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Discord, Dialogue, and Concord The Lutheran Reformation's Formula of Concord

Lewis W. Spitz

The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, observing the religious strife of the day, commented sardonically, "How absurd to try to make two men think alike on matters of religion, when I cannot make two timepieces agree!" Since his day the chorus of religious belief and opinion has become increasingly cacaphonous, so that the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the Formula of Concord, a confession which restored a good measure of harmony to a strife-ridden segment of the church, is an event of deep significance. Commemorations of Protestant confessions have at times in the past been not merely devout, but also partisan, sentimental, monumental, and even self-congratulatory or triumphalist, but ours must be done in a more reflective and analytical mood. The church of the Reformation, too, may benefit from reform and renewal. In the *Frankfurter gelehrten Anzeiger* (1772) Goethe mocked the iconoclastic zeal of the "enlightened reformers" of his day, who were even urging the reform of Lutheranism. But, as Luther himself realized, such great things are not in the hands of man, but of God. "Quando enim Deus verbum emittit," he wrote, "szo geets mit Gewalt!"¹

From Leonhard Hutterus' *Libri christianae Concordiae: Symboli ecclesiarum Gnesios Lutheranarum* (Wittenberg, 1609) to the contemporary work of Edmund Schlink, Holsten Fagerberg, Willard Dow Allbeck, and a host of others, the bibliography on the history and theology of the Lutheran Confessions has reached staggering proportions, so that it is not without trepidation that the non-specialist dares venture into the field.² The modest aim of this paper will be to open up some critical matters for discussion, not to offer definitive statements or formulae. It will begin with a bit of historical revisionism and rehearse briefly a bit of the Formula's *Entstehungsgeschichte*, underlining the drive toward unity against a background of dissension and accenting some remarkable aspects of the story. It will then address some major problems involved in confessionalism, the problem of authority in Protestantism, the relation of church structure to dogmatic emphasis, the function of confessions, some matters of interpretation of the Formula then and now, and the role of confessions

today. That is a tall order for a short paper, which will have to rely on suggestion and summary statement rather than upon fully developed argument.

1. A very widespread misreading of the history of the second half of the sixteenth century which has affected the common understanding of the Formula of Concord is the myth of Lutheran stagnation especially in contrast to the aggrandizement of a more militant Calvinism. Just as the old view that the evangelical movement faltered as a spontaneous popular movement following the debacle of the Peasants' Revolt in 1525 has been discarded in the light of new historical evidence of the urban expansion of the Reformation and the evangelization of the countryside after 1530, so the picture of a passive and static Lutheranism in the second half of the century is being thoroughly revised. Lutheranism continued to be vigorous and expansive during the second half of the century. Although most Lutheran territories were Lutheran in name prior to the Peace of Augsburg (1555), several of the largest states such as Prussia and Sweden were satisfactorily reorganized only in the latter half of the century. The consolidation of those territories continued up until the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. As late as the year 1598 Strassburg turned Lutheran and subscribed to the Formula of Concord. Even the Palatinate, the center of the Reformed churches in the Empire which had Calvinist presbyteries from 1570 on, became Lutheran in 1576 and remained so for seven years.

Moreover, the evidence is mounting that Renaissance humanism continued far into the Reformation era as a major cultural force and was expanded and popularized through the Protestant educational program.³ The Lutheran area of Silesia was of great significance for the cultural history of confessionalism, for during the decades between the Reformation and the Enlightenment it led Germany in literature and philosophy with Martin Opitz formulating the laws for modern high German literature and Christian Wolff most prominent as the leading philosopher. In 1558 Melanchthon had declared quite sincerely that Silesia could boast of having more men learned in the humanities than any other area of Germany.⁴ Even during the three decades of the doctrinal controversies following the death of Luther, the opening of the Council of Trent, the trauma of the Interims, and the Peace of Augsburg, the very tumult and the shouting, vehemence and acrimony, the abuse and heated emotions bore negative witness to the fact that people cared and were very much alive, concerned, and energetic.

2. The Formula of Concord owed its origin to the fear of disin-

tegration, weariness with dissension, and a positive desire for unity within Lutheranism. Protestantism, because of its lack of a supreme centralized authority and its emphasis upon the individual's explicit faith has always carried within it a potential for complete organizational disintegration. With deviations from the central church pattern toward individualism on one hand and toward sectarianism on the other, according to Ernst Troeltsch's well-known diagram, it has come to resemble nothing so much as a banyan tree. Yet; the fact that ninety percent of its adherents are nominally members of a few major persuasions is all the more astonishing. Such cohesion despite all the centrifugal forces brought to bear upon the church may perhaps be explained historically by three factors. The one is a generally observable phenomenon that while ideas make for change in history, institutions provide stability, which gives a long term advantage to organization over individualism. The second is the fact that in early modern times political powers which insisted upon religious uniformity for the good of the state dominated the church. The third was the development of a general adherence and loyalty to the major confessions, whether that be the *Confessio Helveticus Posterior*, the Westminster Confession, or the Formula of Concord.⁵

The desire of rulers for uniformity within the state increased with princely particularism, and the growth in power of natural monarchs added to the traditional proprietary church arrangements. In 1536 the Swedish statesman Axel Oxenstierna told his colleagues on the council that religion "is the great *vinculum communis affectus et societatis humanae* and there is no greater or stronger *nexus concordiae ac communitatis* than *unitas religionis*."⁶ Sweden was out of line with German Lutheranism, for it did not include the *Liber Concordiae* among its *symbola* until late in the next century. At Uppsala in 1593 the opportunity to include it was missed and the ordinance on religion in 1663 and the draft of the Church Ordinance of 1682 really merely recommended it as an explanation of the Augsburg Confession. It was only by his Church Law of 1686 that Charles XI at last gave the Formula of Concord a quasi-symbolic character.⁷ In the case of Sweden, however, the church assembly and, in line with it, the kings and parliaments reinforced religious unity, and the one case of possible royal deviation toward Catholicism proved not to be a serious threat. Ecclesiastical and secular government did in the case of Sweden, by way of example, present further fragmentation of the church.

There can be no doubt that the confessions played an important

role in preventing the doctrinal and organizational disintegration of Protestantism, and among these the Formula of Concord merits an honored place. It grew out of a desire for peace and unity. The formulators strove to be faithful to the ecumenical creeds, to Luther's evangel, to the normative Augsburg Confession; and they undertook to define doctrine on the basis of the Scriptures as the only rule and norm in order to correct error and end controversy. Their motto might well have been taken from St. Augustine's *Confessions*: "In this diversity of true opinion let truth itself beget concord!" Doctrinal controversies had raged so long between the integrists or Gnesio-Lutherans and the Philip-pists, accused of being Crypto-Calvinists, that the public had reached the point of saturation. In the words of La Fontaine, "Religious contention is the devil's harvest." Just as it is difficult to understand the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* without a knowledge of the *Catholic Confutatio Augustanae Confessionis*, so it is impossible to comprehend the assymetrical thrusts of the Formula of Concord without a knowledge of the ten major controversies that developed between 1537 and 1577. How wide the chasm between the two major contending parties had become was revealed clearly at the Colloquy of Worms in 1557. That secular princes were unable to resolve such lofty matters became obvious at the meetings of the princes at Frankfurt in 1558 and at Naumburg in 1561. It was time now for conservative pacific theologians of the centrist position, supported morally and financially by the princes, Luther's "Christian brothers in authority," to become the blessed peacemakers. "The itch of disputing," Sir Henry Wotton wrote in *A Panegyric to King Charles*, "is the scab of the churches." It was time to apply balm in Gilead.⁸

There is no need to rehearse the details of the Formula's *Entstehungsgeschichte*. We should note especially, however, that the original triumvirate and all six initial signators did not reach agreement because they were such compatible personalities, but that they did so despite the fact that they were not! It was the cause of peace and unity in the church that was their overriding concern. All six signators were members of the Center Party, but they were individually quite different. Jacob Andreae had developed under the formative influence of Johannes Brenz and Württemberg Lutheranism. Martin Chemnitz, David Chytraeus, and Nicholas Selnecker had studied with Melanchthon, but had moved quite far from their preceptor. Andreas Musculus, who had conducted polemics against the Interim, Osiander, Starcarus, Melanchthon, and Calvin, was the stalwart general superintendent of Brandenburg.⁹ Christoph Körner or Cornerus, who

was called the *oculus universitatis*, had a keen humanist interest and did commentaries on Cicero and Aristotle. Despite the interplay of intellectual and dogmatic cross-currents, in spite of the ambivalence in the relation of Melanchthon's students to Philippism, despite their differing personalities and even the deep personal dislike that Selnecker, for example, felt for the mercurial Andreae, they worked effectively together for the common cause and set a noble example for emulation.¹⁰ Jacob Andreae made the cause of Lutheran unity his life's work and did much preliminary study prior to the formulation of the Bergen Book or Formula. In 1568 he proposed a "Confession and Brief Explanation of Certain Disputed Articles," and in 1573 he elaborated on these five articles in his "Six Christian Sermons, on the Divisions . . . among the Theologians of the Augsburg Confession . . . How a Simple Pastor and a Common Christian Layman Should Deal with Them on the Basis of His Catechism."¹¹ In his entire effort he never sought to innovate, but rather to clarify and propound those basic truths long held *semper et ubique*, even if not *ab omnibus* (Vincent of Lerins). As the Preface to the Formula eventually expressed it: "We . . . have wished, in this word of concord, in no way to devise anything new."

3. The problem of authority has quite rightly been called the Achilles heel of Protestantism. *Quot homines, tot opiniones!* Luther's personal appeal to conscience and to *ratio evidens* at Worms, before the Diet and later before the Archbishop of Trier, posed the problem of subjectivity. This question plagued him through the years: *Nam tu solus sapis?* He found comfort in the thought that he was not alone, but in the company of the prophets, evangelists, apostles, fathers and brothers from Augustine and Bernard to Johannes Tauler and Philipp Melanchthon. In his funeral oration for Luther Melanchthon in turn placed Luther in that same noble succession. His conscience was "captive to the Word of God"; and his teaching corresponded, he held against the radicals, to a sound tradition within the church. Luther's own temperament did not equip him well to be a systematician, as his uninspired commentary on *The Three Symbols or Creeds of the Christian Faith* (1538) suggests.¹² He deferred gladly to the author of the *Loci*. Nevertheless, his own contributions to the confessional canon embodied in the Book of Concord, the Large and Small Catechisms and the Schmalkald Articles, were simple, forceful, and unambiguous statements of evangelical essentials. But even during his own lifetime, as early as the Wartburg days, "false brethren" undercut him,¹³ and he lived to see the beginning of doctrinal controversies which had to be taken into account in

the Formula of Concord.

The well-known Roman Catholic Reformation scholar Pere Daniel Olivier, a student of Yves Congar and a member of the Lortz school, contends that Luther's formula of justification by faith was basically unstable and could be held together only by a man of his forceful personality, keen intelligence, deep religious experience, and rich theological background. During his own lifetime his theology was distorted in three directions, legalism, synergism, and antinomianism. After his death heresies sprang up as though from dragon's teeth, some preached in his name.¹⁴ Of course, Luther's distinguished predecessors, St. Paul and St. Augustine, had also lived to see their doctrinal formulations twisted and turned, so that even in that respect Luther was in good company.

Why the early and persistent deviation? There is, of course, a skeptical answer, that of the urbane French historian Michelet, who defined theology as the art of befuddling oneself systematically. There was the usual problem of the *epigoni* who lack the master's brilliance. When one observes the exaggerations of an Amsdorf declaring good works to be harmful to salvation, Osiander's pomposity while rejecting forensic justification, or Flacius declaring man's very substance to be sin (although he distinguished *substantia materialis* and *substantia formalis*, and though he really meant the latter as being sin, he refused to clarify his statement), one is inclined to offer easy explanations such as assuming all this to be a case of *Die deutsche Neigung zur Ubertreibung!* But then one recalls that nearly every willful folly can be duplicated among the French and Dutch Reformed and can only feel bemused at general human limitations. Humanism seems to have added flexibility to some mentalities, but one can formulate no general rule. "Hoeschel," Julius Caesar Scaliger remarked, "though a Lutheran, is a learned man!"

When a doctrinal position becomes merely a matter of private opinion, disintegration doctrinally and eventually organizationally is sure to follow. "Taking heed to the doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:16) calls for more than that. It calls for churchmanship, not individual subjectivity: In his *Memoirs* Joseph Priestly recorded this incident: "Orthodoxy, my lord," said Bishop Warburton, in a whisper, "orthodoxy is my doxy — heterodoxy is another man's doxy." The formulators of concord had to arrive at a principle of authority which would transcend self-willed definitions and appeal to sound principle. There were several readily available solutions that they did not adopt. The first of these was an appeal to the authority of Luther. In the interest of pacification they had

decided against naming any person associated with an erroneous or controverted opinion, but would refer only to Luther by name. Andreae's mentor, Johannes Brenz, had called Luther *praeceptor noster observandissimus*. They wrote of Luther that "in the spirit this highly enlightened man foresaw that after his death his traducers would distort his teachings." Musculus published a volume of excerpts from Luther's writings. And yet, for all their high regard for Luther, they did not appeal to his writings as a final authority. In fact, it is astonishing to find how infrequently they cite his non-symbolical works and how rarely they appeal to his magisterial authority. This is no equation of Luther's teaching as such and revelation. Luther is viewed as a great doctor of the church to whom one should respectfully pay attention, but he appears as a gift to that part of the church which adhered to the Augsburg Confession, a true witness to the Gospel.¹⁵

Nor did the authors of the Formula of Concord look definitively to the authority of the ecumenical creeds or to the earlier evangelical confessions. Their attitude was very similar to that of Luther's toward the creeds and, indeed, toward the writings of the church fathers. They were evidence as to how the early Christians in a better age had understood the gospel, just as the evangelicals in those latter days had been given the gift of a purified understanding.¹⁶ The formulators knew full well that nearly all the confessions of the Lutheran Church arose out of specific political and ecclesiastical circumstances. This explains why the signators of the confessions were not synods or theological conventions. Nevertheless, the confessions spoke for the churches, as can be seen from the opening line of the first Chief Article of Faith of the Augsburg Confession, which begins: "Our churches teach with great unanimity . . ." The intention of the reformers was not to found a new church based upon a new confession like a new republic based upon a constitution, but rather to purify the old church of abuses in teaching, worship, and life. The Augsburg Confession did not for them constitute a new church teaching according to the Scriptures, but the confession testifies to its prior existence. Nor did the reformers after 1530 seek to found the church on the Augsburg Confession. That is evident from the freedom with which Melanchthon changed the text from edition to edition like that of any ordinary text, without receiving any criticism from Luther or the other colleagues. Only at the time of the religious colloquies of 1540 was the specific individual wording of the Augustana emphasized more strongly and that from the political side by the Elector of Saxony. Luther realized that the formal adherence to the ecumenical creeds had not kept the old

church from losing its hold on evangelical truth. The essential signs or *notae* of the church were the true preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the Sacraments according to that Word. In the writing in which he gave the fullest account of the *notae ecclesiae*, in the *Von den Konziliis und Kirchen (Concerning the Councils and the Church)*, he completely omits the confessions. They are also absent from the *Kirchenordnungen* and from the university statutes either for ordination or for the academic oath. The first case in which the Augsburg Confession took on a normative and binding character was in the *Homberg Kirchenordnung* of 1532, and then the statement is very guarded, denying force, but stating that the Augsburg Confession and the Apology do not state anything mistaken about the Sacrament. The one attempt to make the Augsburg Confession a norm for determining false doctrine came in 1535 in Ulm when the city proceeded against the spiritualist Sebastian Franck. He was to bind himself to a confession of ten articles composed by Martin Bucer and to the *Kirchenordnung* of Ulm of 1531. When he declined to do so, the city council dropped its demand. The Augsburg Confession was adduced as a witness of the right doctrine, but it was not given a legal character. Using the confessional writings as a legal test seems to have developed gradually in connection with the oath or subscription in churches, schools, and universities in the Lutheran territorial churches and seems to have increased during the period of transition from Orthodoxy to Enlightenment.¹⁷

The *norma normans* for the Formula of Concord was not Luther, nor the ecumenical creeds, nor even the Augsburg Confession, but the Holy Scriptures. The opening words of the *Epitome* make this quite clear: "Formula of Concord. A Thorough, Pure, Correct, and Final Restatement and Explanation of a Number of Articles of the Augsburg Confession on Which for Some Time There Has Been Disagreement among Some of the Theologians Adhering to this Confession, Resolved and Reconciled under the Guidance of the Word of God and the Comprehensive Summary of our Christian Teaching." Things are to be settled "in conformity with God's Word." The seventh paragraph of the *Epitome* reads: "In this way the distinction between the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and all other writings is maintained, and Holy Scripture remains the only judge, rule, and norm according to which as the only touchstone all doctrines should and must be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong."

4. The function of the Confessions, including also the Formula

of Concord, remains one of critical importance. Confessing the Confession does not mean a mere subscription to a church statement as an application of a *fides implicita*, but it means a commitment to the truth of the Word of God and to the person of the God who speaks that Word. The secular princes who signed the Formula of Concord professed to do so *cum ore et corde*. Christianity has lived by the confession of faith, for "many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds" (Acts 19:18). From Luther's brave stand at Worms, which the English historian Froude has described as perhaps the finest scene in human history, the evangelical movement intensified the confessional aspect of the Christian life, linking profession of allegiance to the person of Christ with a Biblical understanding of that relationship. Profession of faith and confession of the creed were joined historically in the Lutheran movement. In a university disputation of 1542 Luther established the syllogism: "The circle of the believers is not visible; the church is the circle of believers; therefore the church is invisible." But he opposed to that syllogism another: "For the sake of confession the circle of the church is visible . . . By confession the church is recognized, according to the word of Paul: 'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation'" (Rom. 10:10).¹⁸ The Confession is part of the individual's confession as well as an expression of the collective doctrinal position. The Formula is very concerned about pure doctrine, *reine Lehre*. It couples the teachings of truth with defense against error (*Lehre und Wehre*), offering thetical statements introduced, with but one exception, with a ritualistic "we believe, teach and confess" and antithetical statements introduced by a formalistic "we reject and condemn."¹⁹ Even condemnations are intended as a loving corrective statement. Every article in the Formula of Concord is concerned with the issues of a major controversy within Lutheranism. But despite the apologetic purposes, the Formula remained evangelical and confessional in the positive sense. It breathes a pacific spirit.

It should be emphasized that none of the confessions of the Christian Church, including the Formula, have ever sought to exhaust divine truth and infinite wisdom through the agency of human language. Rather, they have sought to state as clearly as is humanly possible propositions which would by affirmation or rejection rule out certain human doctrinal aberrations which were not compatible with what from the Scriptures, also given in human language, can be known of divine truth. In the twelfth century Robert of Melun wrote of the church fathers: "Sacri patres,

quod non oppugnabantur, non defendebant.” The Lutheran church fathers, too, did not in the confessions seek to state fully all that the Scriptures comprehended or that they believed. The great church historian Philip Schaff paid the Formula of Concord this tribute: “It sums up the results of the theological controversies of a whole generation with great learning, ability, discrimination, acumen, and, we may add, with comparative moderation.”²⁰

5. One needs to reflect upon the question as to whether such confessions as the Formula of Concord are destructively divisive. Since confessions naturally stress what is characteristic of the confessing group they tend to ignore or play down the areas which that group has in common with other Christian segments of the universal church. The Formula of Concord united at least two thirds of all German Lutherans at the time, but it is instructive to study the response and reaction of other groups at the time. The Fortress Press book entitled *Discord, Dialog and Concord: Studies in the Lutheran Reformation's Formula of Concord, 1577* contains essays on the reaction of the Dutch Reformed, the French Calvinists, the Anglicans, and the Catholics. We have received the gift that Robert Burns asked for when he penned (*To a Louse*, 1786):

Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
An' foolish notion.

If the same spirit of Christian love and charity which is evident in the Formula, which counters error but nowhere attacks people or names them, it may well serve as a starting point for discussions with churches outside the Lutheran fold.

6. We must in conclusion consider the significance of confessionalism and of the Formula of Concord for the church today. The Formula was a confession of great historical importance. It ended the major doctrinal controversies within Lutheranism. It was widely accepted as an expression of inner convictions and personal faith as well as a public doctrinal statement and guide. It showed how the second generation of Lutheran theologians understood Reformation truths. It restored harmony within Lutheranism in the Empire, thereby assuring the Lutherans that the privileges gained politically in the Peace of Augsburg could not with right be challenged.²¹ But we need to reflect on its contemporary significance:

In this present day the idea of cultural uniformity enforced by the state has given way in the free world to an appreciation of cultural pluralism. Institutions as such seem to be coming unstuck at

an alarming rate. With the state and institutional cohesion, two traditional props for church organizational unity removed or weakened, only the third force, that of confessional loyalty remains. There are some voices raised in behalf of doctrinal pluralism on even central conceptions of theology such as sin and grace. Such counsel invites the disaster of confusion within the church and a speeded-up process of dissolution, a foreshortened eschatology.

There is a strange phenomenon operative in church history with respect to the relation of credal statements or dogmatic earnestness and the reality of ecclesiastical control. Where hierarchical governance or domination is relatively secure and effective, wide latitude of religious experience and theological speculation is allowed. Where ecclesiastical governance is weak, authority decentralized or congregationalized, and cohesion depends upon voluntary association, church bodies have tended toward strong credal statements and doctrinal conformity. Witness the Roman Catholic Church, the latitude of opinion allowed in the secure medieval period and the narrowness of Trent once papal power was shaken. Contrast the clerical strength of the Episcopal or Methodist churches with concomitant doctrinal permissiveness and the loose association of Southern Baptists with their strong emphasis on credal fundamentals. Or compare the power of the ministerium in Eastern nineteenth century Lutheranism which tolerated Dr. S. S. Schmucker's *Definite Platform*, the president of the General Synod's Seminary calling for a revision of central articles of the Augsburg Confession, and the dispersed authority of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, guaranteeing congregational supremacy in its famous Article Seven, but with a powerful emphasis under the leadership of Dr. C. F. W. Walther upon loyalty to the Lutheran confessions *quia* rather than merely *quatenus*. One can doubtless cite exceptions to this general rule, especially in American church history, which, for example, has seen Congregationalism suffer nearly complete doctrinal disintegration. But that, one might argue, was the price paid for a more intimate involvement in the processes of Americanization than most foreign or ethnic church bodies experienced until recent times. In the sixteenth century the confessions provided a focal point for allegiance and supplied a cohesive force which spared Protestantism from complete ideological disintegration. Confessions must do so again, unless churchmen are willing to preside over the final dissolution of organized Christianity into its atomic particles.

The Formula might well serve as a renewed stimulus to a genuine ecumenical endeavor. Indifference to genuine differences proved to be damaging in the union efforts of the nineteenth century and in all too many ecumenical efforts of the twentieth. A clear statement of one's beliefs and commitments, individually as well as collectively, is an important first step in any ecumenical effort. Churchmen today can learn from the authors of the Formula the meaning of concern for religious truth, the importance of honesty and integrity, and the value of the theological enterprise. They can cherish the concern for the *una sancta* so evident in the Book of Concord which placed the Formula of Concord after the ecumenical creeds and the conciliatory Augsburg Confession, declaring the ecumenical creeds to have the "very highest kind of authority" (*summae auctoritatis*) after the Scriptures themselves (well after, of course).

The Formula was addressed to grievous contemporary problems of that day. Certainly its engagement should authenticate the value of credal statements today addressed to contemporary problems within or outside the church. The Barmen Declaration in the thirties, the Missouri Synod's doctrinal statements, and similar efforts to articulate the concerns and convictions of church bodies are certainly in line with the intent of the Formula. However, doctrinal concerns and credal statements should be directed toward the real problems of our times, corrosive relativism, skepticism, secularism, totalitarianism, cynicism, nihilism. Creeds, it must be remembered, state what is not compatible with central faith-truths while not trying to exhaust the sum of all truths contained in the Faith.

Finally, from the Concordians and harmonizers of that day, we can learn how to combine a spirit of charity with the concern for truth. Rejoicing over the Torgau agreement Andreae wrote: "Truly, this is the change of the right hand of the Most High, which ought also to remind us that since the truth no longer suffers, we should do everything that may contribute to the restoration of good feeling."²² We can learn, as they obviously had, something from Luther regarding the study of theology. For when it comes to theology, Luther said, "es gehört eine gewisse Bescheidenheit dazu." When it comes to theology a certain modesty is called for!

FOOTNOTES

1. *Weimar Ausgabe* 56, p. 422, 7
2. Among the most comprehensive studies are Edmund Schlink, *Theology of*

- the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), which provides an introduction to the literature, pp. 318-344; Holsten Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions, (1529-1537)* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), limited to the confessional statements of Melanchthon and Luther; Willard Dow Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952); Vilmos Vajta and Hans Weissgerber, eds., *The Church and the Confessions. The Role of the Confessions in the Life and Doctrine of the Lutheran Churches* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963); and the still useful *Historical Introductions to the Books of Concord*, by F. Bente (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), first published in the *Concordia Triglotta* of 1921.
3. See, for example, the articles "Humanism in the Reformation," in Anthony Molho and John A. Tedeschi, eds., *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron* (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971), pp. 641-662; "The Course of German Humanism," Heiko A. Oberman and Thomas A. Brady, eds., *Itinerarium Italicum. The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformations* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), pp. 371-436; "Humanism and the Reformation," in Robert M. Kingdon, ed., *Transition and Revolution. Problems and Issues of European Renaissance and Reformation History* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Burgess Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 153-188. On the Palatinate and Heidelberg as a political and cultural center for European Calvinism, see Claus-Peter Clasen, *The Palatinate in European History 1555-1618* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966).
 4. Manfred P. Fleischer, "The Reception in Silesia," chapter 7 in Lewis W. Spitz and Wenzel Lohff, eds., *Discord, Dialog and Politics, The Formula of Concord, 1577* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977); Herbert Schoffler, *Deutsches Geistesleben Zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung: Von Martin Opitz zu Christian Wolff*, 3rd ed. (Frankfurt a. M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1974).
 5. The Reformed churches have been as concerned as the Lutheran about the role of confessions in their tradition, as is evident from the *Festschrift* edited by Joachim Staedtke, *Glauben und Bekennen. Vierhundert Jahre Confessio Helveticae posterior. Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte und Theologie* (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1966).
 6. Michael Roberts, ed., *Sweden's Age of Greatness, 1632-1718* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 132.
 7. *Ibid.*, pp. 142f. Trygve R. Skarsten, "The Reaction in Scandinavia," in Spitz and Lohff, *op. cit.*, chapter 8, argues that the churches of Sweden and Finland maintained their right to legislate confessional loyalty and subscription as they met in church assembly and determined the confessional subscription of the king in contrast to Denmark-Norway-Iceland, where the king determined the religious affiliation and confessional subscription of the people.
 8. Jer. 8:22. For the *Entstehungsgeschichte* of the Formula see the excellent new popular introduction by Eugene F. Klug and Otto F. Stahlke, *Getting into the Formula of Concord. A History and Digest of the Formula* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977), including a translation of the *Epitome*; also, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche herausgegeben im Gedenkjahr der Augsburgerischen Konfession 1930*, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963), *Einleitung*, xxxii-xliv.
 9. There is a need for a new biography of Musculus offering a more positive evaluation than that of Christian Wilhelm Spreker, *Lebensgeschichte des Andreas Musculus* (Frankfurt an der Oder: Trowitsch and Sohn, 1858).
 10. See the new book by Theodore R. Jungkuntz, *Formulators of the Formula*

of Concord. *Four Architects of Lutheran Unity* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977), which presents skillfully drawn portraits of the four key authors of the Formula. On Chemnitz, see also E. F. Klug, *From Luther to Chemnitz on Scripture and the Word* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), pp. 115-142, on his life and work. John Warwick Montgomery offers a brief introduction to the life of David Chytraeus and his role in developing the Formula of Concord in his edition of *Chytraeus on Sacrifice* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), pp. 1-31. The forthcoming work edited by Jill Raitt, *The Shapers of Tradition*, will include chapters on Flacius, who had "to pull his teacher out of the water by the beard," Wigand, Chemnitz, and Andreae.

11. Robert Kolb has prepared a translation (with an excellent introduction and notes) of the sermons, *Andreae and the Formula of Concord. Six Sermons on the Way to Lutheran Unity* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977).
12. *Luther's Works*, 34 (Philadelphia, Muhlenberg Press, 1960), 197-229.
13. See Mark U. Edwards, *Luther and the False Brethren* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1975).
14. Eugene Klug and Otto F. Stahlke, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15, lists the controversies to which the Formula of Concord responded, indicating the relevant articles. Johann Georg Walch, *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die Religions-Streitigkeiten welche sonderlich ausser der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche entstanden*, 5 vols. (Jena: bey Johann Meyers seeligen Erben, 1734), remains the classical account of the "time of troubles". Wenzel Lohff addresses the problem of polemical responses in his chapter on "Unnützes Gezänk und nötiger Streit" in *Diskordie, Dialog und Konkordanz* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1977).
15. Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "The Lutheran Symbolical Books and Luther," in Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Luther for an Ecumenical Age* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967), pp. 242-270; summary, pp. 150-159.
16. See Hans Weissgerber, "The Valid Confessional Symbols", in Vajta and Weissgerber, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 1-22, on the place of the Augsburg Confession, the Formula of Concord, and the rest, in the doctrinal subscription of the Lutheran churches of the world. On Luther's attitude toward the patristic corpus as evidence of later papal deviation and for the early understanding of the Scriptures, see Ferdinand Kattenbusch, *Luthers Stellung zu dem ökumenischen Symbolen* (1883).
17. Heinrich Bornkamm, "Die Bedeutung der Bekenntnisschriften im Lutherthum," *Das Jahrhundert der Reformation. Gestalten and Kräfte*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1966).
18. *Ibid.*, p. 222. "Propter confessionem coetus ecclesiae est visibilis . . . Ex confessione cognoscitur ecclesia, iuxta illud Pauli citatum dictum: Corde creditur ad iustitiam, sed ore fit confessio ad salutem." WA 39II, 161.
19. Cf. the masterful study of the nature of condemnations, Hans-Werner Gensichen, *We Condemn. How Luther and 16th Century Lutheranism Condemned False Doctrine* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967).
20. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, I (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), p. 338; Willard Dow Allbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 291, 242-244.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 250-253.
22. F. Bente, *op. cit.*, p. 246.