore, they could be quite useful for the faith although they certainly were not necessary for salvation. In Luther's opinion, one could grant images a place in the service of evangelical proclamation.

Zwingli, who began to introduce the Reformation in Zurich in 1519, and with whom Karlstadt stayed after his flight from Electoral Saxony,[19] had a very different opinion. Similar to Karlstadt, he viewed the veneration of images in churches and upon altars as forbidden by God. He was convinced that images in churches would inevitably attract cultic worship. Already in his *Zurich Introduction* of 1523 he referred to a recently-published tract, "*Von abthun der bilden*," which could well have been Karlstadt's own treatise,[20] though Zwingli's treatise warned against hasty action. He clearly stated that God had forbidden not only other and foreign gods, but also images that inevitably led people away from the proper worship of God. According to Zwingli, the removal of images from sanctuaries was a necessary and God-willed consequence of reform. His "Bern Theses" of 1528 followed this line of thinking and, as put into practice in the Swiss cities, reduced the question of images to a concise formula: "To make images for the sake of worship is contrary to the Word of God, the Old and New Testaments. Therefore, if they are set up as objects of worship, they are to be abolished."[21]

In Calvin's first version of his *Institutes*—completed in Basel in 1536—and in the Geneva Catechism (1537) written during the Frenchman's first period of activity in Geneva, we find a prohibition of images integrated into the Decalogue as the Second Commandment. Calvin reasons that in this commandment God gives explicit instruction for proper worship. "Just as in the previous

commandment God proclaims himself as the only God, so now he says who he is and how honor and service are to be rendered to him."[22] The prohibition of crafting "idols" is justified through reference to Isaiah 40:18–26, with its sharp contrast between spirit and flesh. Because God is spirit, he can only be worshipped in spirit. "Therefore, let us learn from this commandment that the service and honor of God are of a spiritual nature, for just as he himself is spirit, he also requires that we serve him 'in spirit and in truth.'"[23] The question-and-answer format of the Geneva Catechism of 1545 also clarifies what blasphemy lurks beneath an attempt to grasp the spiritual, eternal, and incomprehensible through the fashioning of an image from the physical realm.[24] The spiritual and the physical, the eternal and the temporal, the immortal and the mortal are not compatible. The later editions of the *Institutes* retain this idea. On the one hand, Calvin was concerned with the abolition of superstitious customs and their sinful attempt to "subject God to our senses." On the other hand, he was eager to ensure the right worship of God, that which glorifies God alone. In the *Institutes*, Calvin discussed in detail what Holy Scripture said concerning images and the fact that previous orthodox practice had been contrary to scripture, a practice which sought to legitimize itself by referring back to Pope Gregory the Great and the Council of Nicaea in 787, which had supported the use of images, or other church traditions.[25] In contrast, Calvin urged respect and faithfulness to God's will as set forth in the Commandments, finding its most serious expression in the terrible threat associated with the Second Commandment.[26]

The *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1563—based on the work of Melanchthon's pupil Zacharias Ursinus (1534–83)—adopted this typical Reformed numbering of the commandments and addressed the prohibition of images as well, treating the subject in three questions specifically related to it.[27] Similar to Calvin's works, it concerned itself with the correct scriptural worship of God, which cannot tolerate an image of God, as well as the danger in the worship of something that is created.[28] In addition, it is clear that the *Heidelberg Catechism* rejects any endorsement of images in the manner of Gregory the Great in its explanation of the commandment. This was only discussed in Calvin's work in connection with the doctrine of God

in the first book of his *Institutes.* The *Heidelberg Catechism*, however, sought to emphasize its contrast with any positive evaluation of images—as in Martin Luther's writings and in the Wittenberg Reformation with its retention of images in the churches. The *Heidelberg Catechism* clearly answered the decisive question regarding the removal of images: "But may not images be tolerated in the churches, as books for the laity? No: for we must not pretend to be wiser than God, who will have his people taught not by mute images, but by the living preaching of his word."[29] The lively nature of the Word of God stands in stark contrast to everything that attempts to force spirit into flesh through illustration in images and turns the object into a "mute idol."

The *Heidelberg Catechism* formulated its doctrine in clear opposition to other possible interpretations. It was not only a textbook for young people's instruction; it also proved to be a testimony to confessional identity through these and similar statements. In fact, the *Heidelberg Catechism* was given confessional status in the Electoral Palatinate. The Reformed doctrine which was introduced in the Palatinate on the basis of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, coinciding with a new church ordinance in 1563,[30] took shape in the life of the congregations and other aspects of ecclesial practice by the resulting removal of images from sanctuaries. Reactions from the Lutheran camp were inevitable.

Early Lutheran Reactions

Immediately after the 1563 publication of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Matthias Flacius Illyricus (1520–75) spoke out in opposition. He was regarded as the head of a group of theologians who saw themselves as the guardians of the unaltered theology of Martin Luther.[31] His notoriety began with his numerous protests against the Imperial Interim of 1548, which was used to return the Protestant cities and territories to Roman Catholic practice. The heightened awareness of living in the last days—particularly resulting from the defeat in the Smalcald War and the Augsburg Interim—gave a decisive impetus to his effort to distinguish truth from falsehood.[32] For Flacius, the introduction of the *Heidelberg Catechism* was one indication among

many of the eschatological work of the Antichrist, who wanted to sneak into the "temple of God" in this devious way, especially as the *Catechism* "presents itself as if it were Evangelical [Lutheran] or adhering to the Augsburg Confession." In the eyes of Flacius, this was precisely what it was *not*, namely, not in conformity with the teaching of the *Confessio Augustana*. On the contrary, it was "full of many great errors."[33] Naturally, these faults included the doctrine of the Lord's Supper with the associated Christological statements, as well as the ritual breaking of bread in the service on a practical level, but he also treated the subject of images.[34] Above all, he denounced the new interpretation of the Ten Commandments as misleading[35] and—with an eye toward the biblical context—affirmed in the same sense as Luther that God's concern in forbidding the crafting of an image is no different from that in the First Commandment: to keep people from idolatry and from worshipping idols, not only in outward behavior, but also in their inner attitudes. This context is to be understood as "synecdoche," "namely, that it is not simply that we should not make external images of creatures, honoring or worshipping them in an idolatrous way, but also that we should not make any image of them within us in our thoughts, relying on them or setting our hearts on them."[36]

These are clearly biblical or hermeneutical questions that set Flacius and Lutheranism in opposition to the Reformed approach. Calvin emphasized the qualitative difference between the divinely spiritual and the carnally material, which made it impossible to depict God, for it would rob him of his due honor. True genuine worship has to abide by this. On the other hand, for Flacius, who applied the rhetorical figure of synecdoche to the question of images (analogous to the Lutheran understanding of the Lord's Supper), paintings, statues, and crucifixes fell under the category of *adiaphora*—matters neither commanded nor forbidden by scripture: their use is left up to a Christian's discretion. For him, the adherents of the *Heidelberg Catechism* were therefore dismissed as iconoclasts.[37] Placing them thus in line with Karlstadt—in their doctrine of the Lord's Supper and their new doctrine of images—did not do justice to them or their teaching. However, it does show how confessional boundaries were becoming entrenched through the polemics.

Tilemann Heshusius (1527–88), similarly to Flacius, saw the devil at work with the emergence of new catechisms, such as the *Catechismus Romanus* (which can be traced back to Petrus Canisius), the *Heidelberg Catechism*, or the adaptation of the Lutheran Catechism by Petrus Praetorius in Königsberg (Neumark), tending toward Philippism.[38] Through the misguided instruction of youth, these three texts undid the rediscovery of the gospel by Martin Luther, whom Heshusius considered an eschatological prophet.[39] Heshusius was also opposed to the *Heidelberg Catechism* because he had been exiled from the Palatinate a few years earlier due to a quarrel with the deacon Wilhelm Klebitz over their understanding of the Lord's Supper.[40] The fact that this former Heidelberg professor, pastor at Holy Spirit Church and superintendent of the Palatinate, appointed by Elector Frederick's cousin and predecessor Ottheinrich, called himself an "Exul Christi"[41] on the title-page of his *Faithful Warning Against the Heidelberg Calvinistic Catechism* speaks for his firm conviction that he was exiled because of the Evangelical truth and that the truth was on his side in the fight against false doctrine.[42] In Heshusius's critique of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, the focus of concern lay less on images and more on the understanding of the sacraments and Christ's ascension, the significance of original sin and free will, and the theme of conversion. He conveys the impression that he addressed the question of how to deal with images only for the sake of completeness.[43] According to him, it is not a matter for debate that neither God the Father nor the Holy Spirit can or may be depicted. A responsible government must abolish all blasphemous image-worship and thus abolish pagan idolatry. What he does criticize in the *Heidelberg Catechism* is inconsistency in the interpretation and understanding of scripture. In his view, the prohibition in question 97 against creating an image of God, while at the same time allowing the creation of images of creatures (provided, of course, that they are not elevated to idols through worship) should at least allow the God-man Christ to be depicted in his creaturely form. Heshusius considered this treatment of images of Christ also to be a useful reminder of historical events. That such a reminder is prohibited "in the Heidelberg way" is, for Heshusius, a lack of scriptural understanding.[44]

The writings of Flacius and Heshusius provide insights into the public, divisive polemic that marked this era, as clearly exhibited in these reactions against the *Heidelberg Catechism* and the Palatinate's turn to beliefs and creeds influenced by Swiss theology. Just how true this evaluation of Palatine religious policy was can be seen in the fact that Elector Frederick the Pious adopted the *Confessio Helvetica posterior*, which had been drafted by Heinrich Bullinger as early as 1561 and revised again in 1564.[45] This was to serve as a simultaneous proof of his agreement with the *Confessio Augustana* and with Protestantism in other lands, counteracting the efforts at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg in 1566 to exclude the Palatinate from the Religious Peace.[46] The question of images was never really considered in that agreement. Nevertheless, the *Confessio Helvetica Posterior* also addresses the problem of images, in line with Reformed doctrine and the *Heidelberg Catechism*. It is striking that the problem of the image of Christ, mentioned by Heshusius and only hinted at in the *Heidelberg Catechism*, is specifically addressed here. Because Christ had clearly emphasized that he did not want to abolish the Law and the Prophets and since he had by no means promised a future physical presence in the church but rather his spiritual presence, an image of his body or even a shadow of it was not edifying.[47] The *Confessio Helvetica Posterior* developed a concise doctrinal formula that explicitly prohibits images of God, Christ, and the saints. It insists on the authority of the Holy Scripture and, with this foundation, emphasized the sending to preach the word of God as stated by Christ in Mark 16:15. In contrast, teaching the people through images finds no support in the Word of God.

On the Lutheran side, images only found their way into the official confessions when the developing groups began to express themselves in a manner that was both dismissive and exclusionary on this question.[48] In fact, a new genre of confession had emerged in the late 1550s. Inspired by the Saxon duke Johann Friedrich "the Middler," crafted under the leadership of Flacius, the *Weimar Confutation* (1559)[49] dispensed with the previously common formulations of faith and doctrine in public statements of the faith; instead it critiqued false teachings in order to warn against heresy, namely, points in which the authors distanced themselves from the doctrine

they branded as "false."[50] Written in 1564 and published in 1565, the *Mansfeld Confession* also belongs to this group of confessional "confutations." It addressed six problematic topics that were then current, including the *Heidelberg Catechism*.[51] Appropriately, the *Mansfeld Confutation* also contained an article "on the making of images."[52] Of course, the new numbering of the Ten Commandments is mentioned. However, the primary concern of this *Mansfeld Confutation* was to point out a fundamental tendency of the "sacramentarians," to whose camp the *Catechism* can clearly be assigned if one reads between the lines of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, according to the view of the Mansfelders: "they make everything new until there is nothing left of the old and true. They change and find new forms for the order of the commandments in the Decalogue and the petitions of the Lord's Prayer that have been observed and practiced to this day in our churches, in a manner that has nothing in common with others."[53] Karlstadt is once again blamed as the instigator and originator of all such hastily-made changes.[54] Their main argument regarding the question of images, however, is that the *Heidelberg Catechism* failed to make the fundamental distinction between the wrongly-revered idols, on the one hand, and those representations that have a commemorative, educational function and serve to promote piety, on the other. Images are simply nothing other than "transformed narratives and preaching."[55] Surely even our thoughts and ideas are images of what we have heard and read: "Quid enim cogitationes nostrae aliud sunt, quàm imagines earum rerum, quas vel audiuimus vel legimus."[56] God wants his message to be engraved on human hearts not only through the spoken Word of preaching but also through music, singing, and painting. Therefore, the Mansfelders made Luther their authority, who corroborated their opposition to the Reformed teachings of the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

The Lutheran-Calvinist Religious Colloquies

All these disputes and attempts to distinguish one group from the other did not mean that the question of images had definitively become one of the issues dividing the Lutheran and Calvinist confessional groups. The fact that the Maulbronn Colloquy of 1564,

initiated by Duke Christoph of Württemberg, Count Palatine Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, and Margrave Karl of Baden, did not precisely address this topic in the discussion between Württemberg and Palatinate theologians shows that other questions were much more central to the discussion. After Frederick the Pious had consented to a colloquium, the parties met in the monastery of Maulbronn, where a total of ten sessions were held in the winter refectory from 10 to 15 April 1564.[57] Its goal was to regain doctrinal unity, primarily sought through discussion on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper and Christology. The truly irreconcilable differences of the two parties immediately came to a head, especially since Jacob Andreae of Württemberg ensured that the Christological issue surrounding the question of the (omni)presence of Christ's humanity relating to his ascension to God's right hand, came to the fore. So, after endless unpleasant discussions, they parted without achieving any result.

The situation was different two decades later, at the religious colloquy at Montbéliard (Mömpelgard) in 1586, which again tried to overcome confessional differences. The occasion for this was the large number of Calvinist religious refugees in the county of Montbéliard, which was ruled at that time by the dukes of Württemberg, especially since the dukedom had adopted the Lutheran *Formula of Concord* of 1577. Count Frederick of Montbéliard, as the organizer of the colloquy, invited the participants to the castle of the same name from 21 to 26 March 1586.[58] Naturally, the Lord's Supper and Christology were once again in focus. This time, however, baptism, predestination, ceremonies, organs, and images also played a role. No agreement was reached on any doctrinal point; the only area with a semblance of finding common ground was the issue of images. Yet the confessional groups remained divided on the question of whether or not images in churches had an educational value and whether or not they should be tolerated. Theodor Beza, the theologian from Geneva who spoke for the Calvinists, advocated the abolition of all images, unlike the Lutheran side, represented by Jacob Andreae and Lucas Osiander, who were willing to accept them.[59] In the end, Lutherans and Calvinists did not come closer to each other—rather, on the contrary, the gap was more firmly fixed in place. The agenda for the negotiations at the Montbéliard

Colloquy clearly shows the various points on which respective confessional identity was now moored.

Conclusion

The decisive issues for the formation and consolidation of confessional identity within Protestantism were and still remain questions concerning the Lord's Supper and Christology, with the doctrine of predestination also joining the ranks of confessionally-specific doctrinal debate since the Colloquy of Montbéliard. The question of images, on the other hand, occupied a far less significant place, commanding less attention than the other critical topics. In contrast, it immediately came to the fore when a change of confession occurred from Lutheranism to Calvinism or—more rarely—from Calvinism to Lutheranism. The removal of images from churches became an outward, highly visible confessional symbol in terms of public impact, even surpassing the breaking of bread during Holy Communion, while at the same time offering simple, theologically-uneducated people an uncomplicated visual means of confessional identification. For popular piety, the way people interacted with images was more formative than any other doctrinal or confessional distinction, and it is still likely so today.

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NOTES

1. *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563), in *Bekenntnisschriften der Reformierten Kirche*, ed. E. F. K. Müller (1903, Waltrop: Spenner, 1999 [henceforth BSRK]), 710; *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation*, ed. James T. Dennison, Jr. (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2010), 792 (hereafter cited as RC).

2. See Luther's explanation of the First Commandment in the Large Catechism, in *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche*, ed. Irene Dingel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 936/937,15–22 (hereafter cited as BSELK), *The Book of Concord*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 388 (hereafter cited as BC). See also Albrecht Peters, *Kommentar zu Luthers Katechismen, Band 1: Die Zehn Gebote*, ed. Gottfried Seebaß (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 137–143; Albrecht Peters, *Commentary on Luther's Catechisms*, *Ten Commandments*, ed. Charles P. Schaum (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2009), 141–146.

3. Jan Rohls, *Theologie reformierter Bekenntnisschriften von Zürich bis Barmen* (Göttingen: Vandenheock & Ruprecht 1987), 56.

4. Elector Ottheinrich introduced the Reformation in the Palatinate in 1556. His successor, Frederick III, embraced the Reformed faith and the *Heidelberg Catechism* in 1563, thus making his principality as Calvinist in the eyes of his contemporaries. However, in 1576 his son Ludwig VI began a cautious "Re-lutheranization" of the Palatinate. After long negotiations, he finally signed the Formula of Concord; Irene Dingel, "The Preface of the Book of Concord as a Reflection of Sixteenth-Century Confessional Development," *Lutheran Quarterly* 15 (2001): 373–395. When Ludwig's brother, Johann Casimir, came to power in 1583, the Palatinate became Calvinist again. This was followed by a "re-catholicization" during the Thirty Years' War. For a general history of the Palatinate, see Ludwig Häusser, *Geschichte der Rheinischen Pfalz nach ihren politischen, kirchlichen und literarischen Verhältnissen*, 2 vols., (Heidelberg: Mohr, 1845, reprint Heidelberg: Winter, 1924), 978.

5. On the relationship of Luther and Karlstadt on this issue, see Amy Nelson Burnett, *Karlstadt and the Origins of the Eucharistic Controversy: A Study in the Circulation of Ideas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), and Mark C. Mattes, *Martin Luther's Theology of Beauty. A Reappraisal* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 133–154.

6. On Karlstadt, see Burnett, *Karlstadt*, among several studies in German and English. The classic treatment is that of Hermann Barge, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Brandstetter, 1905).

7. The "Zwickau Prophets" were two clothiers, Nikolaus Storch and Thomas Drechsel, and a former Wittenberg student, Thomas Stübner. They contacted Melanchthon on 27 December 1521, claiming to have had personal revelations from God. Nikolaus Storch had held secret meetings in Zwickau. The three also were in contact with Thomas Müntzer. See George Hunston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Kirksville MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992), 120–136.

8. Natalie Krentz, *Ritualwandel und Deutungshoheit. Die frühe Reformation in der Residenzstadt Wittenberg (1500–1533)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014) argues for a less dramatic assessment of the events associated with this movement.

9. Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, *Von Abtuhung der Bylder / Vnd das keyn Betdler vnther den Christen seyn sollen* (Wittenberg: Schyrlentz, 1522), in *Kritische Gesamtausgabe der Schriften und Briefe Andreas Bodensteins von Karlstadt, Band V. Briefe und Schriften 1522*, ed. Thomas Kaufmann (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2023), 139–178.

10. See Karlstadt, *Von Abtuhung der Bylder*, 141.

11. See Hans-Dieter Döpmann, *Die Ostkirchen vom Bilderstreit bis zur Kirchenspaltung von 1054* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1990), 49–54.

12. For the full context, see Walther von Loewenich, Art. "Bilder" V/2 and VI, in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Müller und Gerhard Krause (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1977–2007), 6: 540–557 (hereafter cited as TRE).

13. The German *Pfaffen* is a pejorative term for priests.

14. For the full context, see Karlstadt, *von Abtuhung der Bylder*, 147–149.

15. See Martin Luther, *Acht Sermon D.M. Luthers von jm geprediget zu Wittemberg in der Fasten*, *D. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–1993), 19,3:1–64 (hereafter cited as WA); *Luther's Works* (Saint Louis/Philadelphia: Concordia/Fortress, 1958–), 70–99 (hereafter cited as LW).

16. The Reformer commented on this in his writing *Eine Treue Vermahnung zu allen Christen, sich zu hüten vor Aufruhr und Empörung*, WA 8, 676–687, LW 45:57–74. The treatise was already available in print in January 1522, after Luther's secret exit from Wartburg Castle in early December 1521 to travel to Wittenberg.

17. BSELK 930/931,11–932/933,11, BC 386.

18. WA 18: 62-214, LW 40: 79–223; on the issue of images, WA 18:67.8–84,34, LW 40:84–101.

19. Karlstadt was in Zurich from 1530 to 1534. Zwingli had died on the battlefield in 1531.

20. E.F. Karl Müller refers this to a treatise by Ludwig Hätzer, but this is not made clear. See BSRK, p. 23, note 4, where the "Züricher Einleitung" can also be found: BSRK 7–29.

21. BSRK, 31, RC 42.

22. John Calvin, *Christliche Unterweisung. Der Genfer Katechismus von 1537* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1978).

23. Calvin, *Genfer Katechismus*, 17.

24. The minister asks: "Why is it unlawful to represent God visibly?" The child (*puer*) answers: "Because there is no resemblance between him who is eternal Spirit and incomprehensible, and corporal, dead, corruptible and visible matter." It continues: "You think then that it does dishonor to his majesty to represent him in this way?" The child answers, "This I believe," BSRK, 130,7–12, RC 1:487–488.

25. John Calvin, Institutio Christianae Religionis (hereafter cited as Inst.) I,11,1–16.

26. Inst. II,8,17–21, esp. section 18–21. Incidentally, Luther refers this threatening statement logically within the framework of his interpretation of the first commandment. See the interpretation of the commandment in the Large Catechism, in BSELK 940/941,20–946/947,28, BC 390–392.

27. Questions 96 to 98 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* in BSRK, 710, RC 2:792.

28. Questions 96 and 97 in BSRK, 710, RC 792.

29. Question 98, in BSRK 710, RC 792.

30. *Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Emil Sehling, 14 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1969), 333–408.

31. Researchers also refer to them as the Gnesio-Lutherans. On the Gnesio-Lutherans, see the article by Rudolf Keller in: TRE 13 (1984): 512–519. On Flacius, see Wilhelm Preger, *Matthias Flacius Illyricus und seine Zeit*. 2 Bde. (Erlangen 1859–61, rpt. Hildesheim/Nieuwkoop: Olms/de Graaf, 1964), Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), and Luka Ilić, *Theologian of Sin and Grace. The Process of Radicalization in the Theology of Matthias Flacius Illyricus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck/Ruprecht, 2014).

32. Irene Dingel, "'Der rechten lehr zuwider.' Die Beurteilung des Interims in ausgewählten theologischen Reaktionen," in *Das Interim 1548/50. Herrschaftskrise und Glaubenskonflikt*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005), 292–311.

33. *Widerlegung Eines Kleinen Deutschen Caluinischen Catechismi so in disem M.D.Lxiij. Jar sampt etlichen andern jrrigen Tractetlin ausgangen* . . . (Regensburg 1563), A3a. Also see the preface, A2a–2b.

34. The section "On the Eighth Error" in Flacius, *Widerlegung*, C3a-D1a.

35. Flacius, *Widerlegung*, D1a.

36. Flacius, *Widerlegung*, C4b–D1a.

37. See Flacius, *Widerlegung*, D1a, where he states: "Therefore, this is also just a careless sophistry that the iconoclasts want to use to throw all images out of the church with such a saying. It is an adiaphoron; it is up to the Christian to have it or not to have it, as D[octor] Luther has sufficiently demonstrated and explained in his first part Against the Heavenly Prophets and Carlstadt, the first sacramentalist of this time."

38. After Luther's death and through the course of the protest against the Augsburg Interim and what its opponents called the "Leipzig Interim," the existing theological spectrum found in Protestantism became clearly apparent. Those who followed the teachings of Philipp Melanchthon, in part, and those Lutherans who showed affinities to Calvinism are often referred to as Philippists. Regarding the group designations, see Irene Dingel, *Concordia controversa. Die öffentlichen Diskussionen um das lutherische Konkordienwerk am Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996), 15–19; and *Controversia et Confessio. Theologische Kontroversen 1548–1577/80. Kritische Auswahledition*, ed. Irene Dingel, 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012): 3–14.

39. See the preface of *Trewe Warnung fu[e]r den Heidelbergischen Caluinischen Catechißmum sampt wiederlegung etlicher jrthumen desselben* . . . (s.l., 1564), A2a–C5b.

40. On the occasion of his promotion to the degree of "Baccalaureus" (Bachelor's degree) of Theology, Klebitz had published theses in which his Calvinist convictions clearly emerged. Heshusius forbade his deacon from assisting him in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This led to a scandal. Heshusius excommunicated Klebitz and tried to have him deposed. The situation escalated to such an extent that Elector Ottheinrich's successor, Frederick III, known as "the Pious" (ruled 1559–76), intervened after he had obtained an expert opinion from Melanchthon. The dispute ended with both Heshusius and Klebitz being dismissed from their posts at the end of 1559. See Peter F. Barton, *Um Luthers Erbe. Studien und Texte zur Spätreformation. Tilemann Heshusius (1527–1559)* (Witten: Luther Verlag, 1972), 158–225. On the reactions to Melanchthon over this incident, see Robert Kolb, "The Critique of Melanchthon's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper by his 'Gnesio-Lutheran' Students," in Irene Dingel, Robert Kolb, Nicole Kuropka, and Timothy J. Wengert, *Philip Melanchthon. Theologian in Classroom, Confession, and Controversy* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 236–262.

41. See his *Trewe Warnung*.

42. For Heshusius's biography, see Peter F. Barton, "Tilemann Heshusius," in: TRE 15 (1986): 246–260; also Barton, *Um Luthers Erbe*. On Heshusius's distinctive Christology, see Thilo Krüger, *Empfangene Allmacht. Die Christologie Tilemann Heshusens (1527–1588)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).

43. Heshusius, *Treue Warnung*, J1b–3a.

44. Heshusius, *Trewe Warnung*, J3a: "If one, however, wanted to conclude in the Heidelberg way, one would have to make no image or likeness of the Lord Christ, even if no idolatry was practiced with it anywhere, but only used for commemoration and remembrance of history (*zur gedechtnis vnnd erinnerung der geschicht*). But if such an article were to be used, it would have to be scripture, and proven on good grounds."

45. BSRK 170-221, RC 810–881.

46. In a memorandum dated 13 July 1563, Emperor Ferdinand I had pointed out to Elector Frederick III that the enforcement of the *Heidelberg Catechism* would be tantamount to excluding himself from the Peace of Augsburg. It was therefore a political necessity to prove that the Palatinate had not deviated from imperial law. For this matter, the Elector turned to Heinrich Bullinger. See Ernst Koch, *Die Theologie der Confessio Helvetica Posterior* (Neukirchen/Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968) and Endre Zsindely, "Confessio Helvetica Posterior," TRE 8 (1981): 169–173, and Irene Dingel, *Concordia controversa*, 101–110, 134–139. On the events at the Reichstag, see Walter Hollweg, *Der Augsburger Reichstag von 1566 und seine Bedeutung für die Entstehung der Reformierten Kirche und ihres Bekenntnisses* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964).

47. *Confessio Helvetica posterior* (1562), Art. IV: De idolis vel imaginibus Dei, Christi et Divorum, in: BSRK 174, RC 815–816: "Although Christ has taken on human nature, he has not done so in order to set forth a pattern for carvers and painters. He denied that he had come to abolish the law and the prophets. But images are forbidden in the law and the prophets. He denied that his physical presence would in any way profit the church in the future. He promises that he will always be present with his spirit: so who would believe that the shadow or image of a body would in any way benefit the godly?"

48. In contrast, the *Confessio Tetrapolitana* (1530) already contained an article on images (*Bilderartikel*), see BSRK, pp. 75–78.

49. Kolb speaks of a "new genre of published confession," Robert Kolb, "Christ's Descent into Hell as Christological Locus in the Era of the Formula of Concord. Luther's 'Torgau Sermon' revisited," *Lutherjahrbuch* 69 (2002), 106, and Kolb, "'Bekentnis der reinen lere des Euangelij Vnd Confutatio der jtzigen Schwermer,' Nikolaus von Amsdorf und die Entfaltung einer neuen Bekenntnisform," in *Nikolaus von Amsdorf (1483–1565) zwischen Reformation und Politik*, ed. Irene Dingel (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2008), 307–324.

50. See Irene Dingel, "Bekenntnis und Geschichte: Funktion und Entwicklung des reformatischen Bekenntnisses im 16. Jahrhundert," in *Dona Melanchthoniana. Festgabe für Heinz Scheible zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Johanna Loehr (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: fromann-holzboog, 2005, 2nd ed.). 75–81; "The Function and Historical Development of Reformation Confessions," *Lutheran Quarterly* 26 (2012): 295–321. See also Daniel Gehrt, *Ernestinische Konfessionspolitik. Bekenntnisbildung, Herrschaftskonsolidierung und dynastische Identitätsstiftung vom Augsburger Interim 1548 bis zur Konkordienformel 1577* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2011), 129–137.

51. These included the recently published writings of Paul Eber and Georg Major on the questions of synergism and antinomianism, as well as the Ascension of Christ, see Kolb, "Christ's Descent into Hell," 107.

52. "Omnes innouant, donec nihil vetus & verum retineant. Ordinem praeceptorum in Decalogo, & petitionem in oratione Dominica, in nostris Ecclesijs hactenus obseruatum & vsitatum, quoq[ue] mutant & innouant, modò ne quid cum alijs commune habeant.," *Confessio et Sententia Ministrorvm Verbi in Comitatv Mansfeldensi, et de Dogmatis qvorundam proximo triennio pvblice editis* (Eisleben: Urban Gaubisch, 1565), 87a–89b.

53. *Confessio et Sententia*, 87a.

54. *Confessio et Sententia*, 87b.

55. Duplices sunt imagines: Quaedam sunt Idolatricae, atq[ue] hae sunt tollendae ex Ecclesijs, quia sunt domicilia Daemoniorum: Quaedam verò μνημοσυνα [mnemosyna], id est, signa earum rerum, quae nos de veris cultibus Dei admonent, & pias cogitationes in

nobis accedunt. Tales imagines non modò sunt tollendae ex Ecclesijs: verum etiam retinendae & approbandae. . . . Quid n. imagines aliud sunt, quàm mutae narrations vel conciones?" in *Confessio et Sententia*, 88a.

56. *Confessio et Sententia*, 88b.

57. Elector Frederick III, with his court theologian Michael Diller and professors Petrus Boquinus, Caspar Olevianus, Zacharias Ursinus and Petrus Dathenus represented the Palatinate. The Palatinate delegation also included the Elector's personal physician and church councilor Thomas Erastus, the chancellor Christoph Ehem, and Wilhelm Xylander as notary. The Württemberg party with Duke Christoph was represented by Johannes Brenz, the provost of Stuttgart, the court chaplain Balthasar Bidembach, Jacob Andreae, the chancellor of the University of Tübingen, the Tübingen professor Theodor Schnepf, the abbot of Maulbronn Valentin Wanner, the chancellor Johannes Fessler, and the vice-chancellor Hieronymus Gerhard. Lucas Osiander was also present as a notary, see Irene Dingel, "Religionsgespräche," IV. "Altgläubig—protestantisch und innerprotestantisch," TRE 28 (1997), 665–666, with the sources and literature cited there, 672–673 and 676–681.

58. Jacob Andreae and Lucas Osiander again represented the Lutheran side, accompanied by two political councilors from Württemberg. Theodore Beza from Geneva, Abraham Musculus from Bern and two councilors from Geneva and Bern participated in the colloquy for the Calvinists. See Dingel, "Religionsgespräche," TRE 28 (1997), esp. 666, 673 and Donald Nugent, *Ecumenism in the Age of the Reformation: The Colloquy of Poissy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974).

59. Irene Dingel, "Beza's Nützliche Antwort auf die Publikation der Akten des Religionsgesprächs von Montbéliard durch die lutherische Seite," in *Bibliotheca Palatina Ausstellung der Universität Heidelberg in Zusammenarbeit mit der Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana. 8. Juli–2 November 1986, Textband* (Heidelberg: Edition Braus, 1986), D 4.6, pp. 173–174. On the Colloquy as a whole, see Jill Raitt, *The Colloquy of Montbéliard. Religion and Politics in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).