

CONSENSUS OF SANDOMIERZ – A UNIQUE ECUMENICAL DOCUMENT IN 16TH CENTURY POLISH–LITHUANIAN PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

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Abstract

This article examines the unique ecumenical document of late 16 century by which the Polish and Lithuanian Reformed, Bohemian Brethren, and Lutherans sought to obtain legal standing in the country. It was the goal of the Protestants to formulate a common confession in the Synod of Sandomierz. This, however, proved to be impossible; only a document of common consent entitled *Consensus of Sandomierz* could be reached and an agreement to further theological consultations. The details of the *Consensus* are examined from a theological perspective. The author shows that theological differences concerning Holy Communion gave the document only limited value.

KEY WORDS: Consensus, Confession, Sandomierz, Lutherans, Reformed, Bohemian Brethren, sacrament.

Anotacija

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas unikalus XVI amžiaus ekumeninis dokumentas, kurio pagrindu Lietuvos ir Lenkijos reformatai, Čekų broliai bei liuteronai siekė pripažinimo valstybėje. Sandomiro susirinkime protestantai siekė sudaryti bendrą konfesiją. Bet šio tikslo nepavyko įgyvendinti, buvo priimtas tik bendras dokumentas – *Sandomiro susitarimas* bei nuspręsta toliau tęsti teologines konsultacijas. Straipsnyje pateikiama detali *Sandomiro susitarimo* teologinė analizė. Parodoma, kad dėl teologinių skirtumų šventosios Vakarienes sakramento atžvilgiu šio dokumento vertė buvo ribota.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Sandomiras, susitarimas, konfesija, liuteronai, reformatai, Čekų broliai, sakramentas.

Introduction

Early in April 1570 representatives of the Polish and Lithuanian Reformed, Lutheran churches and the Bohemian Brethren residing in those countries met in an extraordinary General Synod in the city of Sandomierz in Minor Poland for the purpose of formulating a common confession which would symbolize the crown, the parliament, and the three major churches involved their essential oneness in faith and practice. The result was the formulation and acceptance of a theological document, the *Sandomierz Consensus* (*Consensus Sandomiriensis*) which was meant to fulfill this task (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 295–298).

The signing of the *Consensus of Sandomierz* has been regarded as a truly watershed event, unique not only in the history of the Polish and Lithuanian Churches, but indeed in the total history of the Reformation era. It was here that for the first time representatives of three separate Protestant confessions with diverse theological and liturgical traditions stated that the chief obstacles in the way of church union had been overcome, that they were now essentially united in faith, that intercommunion was now possible, and that future efforts would make the realization of unity evident to all.

Never before had Lutherans been willing to concede so much and enter into agreement where in fact there was no complete agreement on the essential sacramental issues. In the 1520s Lutherans had refused to enter into alliance with Zwinglian and other Reformed princes and territories to create a common defense in the face of what at that time seemed to be an inevitable Roman military attack, even though that alliance would have been strictly military and not ecclesiastical. At Marburg at 1529 Luther and Ulrich Zwingli had been unable to come to agreement concerning the nature of Christ's presence in the Sacrament of the Altar thereby dooming

any possibility of a common Protestant front against the Church of Rome. At Augsburg in 1530 the representatives of the cities of Strassburg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau, which had not agreed to the sacramental articles of the *Augsburg Confession* were forced to hastily prepare their own separate *Tetrapolitan Confession* for presentation before the Emperor (Schaff, 1877, p. 525–529). The *Sandomierz Consensus* represents the first instance of a common confession and statement of unity between the Lutheran and Reformed. What had not been possible elsewhere happened here in Poland in an event which some historians have thought to be a precursor to the creation of the Prussian Union in 1817, more that two centuries later (Wotschke, 1911, S. 250; Schaff, 1877, p. 588).

The *Sandomierz Consensus* has been conventionally interpreted. In the eyes of the Polish and Lithuanian Reformed churches the *Consensus* both in the past and at present is regarded as a truly significant monument, a pledge of full union between the three confessions. A host of Synodical protocols and other official church documents have called attention to the *Consensus* in speaking of ongoing relations with the Lutherans (Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 336). The same opinion is shared by Theodor Wotschke, the eminent historian of Polish and Lithuanian Protestantism of the Prussian Union Church, who says that this Consensus of Sandomierz must not be considered a political document but a religious statement of theological convergence (Wotschke, 1911, S. 250).

Lutherans, on the other hand, have taken a wholly different position on the *Consensus* and its significance. The 18th century Lutheran historian Christian Gottlieb von Friese, Chairman of the Lutheran consistory in Warsaw, characterized the work at Sandomierz as tentative and incomplete and based on an inadequate understanding of the classical Lutheran position. He goes on to state that the *Sandomierz Consensus* greatly weak-

ened Lutheranism in both countries (Friese, 1786; Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 32).

Secular historians have regarded the *Consensus* as primarily a political document. Łukaszewicz (Łukaszewicz, 1835, s. 112), Halecki (Halecki, 1915, s. 274–275), Szujski (Szujski, 1894, s. 399), Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 336), and others are of the opinion that the document produced is little more than a statement of intention mapping out a course of action not yet realized who gave little thought to the immediate and practical consequences of the agreement. They state that the *Consensus* came too late to be of consequence. The time for the establishment of a National Protestant church had come and gone. The Jesuits had arrived and were of the offensive and the counter-Reformation had begun.

However, we cannot be content simply to categorize the *Sandomierz Consensus* in such terms. It is not sufficient that we form our evaluation of the *Consensus* without a closer examination of the document itself and its theological argumentation. It is only in the light of such an examination that we will be able to form our judgment concerning the work of the synod of Sandomierz and its place in Polish and Lithuanian church history. The purpose of this study is to satisfy the need for such an examination.

1. The Road to Sandomierz

The *Sandomierz Consensus* came at the end of a series of meetings held between 1555–1570 at which the Reformed, Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren sought to work out their theological and liturgical relationships. A close relationship had developed between the Minor Polish Reformed and the Bohemian Brethren to whom they had looked for theological and practical ecclesiastical guidance. As a result of this relationship full communion was declared between the two confessions at Convocation in Koźminek in 1555 (Akta Synodów <...>, 1966, s. 18–45). Here was created a model for future negotiations and an impulse toward further reunion efforts among Polish Protestants. The road ahead would be difficult. Well known intransigents of Lutherans on doctrinal issues but all were agreed that the hoped – for goal of a united Protestantism was worth the effort. The first to move resolutely toward this goal was Johannes a Lasco, who had returned to Poland in 1557 from Marian England and saw most clearly the pressing need for the establishment of single united Protestant church, in Poland and Lithuania. It was he who held before the people of both nations a vision of united Protestant church and it was with this vision in view that serious meetings between the churches were undertaken in the period between 1560–1570.

The first steps toward this goal were taken at the Włodzisław synod in June 15–18, 1557 (Akta Synodów <...>, 1966, s. 201)¹. Lasco personally raised the ques-

tion whether for the sake of Polish Protestantism it might not be advisable that the groups represented in this synod enter into theological discussions with the Lutherans². For this purpose he proposed that a colloquium with the Lutherans be organized (Akta Synodów <...>, 1966, s. 201). This invitation was rebuffed by Lutheran passivity. The Lutherans did not think that there was sufficient commonality in sacramental teaching to make the union possible. The Convocation of the Minor Polish Reformed and Bohemian Brethren in Gołuchów, held on October 16, 1557, failed to produce any positive results, because the Lutherans were not present, and the Reformed used this fact as one of the reasons for their own refusal to participate, although few ministers actually participated. The Bohemians saw that the vision was unrealistic, because Polish Lutherans were now beginning to question their sacramental orthodoxy. They expressed the conviction that no further discussions with the Lutherans were really necessary, since the agreement had been reached with Luther and Melancthon in 1538 (Akta Synodów <...>, 1966, s. 228–229).

Lasco remained undaunted by this early failure. He understood that Major Polish Lutherans were strongly under the influence of the Prussian Lutherans and the Königsberg theological faculty. He therefore contacted Albrecht of Brandenburg (1490–1568), Duke of Prussia, for the purpose of initiating theological discussions on controversial doctrinal issues. Upon his arrival in Königsberg on April 14, 1558 he entered into a public disputation concerning the doctrine of the Sacrament of the Altar and the two natures of Christ. His efforts were unsuccessful; He was unable to move the Lutherans from their doctrinal position. After the disputation he sought to regain the favor of the Lutherans by presenting a summary of his doctrinal position and calling upon them to enter into fraternal association lovingly in order that they might do battle together against the Papist Church. Again he was not successful in achieving his goal (Kowalska, 1999, s. 70). Lasco, who died suddenly in 1560, never saw the realization of his reunion proposals, but the ideal of a National Protestant Church in Poland and Lithuania did not die with him.

Further discussions were carried on between the Bohemian Brethren and the Lutherans in Major Poland where the two confessions existed side by side. Their relationship was not altogether one of mutual cordiality, since they were not in agreement concerning the Sacrament of the Altar and other related issues. The Lutherans were invited to the Bohemian Synod in Poznań on November 1, 1560 (Łukaszewicz, 1835, s. 54; Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 69 fn. 1). The eighth canon of that synod recommended that universal agreement be

¹ “A wszakoż przedtem jeszcze, mogło li by to być za radą braci, żeby chcieli z luteryjany tu w Wielkiej Polsce mieć colloquium a one w taż uniją z sobą a z nami wprawić, a tak jednomyślnie się wszyscy przeciwko papieżnikom zastawić, a Króla o wolność ewangeliji prosić”.

² The Minor Polish Reformed who were in the Union with the Bohemian Brethren, saw the possibility after the Koźminek Union of 1555 that the closer proximity between the Lutheran and Bohemian Eucharistic theologies might provide the key to Protestant unity in Poland. Although Reformed and Bohemians were moving in quite different theological directions in sacramental understanding, the terms of this Union were reaffirmed in Pińczów in 1556, Włodzisław in 1557, and Książ in 1560.

sought concerning the nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 71)³. No such agreement could be formulated and some Lutheran pastors in reaction accused the Bohemians from their pulpits of false doctrine. In 1563 the Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren again conferred together to consider the charges which Benedykt Morgenstern (†1599) had leveled against the Bohemians (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 169)⁴. These included questions concerning repentance born of faith, the role of confirmation, and, most significantly, the presence of Christ under the figures of the bread and wine. The Lutherans and Bohemians made further efforts in 1565 at Gostyń to find a basis for agreement on important doctrinal issues. Once again their efforts did not meet with success. As a result of the meeting, the Lutherans drew up a list of 16 points on which they considered the Bohemians to be in error (Dworzaczkowa, 1997, s. 37). On January 28, 1567, at the Synod in Poznań, Lutherans again leveled against the Bohemians the charges which had earlier been raised by Morgenstern. In response the Bohemians appealed to the Wittenberg Faculty, which disallowed the charges leveled against the Bohemians and declared the orthodoxy of the Bohemian *Confession* (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 210–212; Wotschke, 1911, S. 239–240; Łukasiewicz, 1835, s. 69–70 fn.*). Crypto-Calvinists on the faculty of Wittenberg could be expected to issue an opinion which approved the position of the Bohemians. The favorable Wittenberg '*Gutachten*' seems to have had the desired positive effect, because the Polish Lutherans had always regarded the opinions of the Wittenberg faculty to be authoritative.

The most urgent impulse toward union was found in the words of King Zygmund II August. He foreswore persecution of dissenters, and, in the last session of the Lublin parliament in 1569, he proclaimed his desire that there be only one church in his realm (Der Briefwechsel <...>, 1908, s. 315; Pelikan, 1947, p. 833; Halecki, 1915, s. 145–146). The King's actual words were not clear in meaning, but the Protestants took them to mean that there could be but one Protestant confession which would serve as the basis of a Protestant union. They thought that this would satisfy the King and achieve religious liberty. In his personal words to some of the senators, the King expressed his hope that there would be peace among his Protestant subjects (Wotschke, 1908, S. 328–329; Halecki, 1915, s. 169).

The Protestants immediately attempted to take advantage of what they believed an ideal situation to achieve official status. However, they needed to be able to present themselves in the eyes of the King and the people as a church united in faith and confession. As we have already seen this task could not be easily accomplished. The Lutherans met with the Bohemians in colloquium on February 14, 1570 in Poznań. In this colloquium a key point in the discussion was concern with the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, more particularly the nature of Christ's presence in the bread and the wine and the adoration of the body of Christ in the Supper. The Lutherans insisted upon the use of the terminology of the *Augsburg Confession* and their Lutheran fathers, that Christ's presence in the Supper is *substantialiter, realiter, essentialiter, corporaliter* (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 239)⁵. The Bohemian Brethren, while insisting that the bread is the true body of Christ and the wine is his true blood, rejected the Lutheran terminology, preferring to define Christ's presence in the earthly elements as *sacramentaliter* (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 239–240)⁶, according to which Christ's true body and true blood are present in a sacramental manner, that is in a manner which is unique to the Sacrament of the Altar. On the basis of their interpretation they refused to adopt the *Augsburg Confession*, protesting that their own confessional position was wholly correct and adequate. This indicated that the Bohemians did not agree to the Lutheran unitive understanding of the relationship between bread and body, wine and blood. On these points, which included also the nature of faith of children in Baptism, the Lutherans and the Bohemians differed considerably. They determined to postpone further discussion these matters to the general synod to be held in Sandomierz.

³ "O zgodzie w porządku z inszymi kościoły. Będąc w takim rządzie mamy insze kościoły miłować, chociażby takiego porządku nie mieli, jedno mieli słowo Boże, znać je za braty i gdyby się trafiło, chwalić Pana Boga z nimi i społecznością świętą, braterstwo <im> pokazywać, chociażby też było nieco różnego, jedno w czym by się zbawienia nie obrażało a żeby nie było bałwochwaltwo. I choćby też smysłu doskonałego kto nie doszedł w tajemnicach Wieczery Pańskiej, jedno żeby znał społecznością Ciała i Krwie Pana naszego Jezusa Krystusa Wieczera, a nie gołym znakiem, taki ma być znoszon, jako rozkazuje Duch Boży, abyśmy trwali w tym, którym jeszcze nie objawiono jest, bo mocen Pan im też objawić".

⁴ "Benedykt Morgenstern, De Valdensium schismate ex publico colloquio Thoroniae cum fratribus Bohemicis habito in praesentia duorum palatinorum et aliquot satraparum Polonicorum et fere ducentorum civium anno 1563 8 Septembris die".

⁵ "Ut igitur ad articulum controversum accedamus de Cena Domini, notandum est, quod nos aliquibus terminis loquendi iuxta *Confessionem Augustanam* et doctores eiusdem Confessionis utimur, quibus praesentiam Christi et corporis eius in Cena explicamus esse (scilicet corpus Christi), *substantialiter, realiter, essentialiter, corporaliter*. A quibus terminis fratres declinant neque iis utuntur, immo in sua *Responsione* eos terminos loquendi crassa adverbis appellant et sibi ab iis cavere censent. Quare si solida inter nos fieri debet concordia et fides nostra de praesentia corporis Christi, ut sit vera, necesse est, ut etiam hos terminos loquendi iuxta *Confessionem Augustanam* et doctores admittant fratres et illos suscipiant".

⁶ "Fratres. Existimamus nos dilucide sententiam et fidem nostram de Cena Domini veraque praesentia corporis Christi in Cena exposuisse tarn in *Confessione*, quam in *Responsione* nostra, cum dicimus et formalibus verbis Salvatoris loquimur in Cena Domini ea utentes ad salutem nostram. Panis est verum corpus Christi, vinum est verus sanguis Christi *sacramentaliter*. Ceterum, quod attinet ad vocabula sive terminos, quibus theologi quidam et vos quoque uti soletis nosque adhortamini, ut illis utamur quoque et vobiscum loquamur praesentiam Christi vel corporis eius affirmantes, quod sit *substantialiter* et *corporaliter* etc., arbitramur satis perspicue causam reddidisse, cur ab illis terminis semper abstinuimus et hodie abstinemus, ne scilicet aliter loquamur et quiddam plus asseramus, quam nos ipse Salvator edocuit. Contenti igitur Salvatoris verbis et definitione illius praesentiae vel corporis ipsius in Cena, propriis verbis loquimur cum Domino nostro Iesu Christo, quia de Cena Domini melius loqui nullus hominum potest, quam ipse Filius Dei locutus est".

A sudden breakthrough came at Vilnius. Here the goals which the Poles had failed to achieve in their meeting in Poznań in February were successfully accomplished. Representatives of both groups met in Vilnius under the auspices of Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Brown (1512–1584) in a two day meeting, which begun on March 2, 1570. They succeeded in devising a formula of agreement between the two Churches. We have only indirect information concerning this meeting (Friese (Bd. 2. Teil 1.), 1786, p. 433; Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 291; Adamowicz, 1855, s. 53–54). It is generally held by students of Lithuanian and Polish church history that it was agreed that church buildings would be opened for the use of both groups, that the official acts of ministers of both churches would be mutually recognized, and that both churches would work together in the matters relating to the government. It has been suggested by some that agreement was also reached concerning the Lord's Supper. However, since we have no definite evidence of this, we may suggest that any agreement of this nature would have been cast in very general terms, such as would be acceptable to both the Reformed and Lutherans, only abstractly mentioning essential sacramental issues (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 291; Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 334). The Vilnius meeting was local and could serve only as a model. The formulation of an acceptable confession would only after prolonged and serious debate in the Synod of Sandomierz.

2. The Formulation of the Consensus at Sandomierz

On April 9–14, 1570 representatives of the Polish and Lithuanian Reformed, Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren met in the General Synod at Sandomierz to formulate a document mutually recognizing the basic orthodoxy of all three groups and concerning the future creation of a united Protestant Church with one confession and worship. The gathering was predominantly Calvinist; they outnumbered the Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren present, and the aristocrats present were mainly of their church. In their attempts to maintain the particular theological and ecclesiastical stance of their own grounds, each of the three churches presented its own classical confession as a working model from which its general agreement could be drawn. For the Bohemians this was the *Confessio Bohemica* 1535, which, as they pointed out, had already been accepted by Luther and the Lutheran Reformers as an acceptable confession of faith. The Lutherans took the position that the Bohemian *Confession* was only one of several confessions and these did not represent a united position. Therefore, they suggested that the *Confessio Augustana* 1530 alone could serve as the model. The Reformed, who were clearly in the majority, looked to the *Second Helvetic Confession* 1566 as representing the true spirit of Protestantism.

On Tuesday, the April 11, after the report of the Vilnius agreement between the Lutherans and Reformed of Lithuania was read, it was decided that the *Second Hel-*

vetic Confession should be used as the basis for their discussion (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 286–287). By sheer force of numbers the Reformed prevailed (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 272–279). On the next day the reading and discussion of the confession was completed. Each group was still hopeful that their own confession would be used as the basis for consensus.

The Reformed moved the acceptance of their *Second Helvetic Confession*. The Bohemians noted that such acceptance would be possible only if they would be allowed to retain their own Bohemian *Confession* and their distinct form of worship and ceremonies. This caught the Lutherans off guard. In the face of this pressure, the Lutheran representatives Mikołaj Gliczner and Erazm Gliczner (1535–1603), who had been the Superintendent of the Lutheran Church in Major Poland since 1566, stated that while remaining loyal to the *Augsburg Confession*, they would agree to a further meeting of the three confessions for the purpose of formulating a completely new confession to satisfy the doctrinal concerns of all three groups, since Lutherans could not accept the Calvinist confession (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 290). A confession acceptable to all would have to be the fruit of their own labors, not the result of the victory of one group over the other two. This threw everyone into confusion. It was agreed that all three groups should meet together in Warszawa (Warsaw) on the feast of the Holy Trinity to formulate the new confession (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 291).

The Lutherans insisted that much work remain to be done before a definitive statement of common confession could be produced and that this task still lay before the churches. However, the prevailing opinion of the other churches was that this meeting must produce some common statement which would demonstrate to the Polish and Lithuanian nations that all three churches shared the same general presuppositions and were able to work together. This task was not easily accomplished because important doctrinal differences still remained. In their discussions on April 13th the delegates decided to use the Vilnius agreement of March 1–3 as the basis for their own common statement. The *Consensus Sandomiriensis* which came to be known as the *Formula Recessus* represents the results of their negotiations at Sandomierz.

3. An Examination of the Consensus

This short document describes in positive terms the high regard in which the churches regard each other and the measure of common agreement which they have reached.

The Latin text does not speak of the formula as an *Act of Religious Union* as Krasieński translates it in his *Historical Sketch of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Reformation in Poland* (Krasinski, 1838, p. 383). It describes itself rather as *Consensus mutuus in religionis Christianae...*, that is a statement of mutual consent in matters of the Christian religion between these churches (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 295). The second paragraph states the rejection by all three groups of all here-

sies which are inimical to the gospel and God's truth which have plagued the Protestant churches in these countries. In the third paragraph all three churches affirm that they regard and have always regarded each other as pious and orthodox in their theological statements concerning God, the Holy Trinity and other primary articles and pledged themselves to defend this mutual consent against all foes. The next paragraph states that the words of Christ in the Supper must be understood in such a manner that two elements are recognized, the earthly and the heavenly. These elements and signs exhibit and present by faith what they signify, so that it is confessed that the substantial presence of Christ is represented, distributed and exhibited to those who eat and drink. For purposes of clarification a section from *Confessio Saxonica* beginning with the words *Et baptismus et Cena Domini...*, is appended at this place. The fifth paragraph pledges that those who agree to this *Consensus* are to be acknowledged as orthodox Christians and treated with Christian charity. In the sixth paragraph the signers resolved to persuade their brethren to conform this *Consensus* by mutual participation in attendance at services and intercommunion (sacramental participation). In the next paragraph rites and ceremonies of each church are designated *adiaphora*, as is stated in the Augsburg and Saxon Confessions. The next paragraph attendance and participation in the general synods of the participating churches is encouraged and the hope is expressed that in the future it will be possible to formulate a common body of doctrine to be used in all the churches. In the penultimate paragraph the signers pledged to build up both faith and peace avoiding all occasions of alienation and promoting only the glory of Christ and the truth of his word by their own words and actions. Finally, the blessing of God is invoked on this *Consensus*, conjunction, and union to the glory of his name and the upbuilding of his church. The signatures of the leaders of all those subscribing on behalf of their churches concludes the document.

Although ordinarily formal confessions begin with a positive statement and then make note of rejected opinions, the *Sandomierz Consensus* reverses this order and begins with a statement rejecting the erroneous opinions of sectarians Tritheites, Ebionites, and Anabaptists. The delegates had good reason for this decision because in the past the Reformation churches in Poland have been beset with contentious conflicts and sects which made it appear that they had departed from orthodoxy. The Reformed church had suffered most from such conflicts. In 1563 the Antitrinitarian teachings, which had reached even the highest levels in the leadership of the church, had caused a division and the establishment of separate churches. The appearance of sectarian and clearly heretical teachings caused the Reformed church to lose its place in the esteem of the Polish and Lithuanian people and the quest for official recognition all the more difficult. Beginning with this paragraph the churches necessarily clearly distanced themselves from all unorthodox theological opinions.

We are somewhat perplexed by the use of pronouns "we, they, our, their, etc." in a document which claims to be the common statement of all three groups. One would expect that the pronouns "we" and "our" would refer to the consenting churches and "they" and "there" would refer to those not part of the *Consensus*. However, such is not the case. Although definitions seem to change from one paragraph to another, the overall impression is given that the document was written chiefly from the perspective of the Reformed delegates and their churches. Thus, for example we find the statement: "As both we who in the present Synod have published our confession and the Bohemian Brethren have never believed that those who adhere to the Augsburg Confession...". In point of fact the vast majority of delegates were Reformed and they had the almost unanimous backing of the aristocracy, and in the formulation of the *Consensus* they clearly used this to their own advantage. "We" ("*nos*") and "have never believed" ("*nunquam credidimus*") clearly refers to the Reformed church over against the Bohemian Brethren and the Lutherans.

The signers determined that there were indeed no essential doctrinal differences among the churches. The Reformed and the Bohemian Brethren have never called into question the orthodoxy of the chief articles confessed in the Lutheran church, concerning God, the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of Christ, and Justification. From their point of view those who held to the *Augsburg Confession* have openly stated that they could see nothing contrary to Christian orthodoxy and the word of God as confessed in these same articles by the Reformed and the Bohemian Brethren.

Clearly there are wide areas of essential agreement between the churches with reference to these chief articles. However, it is perhaps an overstatement to describe the Lutherans and the Reformed as being in the essential agreement with reference to the incarnation of the Son of God, the area upon which Luther and his followers drew most heavily in support of their understanding of the nature of Christ's bodily presence in the bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Altar. Clearly the Reformed would agree with every word of the *Augsburg Confession* in Article III, "*Concerning the Son of God*". If mere agreement in words is sufficient then one may indeed say that here the Lutherans and Reformed share the same confession. However, the Lutherans understood this article from the standpoint of Christological positions taken by Luther in his polemics with Zwingli, Karlstadt and Oecolampadius in the period of 1525–1529 (Luther's works, 1961, p. 41–42). Here it becomes clear that the article was understood quite differently by the Lutherans from that understanding confessed by the Reformed. Luther was able to see very early the essential relationship between the doctrine of the two natures of the incarnate Son of God and the nature of Christ's physical presence in the bread and the wine of the Lord's Supper in a way to which the Reformed could never agree. To Luther Christ is present in the sacrament in the same way in which he is present in the incarnation. The body of Jesus is the body of

God, the blood of Jesus is God's blood. It is the body and blood of him who is both completely God and Man that is crucified for man's sins and raised again for his justification. Thus Luther in his *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* of 1528 says "in the Sacrament of the Altar the true body and blood of Christ are orally eaten and drunk in the bread and wine" (Luther's works, 1961, p. 367). From Reformed perspective such teaching was clearly rejected since the separate human and divine natures of Christ are understood not to relate directly to each other but each separately relates to the person of Christ. Thus the *Communicatio idiomatum* can never be more than a play on words and an expression which Calvin can characterize as unfortunate. The human nature can never be more than the symbol or sign of the heavenly.

Earlier colloquies between the Reformed and Lutherans in Poland and Lithuania had proceeded directly to this Christological issue. We find, for example, that in the meeting held in late 1557 and the early months of 1558 the Lithuanian Reformed theologian Szymon Zacjusz (1507–ca.1591) directed his fire against the Lutheran understanding of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament on precisely this basis. He stated that although the divine nature is unlimited, the human nature is limited with regard to time and space. Therefore Christ's physical presence in the earthly elements can only be circumscribed in closed and hidden; it can only be a figurative presence. In the same way Christ's descent into hell and other experiences are inappropriate matters of discussion if the divine nature is the subject (Akta tho iest sprawy <...>, 1913, s. 10–11). Also Lasco's public disputation at Königsberg in April 1558 was concerned with the Sacrament of the Altar and the two natures of Christ. He was unsuccessful in moving Lutherans from their doctrinal position and in his subsequent attempt to state that they were in fundamental agreement and should be ready to act upon it (Kowalska, 1999, s. 70). We see also that in the Confession of Faith *De Confessione ministrorum ecclesiae Vilnensis* ... 1560 which the Vilnius Reformed parish addressed to the Prussian pastors central attention was given to the question of Christ's presence, the adoration of the sacrament and related matters, articulated on the basis of Reformed theology (Wotschke [Vergerios <...>], 1911, S. 302–303). The same is the case in the meetings between the Lutherans and the Bohemian Brethren in Major Poland. At convocations held between 1560–1570 they were not able to resolve these matters to their mutual satisfaction. The statement that the Lutherans, Reformed and Bohemian Brethren are now in agreement concerning the incarnation can only be made if one ignores the fact that Lutherans understand the mutual relation of the two natures on the basis of the *communicatio idiomatum* confessed at Chalcedon 451AD, and that the Reformed understood that phrase on the basis of the philosophical principle *finitum non capax infiniti*. The assembly at Sandomierz shows to avoid the issue all together and thus the Christological problem is never mentioned. The *Formula Recessus*

chooses to sidestep the Christological issue by stating that the churches are in essential agreement with reference to the Incarnation. This question along with the unresolved issues concerning the Sacrament of the Altar and predestination would reappear constantly in later discussions. Finally in 1644 when they invited the Lutherans to stand together with them in the *Colloquium Charitativum*, the Reformed and Bohemian Brethren had to acknowledge that agreement on the Incarnation could not be accomplished, and they asked the Lutherans to avoid going into details on this controversial point (Łukaszewicz, 1835, p. 212).

Having stated the essential agreement of all parties regarding all major Christian doctrines the *Consensus* now turns to a more detailed description of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. With reference to it, the *Consensus* states:

Moreover, as far as the unfortunate difference of opinion on the Lord's Supper is concerned, we agree on the meaning of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they have been orthodoxy understood by the fathers, and especially by Irenaeus, who said that this mystery consists of two elements, namely, an earthly and a heavenly one. Nor do we assert that those elements or signs are bare and empty; we state, rather, that at the same time by faith they actually [re ipsa] exhibit and present that which they signify. Finally, to put it more clearly and expressly, we have agreed to believe and confess that the substantial presence of Christ is not merely signified, but that the body and blood of the Lord are represented, distributed, and exhibited to those who eat by the symbols applied to the thing itself, and that the symbols are not at all bare, according to the nature of the sacraments. But lest the diversity of manners of speaking bring forth another controversy, we have decided by mutual consent, in addition to the article which is inserted into our Confession, to add the article of the Confession of the Saxon churches on the Lord's Supper, sent to the Council of Trent in 1551, which we acknowledge as correct and have accepted (English translation quoted from: Pelikan, 1947, p. 827–828).

First note is taken that there has been an unhappy (*infelix*) disagreement with regard to this doctrine. Therefore the delegates feel called upon to affirm their agreement concerning this matter. They state that they are "*convenimus in sententia verborum*" that is "we agree in the sense of the words" as they have been understood in an orthodox manner by the fathers and chiefly by Irenaeus.

In their search for *Consensus* the delegates found it helpful to make use of a distinction originally introduced by Irenaeus of Lyon in his polemic against those who spiritualized the resurrection. In Book IV of his major work against the heretics he speaks of the bodily effects of the Sacrament of the Altar. Irenaeus notes that two realities or sides are present in the sacrament, the earthly and the heavenly, and notes that its blessings are both earthly and heavenly. Both the body and soul of communicants are rendered incorruptible by the sacrament (The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 1994, p. 484–486).

This quotation from Irenaeus was often cited in reformation sacramental debates. Martin Bucer had made use of it in his attempt to bring the Reformed and Lutherans into agreement at the *Wittenberg Colloquium* of 1536. In the original statement Irenaeus' had spoken of these two realities unitively. Bucer, however, divides them, saying:

We confess in agreement with the words of Irenaeus that the Eucharist consists of two matters, earthly and heavenly. Thus [the parties at Wittenberg] believe and teach that with the bread and the wine the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, distributed and eaten (Die Bekenntnisschriften <...>, 1956, S. 65)⁷.

Luther had reacted coolly to Bucer's position and later rejected it. The *Wittenberg Concord* never achieved official status among the Lutherans since it became clear to them that Bucer assigned no saving value to the material elements in the sacrament. He wished to formulate a position which was capable of contradictory interpretations. However, the delegates at Sandomierz held the *Wittenberg Concord* in high regard and thought the phrase of Irenaeus to be a sufficient basis from which to move forward (Die Bekenntnisschriften <...>, 1956, S. 1024)⁸.

The *Consensus* states that the delegates agree in the sense of these words "*in sententia verborum*". We must at this point ask to what words the Latin phrase "*in sententia verborum*" are referring. One possible interpretation is offered by Jaroslav Pelikan, the eminent History of the Theology scholar, who in his 1947 translation of the *Consensus* adds here the words "*of our Lord Jesus Christ*". This suggests that Pelikan believes that the delegates were addressing the same point that Luther had asserted in his 1527 treatise *That These Words of Christ, "This Is My Body,"... Still Stand Firm Against the Fanatics*. Luther had begun that essay with the statement: "It is perfectly clear, of course, that we are at odds concerning the words of Christ in the Supper", thus indicating that the delegates have now at length been able to agree were Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, Andreas Karlstadt (1480–1541), and Johannes Oecolampadius (1482–1531) had not been able to agree (Luther's works, 1961, p. 25). However, we cannot agree. There is nothing in this paragraph to back up that assertion. Indeed nothing further is said concerning the words of Christ or of their meaning. Instead it is the words of the fathers and Irenaeus that are given central attention here, not the words of Christ in the Supper. The delegates determined not to deal with the question of the interpretation of Christ's words at all, but instead to concentrate their attention on Irenaeus' description of the mystery of the

Eucharist. His words proved helpful because of his assertion that the mysteries consists in two parts or elements, earthly and heavenly. It appears to fit so easily into the thought pattern so typical of Reformed theology, which separates earthly and heavenly in such a manner that they are understood to have no direct mutual relationship.

It is asserted that the elements according to this understanding are as it were, a sign which is neither bare (*nuda*), nor empty (*vacua*). They deliver and give what they signify to believers who receive them by faith. If we are to understand these words as a statement concerning the presence of Christ in the Supper, we are given no indication of the nature of that presence. No clarification is offered about the manner by which Christ is received by those who receive by faith and what is received by those who do not receive by faith, *i.e.*, those not classified as being among the believers. Further if Christ is present by faith, it is not yet clear what the faith which makes Christ present believes. One looks in vain for any clear statement as to the content of the faith by which Christ is made to be present. Lutheran confessional statements traditionally spoke explicitly as to the content of faith. In this case one would look for a statement that faith leaves reason behind and clings only to Christ's consecratory words. No further mention is made either of the earthly elements of bread and wine or the heavenly elements of body and blood as such, nor is it made clear what is the nature of the relationship between them. Clearly faith is understood to be the means by which Christ is given and received. What is here stated would be sufficient for the Reformed who in the *Heidelberg Catechism* are provided with a description of the Eucharist which does not speak of an identification between the material and celestial elements. Although the pattern of thought in the *Heidelberg Catechism* imitates Luther's definition of the Sacrament of the Altar in his *Small Catechism*, it avoids any identification of the material with the celestial elements such as Luther had made in his definition of the sacrament⁹.

By way of clarification it is stated that the delegates agree that they believe and confess that the substantial presence of Christ ("*substantialem praesentiam Christi*") is not only signified but is really represented, distributed, and delivered by means of the symbols applied to the things itself and that these symbols are by no means bare but function according to the nature of

⁷ „Confitentur iuxta verba Irenaei, constare Eucharistiam duabus rebus, terrena et coelesti. Itque sentiunt et docent, cum pane et vino vere et substantialiter adese, exhiberi et sumi corpus Christi et sanguinem“.

⁸ Luther does not use the Irenaeus quote, but it is referred to in the *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration Article VIII Paragraph XXII, where it is used to support the doctrine of the communion of the earthly and heavenly elements.

⁹ “How is it signified and sealed unto you in the holy supper that you partake of the one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross, and of all His benefits? Answer. Thus, that Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat of this broken bread and to drink of this cup in remembrance of Him, and has added these promises: first, that His body was offered and broken on the cross for me, and His blood shed for me, as certainly as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup communicated to me; and further, that with His crucified body and shed blood He Himself feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life as assuredly as I receive from the hand of the minister, and taste with my mouth, the bread and cup of the Lord as sure signs of the body and blood of Christ“. Heidelberg Catechism: Question and Answer 75.

sacraments. In other words Christ is set to be present in a sacramental manner, the definition which the Bohemian Brethren had traditionally preferred and which Luther and the Wittenberg reformers had been willing to agree (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 292–293). It was acceptable also to the Reformed on the basis of Bullinger's *Second Helvetic Confession* of 1566 which speaks of a sacramental eating¹⁰. What have been sufficient in 1535, however, could no longer be regarded as sufficient after the introduction and wide distribution of Calvinistic opinions. In the intervening years, and especially after the union of Koźminek in 1555, the sacramental theology of the Bohemian Brethren had moved increasingly away from that confessed at Wittenberg and had more closely approached the Calvinist understanding. These made further definition necessary. Here *vere et substantialiter* can no longer carry the weight of full sacramental definition. *Substantialiter* is a philosophical term which is capable of more than one interpretation. It can be understood to refer to a heavenly reality toward which the earthly sign points. Here too the qualification is added that what is offered, distributed and delivered by means of the symbols, is present to those who eat the Supper (*vescentibus*), a Reformed qualification over against Lutheran insistence that all who receive, receive what God gives whether for their benefit or to their judgment.

Such a definition was in itself not satisfactory to the Lutherans. For this reason the Reformed and the Bohemian Brethren allowed that the relevant words concerning the Lord's Supper from Melancthon's the *Saxon Confession* of 1551 be added to satisfy the Lutherans and to avoid further controversy. In the *Saxon Confession* we find the following statement with reference to the sacrament:

Also men are taught that sacraments are actions instituted of God, and that without the use whereunto they are ordained the things themselves are not to be accounted for a sacrament; but in the use appointed, Christ is present in this communion, truly and substantially, and the body and blood of Christ is indeed given to the receivers; that Christ does witness that He is in them and does make them His members and that He does wash them in His blood, as Hilary also says, "These things being eaten and drunk do cause both that we may be in Christ and that Christ may be in us". Moreover, in the ceremony itself we observe the usual order of the whole ancient Church, both Latin and Greek. We use no private masses, that is, such wherein the body and blood of Christ is not distributed; as also the ancient Church, for many years after the Apostles' times had no such masses, as the old descriptions which are to be found in Dionysius, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Augustine, and others do show (Reu, 1930, p. 413–414).

¹⁰ "Besides the higher spiritual eating there is also a sacramental eating of the body of the Lord by which not only spiritually and internally the believer truly participates in the true body and blood of the Lord, but also, by coming to the Table of the Lord, outwardly receives the visible sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord". *Second Helvetic Confession 1566: Of the Holy Supper of the Lord*, Chapter 21.

The paragraph quoted speaks to the question of what actions may be regarded as sacraments. It is noted that Christ is truly and substantially present in the Sacrament of the Altar and that the body and blood of Christ are delivered to those who receive. The classical words *vere et substantialiter* are found and the body and blood are said to be delivered to those who receive. Those who receive communion receive Christ. However, lacking in the *Saxon Confession* is any specific reference to the bread and wine and the body and blood. Accordingly it might be asserted that communion is an action instituted of God in which the participants perform a ritual action and receive its spiritual blessing that is not necessarily directly related to it. It was the lack of clarity in this area which occasioned dissension with regard to sacrament within Lutheranism and which made necessary the clarifications found in the Formula of Concord (Die Bekenntnisschriften <...>, 1956, S. 999)¹¹. Although the *Confessio Saxonica* was and remain a provincial document of only limited significance and force produced by a faculty in which some professors had been openly accused of introducing Crypto-Calvinism into the Lutheran church, the Reformed and Bohemian Brethren at Sandomierz found it an imminently suitable document for quotation. The Lutherans present must have felt uneasy about the matter but here as on other occasions they acquiesced.

All three had agreed on this paragraph from the *Saxon Confession* because each group was able to see in it a reflection of its own position. However, the Lutherans understood that the Saxonian definition was insufficient and in need of clarification, especially since little had been said about the relationship of Christ's body and blood to the bread and the wine. The precise meaning of the phrase *substantialem praesentiam* was unclear and they asked that the words *corporis Christi* be added (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 292–293). The Reformed and Bohemians were unwilling to grant this request; they believed the insertion of the sacramental section from the *Confessio Saxonica* to be sufficient. In the interest of peace and harmony all parties have determined not to go into details, but to speak indirectly and abstractly, rather than to face clearly divisive issues. As in modern interchurch statements the representative parties have chosen to underline areas of agreement and avoid discussion of divisive issues. Such awkward questions as Luther's, "what does the priest put in your

¹¹ "This is to be ascribed only to the almighty power of God and the Word, institution, and ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the truthful and almighty words of Jesus Christ which he spoke in the first institution were not only efficacious in the first Supper but they still retain their validity and efficacious power in all places where the Supper is observed according to Christ's institution and where his words are used, and the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received by the virtue and potency of the same words which Christ spoke in the first Supper. For wherever we observe his institution and speak his words over the bread and cup and distribute the blessed bread and cup, Christ himself is still active through the spoken words by the virtue of the first institution, which he wants to be repeated". English translation quoted from: *The Book of Concord 1959*, The Formula of Concord: 2, VII, 77.

mouth”, “what do unbelievers receive”, and “for what purpose and for what benefit” are avoided for the sake of a declaration of broader unity in the face of political and social pressures.

The churches have decided that they will work together the parameters set down in the earlier paragraph and have agreed that they will threaten with Christian love and acknowledge as orthodox those churches that accept the terms of this *Consensus* together with “our confession... and that of the Brethren...” (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 296)¹². *Confessionem nostram* can be understood to refer to this *Consensus* document, but careful reading makes it clear that the reference here is to an additional document. This is made clear both by the *et* which precedes the phrase *Confessionem nostram* and the reference to the statement of the Brethren which is included in the same sentence. The Lutherans had found the *Second Helvetic Confession* and its definition of the sacrament and sacramental presence inadequate, but the Reformed added an oblique reference to their Sandomirian version *Confession of Sandomierz* (Lehmann, 1937, p. 108–115)¹³ of it at this point, referring to it as *Confessionem nostram, in hac synodo publicatam*.

Understanding that some direct questions had not been resolved the representatives of the churches moved to forestall further debate on these matters by imposing interdiction on all further debate and “utter silence upon all bickering, disagreement, and controversy” (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 296)¹⁴. They promised to persuade their brethren to take the same course of action and to deal with each other peaceably and charitably for the good of the fraternal union which has been established. At the same time the churches promise to use the “utmost zeal” to quash opposition. The delegates have pledged themselves to prevail upon all of their brethren to agree to the *Consensus*.

To be effective the *Consensus* must be implemented and for this reason a program of implementation is detailed to accomplish the purpose of the *Consensus*. Members of each church should be encouraged to attend the services of the other churches and receive the sacraments from them. In line with the approach employed by the modern ecumenical movement, it is understood that only as interchurch activities become common place that differences in doctrine and practice are laid aside.

The signatory churches had very different traditions and liturgical practices. This was a very sensitive area, so sensitive in fact that the *Sandomierz Consensus* avoids any suggestion of immediate changes. It simply states that the churches are free to continue their present practices. It could be expected that Lithuanian Re-

formed would continue to suspect that Lutheran worship was far too ‘Catholic’ and still had upon it the fingerprints of the papacy. Indeed, even among the various Reformed groups there were strong differences regarding liturgical practices. At the end of the 16th century the Lithuanian Reformed would accuse their own Podlasiian district of unwarranted and inappropriate liturgical innovations which betrayed the heritage of Johannes a Lasco (Akta Synodów Litewskich prowincjonalnych 1611–1637; Tworek, 1971, s. 122, 124). In such a situation no other possibility presented itself but declare that such observances were a matter of indifference as long as doctrine and the foundation of the faith were not corrupted.

The whole history of the liturgical tradition in the Reformed church makes it clear that the Reformed in Poland and Lithuania did not regard liturgical matters as inconsequential. Liturgy articulates doctrine. The Lutherans too came out of the ‘adiaphoristic’ controversies with the clear determination that when doctrine is at stake nothing is *adiaphora*. From the beginning of the Reformation the Reformed and the Lutherans had worshiped at and communed from separate altars. This was not according to the Reformed preference but the Lutheran belief that doctrinal disagreement is divisive of church unity. Communion fellowship in the face of doctrinal disagreement relegates doctrine to the category of pious opinions. Lutherans regarded as *adiaphora* or matters of indifference only those things which do not affect the doctrine of the gospel as such. Thus included among *adiaphora* are vestments, the use of pipe organs, hymnody, holy pictures, candles, and kneeling or standing attitude in prayer in communion. Such practices may differ according to time and place. For the Reformed everything is forbidden excepting what is explicitly commanded by the Scriptures. Therefore many things which the Lutherans kept in practice the Reformed rejected because they were not commanded in Scripture. Even were some matters hypothetically said to be *adiaphora* as in the question of bodily attitude of communion both sitting and kneeling are disallowed because the Polish and Lithuanian Reformed associated them in the one case with Antitrinitarianism, and in the other case with ‘Bread Worship’. Lutheran and Reformed differences regarding liturgical worship, genuflections, the sign of the cross and other matters were a mine field that the delegates decided they must avoid.

In the course of time the Minor Polish Reformed decided that closer collaboration with the Lutherans could not be achieved by continued insistence on the complete removal of Western worship practices even though some of those practices seemed rather too ‘Catholic’ to them. Over the period of the next four decades the Reformed would show themselves willing to introduce ‘Lutheran’ elements into their communion services. Elsewhere in the Reformed world one does not find the use of the Nicene creed, the *Agnus Dei*, Gregorian Music, notions of consecration by the spoken Words of Christ in the Supper, or reverent consumption of the reliquiae after communion. Their hope was that the in-

¹² „*Confessionem nostram, in hac synodo publicatam, et fratrum...*”.

¹³ *Confession of Sandomierz – Wyznanie wiary powszechnej Kościołów Krześcijańskich ...* 1570 was published under the supervision of Krzysztof Trečius (Trecy) (†1591), Rector of the Calvinistic gymnasium in Kraków, who played a supervisory role in its composition in the synod of Sandomierz.

¹⁴ „*Extremumque valedicamus et altum silentium imponamus omnibus rixis, distractionibus, dissidiis...*”.

roduction of these outward signs might show the Lutherans that their churches were not far apart and that 'minor' doctrinal differences should not deter them from full fellowship.

Finally the delegates of each church are to consult together with the other churches and freely participate in the general synods, so that each group may have input into the discussions and decisions of the other churches. They pledged themselves to seek this goal and look forward to the day when the churches will work together to assemble and formulate a new and comprehensive body of doctrine which will supersede the confessions of the individual groups. This would finally stop the mouths of evil men and enemies of the truth, and provide great comfort to all the faithful of the churches of the Reformation in Poland, Lithuania and Samogitia. Forgetting themselves and acting as true ministers of God all sacredly promise to avoid all occasions which might lead to alienation and instead to seek always to build up and nurture faith and tranquility. The signers ardently pray that God, who has freed them from the Papal tyranny, would be pleased to abundantly bless the work they have done and the *Consensus* which they have achieved.

4. The Implementation of the Consensus

From the start the Reformed held the *Consensus* as a great breakthrough and the dawning of new day of interchurch collaboration. They spread the word throughout Europe that they had been able to achieve the goal which Zwingli, Calvin, and the Lutherans had never previously been able to reach. They now wished to move ahead and build upon the agreement which have been reached. In a letter to Hieronim Zanki in Heidelberg, they asserted that it should now be possible to formulate a new Protestant *Corpus Doctrinae* on the basis of the unique accomplishment of Sandomierz. In answer Zanki expressed his great joy at the formulation of the *Consensus* but noted that in his opinion no further work towards the formulation of a common body of doctrine was necessary (Portions of this letter are printed in Любовичь, 1890, c. 191; Wotschke, 1908, S. 315; Halecki, 1915, s. 356).

Among the Lutherans there was quite a determined reaction. As could be expected, the theological faculty of the University of Wittenberg was not displeased and gave the *Consensus* and along with it the whole movement toward Protestant union its blessing (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 128). The major Professors Paul Eber (1511–1568), George Major (1502–1574), and Caspar Peucer (1525–1602), Melancthon's son-in-law, were all strongly influenced by Melancthon and had been labeled Crypto-Calvinist by more orthodox Lutheran theologians. To them the *Consensus* was in line with their ecclesiastical views (Pelikan, 1947, p. 836). At the faculty of Theology in Leipzig also the *Consensus* was accepted with approbation (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 128). The Prussian Lutherans, however, were far more critical of the work. They saw that many necessary points had been passed over without mention

and condemned the *Consensus* as inadequate (Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 388; Любовичь, 1890, c. 193). Of course in Jena strong criticism arose, for here were to be found many who have left Wittenberg because of its stronger ties with Philippism. Here, as one would expect, a positive evaluation could not be expected (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 128).

The Roman Catholics were aware of the diversity of opinion among the Protestants and immediately understood that no union could be possible on the basis of the *Consensus*. It was clear to them that the Protestants could not achieve and maintain the common position necessary to create and maintain a united Protestant church. Stanisław Hozjusz (1504–1579), Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, said as much in his letter of August 31, 1570 to Jakób Uchański (1502–1581), Archbishop of Gniezno, that it would not be possible to persuade all the parties to come to common consent concerning the Lord's Supper (portions of this letter are printed in Любовичь, 1890, c. 191).

The shortcoming of the *Sandomierz Consensus* was that the goal sought was simply unreachable. No acceptable common confession was formulated, and according to the standards of the 16th century without such a common confession no real union was possible. Thus the 'union' was based upon the *Consensus* behind which there was no commonly accepted confession and therefore no mutually agreed interpretation. Accordingly, the Reformed and the Lutherans had very different understandings concerning what had been achieved. The Reformed claimed that a common agreement had been reached. The Lutherans, however, understood the matter differently. To them the *Consensus* represented only taken the first step toward the formulation of a common agreement.

Lutherans understood that they had allowed themselves to be put in the position of practicing intercommunion with the churches with which no common confession concerning the Lord's Supper had been agreed. They had signed the agreement establishing altar and pulpit fellowship without the doctrinal agreement which such fellowship requires.

It is hard to imagine that Lutherans could come forward to receive Christ's body and blood in bread and wine over which his Testamentary Words (1 Corinthians 11, 23–25) had not been spoken in blessing. Unlike the Bohemian Brethren the Lithuanian Reformed did not use the *Verba Christi* to consecrate the sacrament. Lithuanian Reformed of the Lasco liturgical tradition included only a historical recitation of the institution of the Supper (1 Corinthians 11, 23–29) spoken as a Gospel lesson before communion (Formá álbo porządek <...>, 1581, s. bv; Sprovva Wećiáros Poná, 1939). There was no notion that the Words of Christ consecrate the bread and wine to be what Christ's Words make them. Nor did the Lithuanian Reformed have any intention of consecrating bread and wine, in accordance with the Lutheran understanding, that communicants might receive Christ's very body and blood. To them the Lutheran practice was far to reminiscent of Roman Tran-

substantiation. How then would the Lutherans react to the Reformed manner of keeping the Supper? What would they have understood was being given and received – bread and wine, or body and blood? Although the *Sandomierz Consensus* allows here for latitude of interpretation, in actual practice there could be no such breath of interpretation. It must be one or the other. Luther's question must still be faced "what does the priest put in my mouth" and "for what purpose is it given". The *Consensus* provided no clear answer to these questions.

The problematic nature of the *Consensus* can be seen from the fact that on May 18–20 in the Convocation of Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren at Poznań, when the ink of the *Consensus* was barely dry, dissention concerning the Lord's Supper again became evident. Lutherans were dissatisfied with the lack of clarity which was so evident in the *Consensus*. They declared that further and more precise definitions are necessary. However, they sought in vain. Lutheran church leaders, such as Erasmus Glicner recognized that any attempt at further definition would destroy the fruits of the work at Sandomierz. With reference to the implementation of the *Consensus* a document was drawn up which spelled out a program of twenty points of procedures upon which all three churches must agree. All the points were based on Reformed theology in character and asked the Lutherans to agree to proposals which were in line with Calvinistic opinions. With reference to the Lord's Supper only the terminology of the *Consensus* and the *Saxon Confession* were to be allowed. Issues could not be raised which had not already been agreed upon in the *Consensus*. Members of the three churches were to be admitted to the communion table if they could provide testimony from their pastor and had not been excluded from the communion table in their own churches. Under no circumstances were members of these partner churches to proselytize or seek to induce members of another confession. The rites and ceremonies of the consenting churches were to be respected and patrons were not to require ministers to change rites and ceremonies without the consent of the superior ministers. Problematic was the provision that all rites and ceremonies in any way associated with the Church of Rome were gradually but absolutely to be abolished. Included among these were exorcisms, images, relicts of saints, superstitious use of candles, consecration of herbs, the use of banners and other standards, gold and silver crosses and anything else which would profane the word of God (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 309–311).

The adoption of the Twenty-point program reveals first of all the leaders had forestalled any discussion concerning the Sacrament of the Altar on the basis of their belief that further discussions would be detrimental to the *Consensus* and destroy the union. Secondly, the program directed its major attention to agreement on secondary matters. It condemned practices which all desired to eliminate, but included also some Lutheran practices of which the other churches did not approve. By the adoption of this program the Lutherans departed

from their traditional practice and moved toward the adoption of Reformed Protestantism as normative for Polish Protestantism. It would seem that at least in part Lasco's vision of co-opting Polish and Lithuanian Lutheranism had been fulfilled.

On the basis of their *Consensus* the three Protestant confessions looked to the King and parliament to regard them as a united Protestant church with full liberty to live and worship according to their beliefs. All three groups begun expectantly to prepare for the coming meeting of the Parliament in Warszawa. Few Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren attended; Calvinists predominated. When the Calvinists appeared before the parliament to represent the entire Protestant community they choose not to present the *Sandomierz Consensus*, but instead their own *Sandomierz Confession*. This served to greatly diminish the value of the *Consensus*. The bishops and senators rejected the *Sandomierz Confession*, and refused to grant religious liberty on the basis of it (Wotschke, 1911, S. 250–251; Halecki, 1915, s. 313–314). This strong negative reaction made it impossible for the King to act favorably toward the Protestants. The battle for the religious liberty which the Protestants had so earnestly sought from parliament was not achieved.

When the Lutherans were informed that the Calvinists had presented their Confession as representing the entire Protestant community, they were furious. On October 4, 1570, at the Convocation at Poznań they expressed their desire to disassociate themselves from the decisions made at Sandomierz and the subsequent actions of the Calvinists (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 314). This was the first step in a movement away from the *Consensus* which would gain impetus over a period on the next thirty years and would result finally in their rejection of the *Consensus* and its term. The representatives of the Bohemian Brethren present at the synod interpreted the action of the Calvinists more calmly, reminding the Lutherans that the churches of the *Sandomierz Consensus* allowed for each group to retain its own historic Confession. They noted that they had no exact record of what had taken place at the Diet, and that even if it were to be shown that the Calvinists presented their own Confession, this would have been entirely within their rights. The Lutherans determined to limit their public action to a letter to the Reformed congregation in Kraków admonishing them to follow the terms of the *Consensus* (Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 315–316).

On the surface the October meeting in Poznań did not seem very significant. The Reformed and Bohemian Brethren thought that harmony had been established and that it was now possible to move forward in the implementation of the *Consensus*. From this point on they turned their attention from doctrine to practice. Their chief concern was to establish discipline within the congregations and unify worship and communion practices. At the General Synod of Kraków on September 29 – October 1, 1573, much attention was given to question of civil morality, church membership and excommuni-

cation. It was resolved that no person excommunicated from one Protestant Church might be accepted at the Lord's Supper of another church until the matter will be resolved in the congregation where the excommunication had been declared (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 7). Further consideration was given to the question already raised in Sandomierz about the bodily disposition of those receiving Communion, whether it be by standing, kneeling, or sitting, as Lasco had ordered in his *Forma ac Ratio*. Here the synod found it necessary to distinguish the main body of Protestant Christians from the anti-Trinitarians who pointed to their practice of receiving Communion while seated as evidence of their continuity with Lasco. The synod resolved in favor of kneeling or standing (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 12). This indicates not only of variety of practice, but also of the need to counter the claims of the Anti-Trinitarians who liked to present themselves as orthodox Reformed.

The General Synod at Piotrków on June 1–3, 1578 again stated that it would be desirable that the Protestant Churches in the Polish Kingdom administer the Lord's Supper according to a common ceremonial procedure. However, the 'weaker brethren' should not be compelled or disciplined because of their reticence to abandon their form of practice, as long as the sacrament was received while kneeling or standing. With regard to the Communion of the sick and the dying, it was resolved that all Christians should be prepared to leave this present life fully confirmed in the hope of salvation. However, for the sake of weak consciences, the sick who while of sound mind request the sacrament should not be denied their request. Properly speaking, Holy Communion was understood by the Reformed to be a public or congregational act, but pastoral concern for the individual must prevail. Differences arose concerning the elements in Holy Communion at the General Synod of Włodzisław on June 19–20, 1583. The matter was considered on the basis of the terms set down in the *Sandomierz Consensus* (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 79)¹⁵. The synod limited its consideration of the sacrament to reiteration of the provision that communicants should kneel or stand to receive it (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 82)¹⁶.

A general attitude of good feelings seems to have resulted from the signing of the *Consensus* and its approval by the general synods. Even the Lutheran leaders, including Erazm Gliczner, adopted the attitude of

the Reformed, who came to regard the *Consensus* as the model which ought to be followed also in Germany. In their letter of 1578 he and Paweł Gilowski, Reformed Superintendent of Kraków, wrote:

A perfect understanding prevails amongst us, notwithstanding that foreign intrigues attempt to destroy union. Though separated by minor differences, we compose one body, and one host against Arians and Papists. We wish to the German churches a similar union. It is necessary to convoke a general European Protestant synod, which shall unite all shades of the Reformation into one general confession, and give it a uniform direction (English translation quoted from: Krasinski, 1840, p. 72).

However, all was not as it seemed on the surface. The deficiencies of the *Consensus of Sandomierz* were becoming increasingly evident. Although all three churches consented to it, it was clear that no real harmony had been achieved on sacramental teaching. The political situation was such that the deficiencies of the *Consensus* could be overlooked for a time. For the next several years all three groups determined not to press the matter further in their general synods. Instead, they turned their attention to matters all could agree were *adiaphora*. The deficiencies of the *Consensus*, however, could not long be ignored. With the publication of the Lutheran *Formula of Concord* in 1577, the Lutherans began to examine the positions to which they had agreed in the light of their church's fuller doctrinal statement on the Sacrament of the Altar. Now they would be forced to choose whether to follow Luther, or go to Geneva.

On June 25, 1578, the 48th anniversary of the presentation of the *Augsburg Confession*, the Lutherans in their convocation with the Reformed at Vilnius moved away from their earlier acceptance of the terms of the *Consensus*. Meeting in Duke Krzysztof Radziwiłł's ("Piorun") palace they formulated a statement entitled *Concordia Vilnensis* which expressed their dissatisfaction with the terminology by which the *Consensus* had described the nature and purpose of Christ's presence in the Supper. The Lutherans were represented by Maciej Dambrowski and Job Sommer, Pastors of the Vilnius Lutheran parish, Mikołaj Talwosz, Castellan of Samogitia and others. Included among the Reformed participants were Mikołaj Kantz a Skala, Stanisław Sudrowski, Pastor of Vilnius Reformed Parish, Caspar Tarasowski, Superintendent of the Reformed Church, Stanisław Martianus and Reformed Pastor Deovalte (Dziewałtowski). It is noteworthy that among those present in the convocation was Mikołaj Pac, the former Roman Catholic Bishop of Kijev, who begun to incline toward the Lutheran Church after his earlier allegiance to the Reformed (Andreae Wengerscii <...>, 1679, p. 80–81; Jablonski, 1731, p. 81–86; Adamowicz, 1855, s. 54). Although some may thought of this as a local action, the position of the Lutheran parish in Vilnius has the bellwether parish of Lithuanian Lutheranism indicates that it had more than merely local significance.

¹⁵ "In articulo de Cena Domini quicquid difficultatis emergebat, tam in elementis sacramentalibus, quam in communione veri Christi Corporis et Sanguinis. Haec omnia ad expressum sensum in summa Consensus Sandomiriensis composita sunt sacramenta duabus semper rebus constare in sacro usu suo: terrena et caelesti, ut Irenaeus testatur".

¹⁶ "[Z] strony ceremonij przy używaniu Wieczerzej Pańskiej dawna namowa synodu generalnego sędmirskiego i konkluzja synodu generalnego krakowskiego pochwalona jest, żeby siedzenie w żadnych zborzech tego konsensu naszego w Małej i w Wielkiej Polsce, i w Księstwie Litewskim etc. używane nie było, ale koniecznie złożone, a insze, tj. stojenie i klęczenie, jako gdzie zwyczajnie jest, wolne sobie bez obrażania się i przygany jedni drugim zostawujemy".

In the same year tensions concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper and Lutheran agreement with the *Sandomierz Consensus* were beginning to become evident in Poznań (Akta Synodów <...>, 1997, s. 49). In 1582 Paweł Gericius, the Lutheran pastor in Poznań and Jan Enoch, openly declared against the *Consensus*, mainly because of its Eucharistic doctrine (Akta Synodów <...>, 1997, s. 73)¹⁷.

This adjudication made it necessary for Duke Radziwiłł, Palatine of Vilnius and Hetman of Lithuania, to make an attempt at reconciliation. Radziwiłł convoked a Colloquium in Vilnius on June 14, 1585 for this purpose. Among the Lutherans participating in this meeting were Paul Weiss, professor of Divinity in Königsberg, Martin Henrici, Job Sommer, Lutheran Pastor of Vilnius, Paul Oderborn, Lutheran Pastor of Kaunas, George Plotkowski, a Polish Lutheran Pastor, and distinguished members of the Vilnius parish. The Reformed representatives included Duke Krzysztof Radziwiłł himself, Stanisław Naruszewicz, Castellian of Mińsk (Mścisław), Andreas Zawisza (*tribunallasessor*), Jan Abramowicz, Starosta of Lida, and Reformed theologians Stanisław Sudrowski (Sudrovius) (ca. 1550–ca. 1600), Johann Ulrich, Mathias Johannides, Andreas Chrzęstowski, and Andreas Volanus, an eminent theologian and secretary of the King (Lukaszewicz, 1848, s. 36).

Volanus, speaking for the Reformed, made the Lord's Supper the central subject. He stated that pressures from the forces of the Papal Church made it most desirable that Lutherans and Reformed should form a common opinion. He declared that this could best be accomplished by laying aside the important work of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Oecolampadius, and all other human authorities, excepting only ancient fathers (Colloquium habitum Vilnae <...>, 1585, p. 265–279; Friese [Bd. 2. Teil 2], 1786, p. 139 ff.).

Volanus built his arguments upon his careful distinction between earthly and heavenly things, after the manner of the distinction between the *signa* and *res signata*. It is basically a Neo-Platonist argument. He alluded to evangelical confessions from other countries, all of which clearly built upon the same philosophical foundation. He spoke of the true gift of the body and blood of Christ, but he did not equate it with the physical eating of the external elements (Colloquium habitum Vilnae <...>, 1585, p. 265–279). While using terminology which Lutherans employ in speaking of the sacramental gifts, he did not connect the heavenly gifts to the consecrated bread and wine in a manner acceptable to the Lutherans.

We believe and acknowledge that when the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is distributed to the believers according to his institution, the bread is his body and the wine is his blood, not by an exterior and invisible transformation of elements into heavenly and visible things, but by the real and

true gift of the body and blood of Christ, in such a manner that those who, being endowed by the grace of God with true faith and repentance, receive with the mouth the external elements, are partaking at the same time with the spirit and faith of the body and blood of Christ, to the certain remission of sins and the gift of eternal life, which is obtained by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ (Brevis et perspicua <...>, 1585, p. 262; English translation quoted from: Krasinski, 1840, p. 84).

Lutherans objected strongly to this omission and that Volanus had not spoken to the question of unworthy reception of the sacrament. The Lutherans and Reformed had reached an impasse (Friese [Bd. 2. Teil 2], 1786, p. 139ff).

The Vilnius meeting revealed the firmness with which both the Lutherans and Reformed had come to regard their traditional sacramental teachings. The Lutherans insisted that careful attention must be paid to the words of Christ without resort to rationalistic interpretations, whereas the Reformed insisted that rational philosophical principles must be the basis for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The Vilnius Convocation ended without making any real advance (Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 483; Lukaszewicz, 1848, s. 36–37; Friese [Bd. 2. Teil 2], 1786, p. 139ff).

Relationships between the churches were put under increasing strain both in Poland and Lithuania. It was becoming evident that the *Sandomierz Consensus* could not carry the weight that was being put upon it. At Poznań Paweł Gericius was unwilling to compromise on any point. Although Lutheran church officials tried to mute the effect of his arguments, his position was increasingly supported among the Lutheran clergy and parishioners. In addition his position had the support of prominent Lutheran theologians in Germany. Over the course of time these formidable opinions led Superintendent Erazm Glicznar to reevaluate his support for the *Consensus*. As a result he published in the Polish language in 1594 an unaltered *Augsburg Confession* of 1530 to the chagrin of Reformed and the Bohemian Brethren (Sławiński, 2002, s. 105).

It was evident that steps must be taken to clarify the situation and save the *Consensus*. For this purpose a General Synod was called to meet at Toruń on August 21–26, 1595 to address this and other issues. Świętosław Orzelski (1549–1598), the Chairman of the synod, declared in his opening oration that the meeting of the synod was for the purpose of renewing and conforming and consolidating the *Consensus of Sandomierz*; and of determining means by which the Polish Protestants could avoid the injuries and persecutions which they were suffering, especially from the Jesuits. Gericius immediately objected to the manner in which theological issues in the *Consensus* to be discussed. He stated that there were contradictory theological statements in the *Consensus* which must be resolved (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 122–123). Orzelski replied that it was common knowledge that Lutherans, Bohemians, and Reformed had theological differences, but that these

¹⁷ “Pokazało się, iż x. Paweł, kaznodzieja niemiecki, jawnie szturmuje na Konsens, od niego do Pisma św. się ozywając in sententia de Cena Domini. Także i Enoch”.

should not disturb their *Consensus*. Gericius declared that this was in conflict with the statements of those who formulated these positions and had accused those who thought and wrote differently of error. It was pointed out that Andreas Volanus, in his reply to the Jesuit Piotr Skarga, had inserted the statement that the *Consensus of Sandomierz* denies the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the sacrament, as the same denial could be found in the catechism of Paweł Gilowski (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 124 fn. 2). In an effort to turn the discussion away from the doctrinal matters, Krzysztof Rej (†1626), the Chamber of Lublin, stated that the synod had gathered not to discuss the doctrinal issues of the Lord's Supper, but to unite more closely with each other and strengthen the Union of Sandomierz. Only Superintendent Gliczner insisted that the doctrinal issues must be faced because many of Helvetican Confession were destroying the *Consensus* by their teachings and writings. Attention now turned to attempts to force Gericius to sign the *Consensus*. He left the city rather than subject himself to further pressure, and in order to quiet the opposition of Erazm Gliczner, it was resolved to excommunicate him should he fail to repent before the end of the year (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 153; The decree of Paweł Gericius' excommunication is cited in Łukaszewicz, 1835, s. 161–162).

Finally, the General Synod of Toruń resolved to accept the *Consensus of Sandomierz* and to require that every minister in Polish Kingdom conform himself to its provisions. It was further resolved that no one should be made a minister unless he would sign the *Consensus* and conform with it. The senior of every district should keep a book in which all ministers of his district subscribe their agreement and confirmation of the agreement; every year the superintendents of the three confessions should meet to deliberate concerning affairs of the church; churches have liberty in maintaining their tradition ceremonies for the present time until a future synod establishes conformity (Akta Synodów <...>, 1983, s. 166).

The synod of Toruń did not resolve the doctrinal issues. It preferred to establish unity by edict and demand conformity. On one side the situation of the Protestant Churches and the need for union in the eyes of society were critical. Those who supported the union looked to it as the only possible means of Protestant survival. On the other hand, some of the Lutherans saw this *Consensus* as a falsehood which could never accomplish its purposes, because it did not address and resolve the theological issues which had divided Protestantism into opposing camps. Lutherans opposed to the *Consensus* remained adamant. Lutheran leaders in several Major Polish cities refused to accept the provisions or sign the protocol of the Toruń Synod (Lukšaitė, 1999, p. 485). When Gliczner was instructed to carry out the decision of the synod to depose Gericius for continually preaching against the *Consensus*, the strong reaction of the Poznań congregation moved him to abandon the attempt for fear of violence (Krasinski, 1840, s. 130). In one sense the synod consolidated Protestant leadership in

their efforts to stand together against the Jesuits. However, the more visible result of the Synod of Toruń was that it made even more evident the inadequacy of the *Sandomierz Consensus* as a basis for union between the churches.

It was in the General Synod at Toruń that the Lutherans reaffirmed the *Sandomierz Consensus* for the last time. With the coming of the new century the Lutheran officials began to openly declare that they could no longer support the *Consensus* (Gmiterek, 1987, s. 204 fn. 11). It was simply inadequate and could provide no basis for solid and enduring unity among the Protestant churches. The emerging Lutheran spirit which had demonstrated itself in the publication of the *Formula of Concord* and the entire Lutheran *Book of Concord* was such that Lutherans had come to the inevitable conclusion that the *Consensus* was inadequate. As confession-alism grew, support for the *Consensus* waned and it was most clearly repudiated at the *Colloquium Charitativum* in 1645, when the Lutherans refused to make common cause with the Reformed and Bohemian Brethren before the Polish monarch (Łukaszewicz, 1835, s. 212–213). On the basis of a commonly held opinion of that era the Lutherans refused even to engage in common prayer with the Roman Catholics, Reformed, and Bohemian Brethren, because in colloquium they shared no common confessional position (Łukaszewicz, 1835, s. 220). From the standpoint of the Reformed, however, the *Consensus* was and would remain the crowning achievement of a decade of struggle to establish Reformed sacramental doctrine. Up until the present day Lithuanian Reformed have regarded the *Sandomierz Consensus* as the definitive and binding confessional document on the basis of which they understand their relationship to the Lutherans.

Conclusions

Like every document of its time the *Consensus of Sandomierz* was formulated to meet a need. Protestants believed that it was only by a show of unity that they would be able to obtain official recognition by king and parliament in both Poland and Lithuania. In addition it would indicate to the people of both nations that their churches were not simply sects but the true church of Christ, deserving of equal status with the Roman majority church.

Theological examination of the *Sandomierz Consensus* reveals clearly that it was not a church union document in the usual sense. For 16th century man to speak of religious union was to speak of agreement in all articles of faith including those previously controverted. We see this in the case of the Augsburg Diet of 1530. Mutual agreement in doctrine and practice was required of those who signed the *Augsburg Confession* 1530. Those who could not agree on all articles were considered to be outside the terms of agreement. From this perspective the document produced at Sandomierz could not be considered a religious union because no common confession was formulated. It avoided dealing with important points of controversy. Instead of searching for

solutions to controverted issues it chose rather to speak only of matters in which there appeared to be widespread agreement. Indeed it might be asked whether this is a theological statement at all since little is said about doctrinal definition and agreement, and major attention is given only to administrative issues. In only one paragraph do theological concerns appear and then only superficially. Therefore it might be described a statement of consensus and an agreement of mutual cooperation towards the eventual achievement of the goal of complete agreements.

Both the strength and the weakness of the *Consensus* are revealed by the language the framers agreed upon. They determined to speak only of those things which united them without coming to terms in those issues which so clearly still divided them. The *Consensus* does not even speak of the *Verba Christi* but built instead on Irenaeus' teaching concerning the mystery of the Communion. Lutheran attempts to deal with issues concerning the nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament (*corporaliter praesentia*) and to make clear statements concerning them were rejected.

From another perspective, one may regard the *Consensus* as a statement of formal ecclesiastical union agreement on the basis of the fact that it did establish altar and pulpit fellowship among the signatory churches. It was on this basis that Reformed theologians and later historians have continued to regard the *Consensus* as a statement of religious union. Such is clearly the point of view of the Polish Reformed historian Krasinski and Prussian Union Church historian Wotschke. However, they do not give attention to the fact that the fellowship established by this document lacked the necessary theological agreement. No adequate foundation was laid.

The fact that Polish and Lithuanian Lutherans at that time would indicate a willingness to allow parishioners and clergy of another confession to commune at their altars and preach from their pulpits would be regarded by other Lutherans of the same period a serious weakness and departure from Lutheran teaching and practice.

No doubt they understood themselves to be acting on the basis of sound advice from the Wittenberg faculty in which a very congenial attitude toward Calvinism had developed. Lutheran confessionalism was beginning to grow during this period but by 1570 it had influenced only a few pastors and theologians in Poland and Lithuania. By the end of this decade Lutheran confessionalism would have strengthened its influence to that the Lutherans would adopt the position that there could be no pulpit and altar fellowship without complete doctrinal agreement. We see this in 1645 *Colloquium charitativum* when the Lutherans stated that they could no longer make common cause together with the Reformed and the Bohemians.

The *Consensus* was not without its fruits as we can see in the Reformed liturgies of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. During this period Reformed worship was greatly enriched by the introduction of traditional forms and practices which the Lutherans had kept. It was the hope of the Reformed that this would open the door to a common liturgy to be used in both the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.

It was the pressing political needs of the time which are able to explain the willingness of the three main Protestant bodies to participate and sign the *Consensus*. The Reformed and the Bohemian Brethren did not regard theological differences as a major obstacle to union. For the Lutherans, however, doctrinal differences were a matter of great concern. Their willingness to sign the *Consensus* is a clear indication of the seriousness of the situation in which the Protestants found themselves. The churches were fighting for their lives in the face of the counter-Reformation and the growing Jesuit offensive, and they decided to take seriously the king's proposal that his Protestant subjects should be members of a united Protestant church. From this perspective historians are not willing to talk about the *Consensus* as grounds for religious union. The verdict of the eminent Polish historian Józef Szujski is correct, that the *Sandomierz Consensus* was primarily a political union.

Appendix

The Consensus of Sandomierz

Formula Recessus

Consensus mutuus in religionis Christianae capitibus inter ecclesias Maioris et Minoris Poloniae, Russiae, Lithuaniae, Samogitiae, quae iuxta confessionem Augustanam, fratrum Valdensium (ut vocant) et Helveticam aliquo modo a se dissentire videbantur, factus in synodo Sandomiriensi anno 1570 14 Aprilis.

Posteaquam diu multumque cum sectariis, tritheitis, Ebionitis, anabaptistis conflictatum esset, tandem divino favore ex tot tantisque certaminibus et deplorandis contentionibus emersimus, visum est iisdem ecclesiis Polonicis reformatis et orthodoxis, quae in quibus-

Formula of Recessus

Mutual consensus in the chief articles of the Christian religion between the churches of major and Minor Poland, Russia, Lithuania, and Samogitia concerning which there appeared to be descent in the Augsburg Confession and that of the Valdensians (as they are called) and the Swiss, concluded in the synod of Sandomierz April 14, 1570.

Since, after many long conflicts with sectarians, Tritheites, Ebionites, and Anabaptists, we have nevertheless emerged, by the grace of God, from so many great struggles and deplorable contentions, it was decided by those Reformed and Orthodox churches of

dam capitibus et formulis doctrinae hostibus veritatis et evangelii minime consentire videbantur, pacis et concordiae studio synodum convocare ac consensionem mutuam testari. Quare habita collatione amica et Christiana sic iunctis compositisque animis consenserunt in haec capita:

Primum. Quemadmodum et nos, qui in praesenti synodo Confessionem nostram edidimus, et fratres, nunquam credidimus eos, qui Augustanam confessionem amplectuntur, aliter quam pie et orthodoxe sensisse de Deo et Sacra Trinitate atque incarnatione Filii Dei et iustificatione aliisque praecipuis capitibus fidei nostrae, ita etiam ii, qui Augustanam confessionem professi sunt, candide et sincere se vicissim tam de nostrarum ecclesiarum, quam de fratrum, quos Valdenses vocant, confessione de Deo et Sacra Triade, incarnatione Filii Dei, iustificatione et aliis primariis capitibus fidei Christianae nihil agnoscere, quod sit absonum ab orthodoxa veritate et puro verbo Dei. Ibiq; sancte invicem polliciti sumus unanimiter secundum regulam verbi Dei defensuros consensum hunc mutuam in vera et pura Christi religione contra pontificios, contra sectarios, contra denique omnes hostes evangelii et veritatis.

Deinde vero quantum ad infelix illud dissidium de Cena Domini attinet, convenimus in sententia verborum, ut ilia orthodoxe intellecta sunt a patribus ac imprimis Irenaeo, qui duabus rebus, scilicet terrena et coelesti, mysterium hoc constare dixit. Neque elementa signave ilia nuda et vacua esse asserimus, sed simul re ipsa credentibus exhibere et praestare fide, quod significant. Denique, ut expressius clariusque loquamur, convenimus, ut credamus et confiteamur substantialem praesentiam Christi non significari dumtaxat, sed vere in Cena vescentibus representari, distribui et exhiberi symbolis adiectis ipsi rei minime nudis, secundum sacramentorum naturam. Ne vero diversitas formularum loquendi contentionem aliquam pariat, placuit praeter articulum, qui est insertus nostrae Confessionis, mutuo consensu ascribere articulum Confessionis Saxonicae ecclesiarum de Cena Domini ad Tridentinum Concilium a. D. 1551 missae, quem etiam pium agnoscimus et recipimus. Cuius Confessionis haec sunt verba: Et baptismus et Cena Domini sunt pignora etc. etc., usque ad finem articuli huius verba integra.

Huius autem sancti mutuique consensus vinculum fore arbitrati sumus convenimusque, ut quemad-

Poland which seemed to the enemies of the truth and of the Gospel to be in least agreement in certain articles and formulas of doctrine to call a Synod in the interest of peace and concord and to attest their mutual consensus. Therefore, after a friendly and Christian conference, we agree to these articles with minds thus joined and agreed.

First. As both we who in the present Synod have published our confession and the Bohemian Brethren have never believed that those who adhere to the Augsburg Confession feel otherwise than piously and orthodoxly about God and the Holy Trinity, also the incarnation of the Son of God and our justification and other principal articles of our faith; so also those who follow the Augsburg Confession have openly and sincerely confessed that they, on the other hand, know of nothing in the confession of our churches or that of the Bohemian Brethren concerning God and the Holy Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, justification, and other primary articles of the Christian faith which would be contrary to the orthodox truth and the pure Word of God. And there we have mutually and unanimously promised according to the rule of God's Word that we shall defend this mutual consensus in the true and pure religion of Christ against Papists, against sectarians, against all the enemies of the Gospel and the truth.

Moreover, as far as the unfortunate difference of opinion on the Lord's Supper is concerned, we agree on the meaning of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ¹⁸, as they have been orthodoxly¹⁹ understood by the fathers, and especially by Irenaeus, who said that this mystery consists of two elements, namely, an earthly and a heavenly one. Nor do we assert that those elements or signs are bare and empty; we state, rather, that at the same time by faith they actually [re ipsa] exhibit and present that which they signify. Finally, to put it more clearly and expressly, we have agreed to believe and confess that the substantial presence of Christ is not merely signified, but that the body and blood of the Lord²⁰ are represented, distributed, and exhibited to those who eat by the symbols applied to the thing itself, and that the symbols are not at all bare, according to the nature of the Sacraments. But lest the diversity of manners of speaking bring forth another controversy, we have decided by mutual consent, in addition to the article which is inserted into our Confession, to add the article of the Confession of the Saxon churches on the Lord's Supper, sent to the Council of Trent in 1551, which we acknowledge as correct and have accepted. These are the words of that Confession: The Baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs, etc.²¹.

We have decided to be bound by this holy and mutual consensus, and have agreed that just as they regard

¹⁸ "...of our Lord Jesus Christ" are not in the Latin text.

¹⁹ "In an orthodox manner".

²⁰ "...that the body and blood of the Lord" are not in the Latin text.

²¹ "...and to this end the words this article are included" are not in the English text.

modum illi nos nostrasque ecclesias et Confessionem nostram, in hac synodo publicatam, et fratrum orthodoxas esse testantur, sic etiam eorum ecclesias eodem Christiano amore prosequamur et orthodoxas fateamur. Extremumque valedicamus et altum silentium imponamus omnibus rixis, distractionibus, dissidiis, quibus evangelii cursus non sine maxima multorum piorum offensione impeditus est et unde adversariis nostris non levis calumniandi et verae Christianae religioni nostrae contradicendi occasio sit subministrata. Quin potius, paci et tranquillitati publicae studere, caritatem mutuam exercere et operas mutuas ad aedificationem ecclesiae pro fraterna coniunctione nostra praestare debemus.

Ad haec recipimus mutuo consensu omni studio nostris fratribus omnibus persuasuros atque eos invituros ad hunc Christianum et unanimum consensum amplectendum et obsignandum, praecipue auditione verbi frequentando tam huius, quam alterius cuiusque confessionis coetus et sacramentorum usu, observato tamen recto ordine et gradu tam disciplinae, quam consuetudinis uniuscuiusque ecclesiae.

Ritus autem et caeremonias liberos uniuscuiusque ecclesiae hac concordia et coniunctione relinquimus. Non enim multum refert, qui ritus observentur, modo sarta tecta et incorrupta existat ipsa doctrina et fundamentum fidei ac salutis nostrae. Quemadmodum et ipsa Confessio Augustana et Saxonica de ea re decent et in hac Confessione nostra, in praesenti synodo Sandomiriensi publicata, id ipsum expressimus. Quomobrem consilia officiae caritatis mutua inter nos conferre et in posterum de conservatione et incremento omnium totius Regni, Lithuaniae, Samogitiae piarum orthodoxarum et reformatarum ecclesiarum, tamquam de uno corpore, consulere polliciti sumus ac recepimus.

Et siquando synodos generales celebrabunt, nobis quoque significant et ad nostras etiam generales vocati non gravatim veniant, si opus fuerit.

Atque ut colophonem huic consensui et mutuae concordiae imponamus ad hanc fraternam societatem conservandam tuendamque, non incommodum fore putamus in locum certum convenire, ubi una ex mutuis Confessionibus compendium corporis doctrinae, improbitate hostium veritatis ad id adacti, eliceremus et in publicum edeamus, ut invidorum hominum ora obturarentur, cum maximo omnium piorum solacio, sub titulo omnium ecclesiarum Polonicarum reformatarum et Lithuanicarum et Samogiticarum nostrae Confessionis consentientium.

Datis igitur iunctisque dextris sancte promisimus et recepimus invicem omnes fidem et pacem colere, fovere et indes ad aedificationem regni Dei magis

us, our churches, our confession published in this Synod, and that of the Brethren as orthodox, so also we shall treat their churches with the same Christian love and acknowledge them as orthodox. We shall avoid the extreme and impose utter silence upon all bickering, disagreement, and controversy by which the course of the Gospel is impeded to the great offense, of many pious people, and from which there comes a severe calumny by our adversaries and contradiction to our true Christian religion. Rather let the occasion be provided to strive for public peace and tranquility, to exercise mutual charity; we should also offer our labors for the building up of the church in our fraternal union.

For this reason we have agreed by mutual consent to persuade all our brethren with utmost zeal and to invite them to increase, build up, and conserve this Christian and unanimous Consensus, to nourish it and testify to it, especially by the hearing of the Word (by attending the services first of one, then of another of the confessions) and the use of the Sacraments, observing the proper order and manner of the discipline and custom of each church.

We leave the rites and ceremonies of each church free by this concord. For it does not matter much what rites are observed, as long as the doctrine itself and the foundation of our faith and salvation are kept intact and incorrupt. So the Augsburg Confession itself and the Saxon Confession teach on this matter; and in this our Confession published in this Synod of Sandomierz we have expressed the same thing. We have therefore promised and decided to compare counsels and works of charity among ourselves, and in the future to consult about the conservation and growth of all the pious, orthodox, and reformed churches' of the entire realm of Lithuania and Samogitia, as well as [the formation of] one body.

And if they ever hold general synods, let them inform us; and when called to our general synods, let them feel free to come²².

And to put a colophon to this consensus and mutual concord, we do not think it would be inappropriate for the saving and assuring of this fraternal society to gather in a certain place, where, forced to this by improbity of the enemies of truth, we would draw up a compend of the body of doctrine (one out of the several Confessions) and publish it, that the mouths of evil men may be stopped to the great comfort of all the faithful in the name of all the Polish, Lithuanian, and Samogitian reformed churches which agree with our confession.

Having given and joined our right hands, therefore, we have sacredly promised and mutually agreed that we want to build up and nurture faith and peace and to

²² "...if it would be beneficial" are not in the English text.

magisque amplificare velle omnesque occasiones distractionis ecclesiarum evituros. Denique se immemores et oblitos sui ipsius, ut veros Dei ministros decet, solius Jesu Christi Salvatoris nostri gloriam promoturos et evangelii illius veritatem propagaturos tum dictis tum factis recepimus.

Quod ut felix ratum firmumque sit in perpetuum, oramus ardentibus votis Deum Patrem, totius consolationis et pacis auctorem et fontem uberrimum, qui nos ex densis papatus tenebris nostrasque ecclesias eripuit donavitque puro verbi sui et sacrosancto veritatis lumine hancque nostram sanctam pacem, consensionem, coniunctionem et unionem benedicere ad sui nominis gloriam et ecclesiae aedificationem velit. Amen. Amen.

Stanisław Myszkowski, palatinus Craco–viensis, personaliter consensus. Piotr Zborowski, palatinus Sandomiriensis, personaliter consensit mpp. Stanisław Bniński, starszy kościoła, imieniem jmp. Łukasza z Górki, wojewody poznańskiego, Jana z Tomic, kasztelana gnizeńskiego i wszystkich zborów Augustanae confessionis. Stanislaus Chrzastovius, nuncius md. palatini terrarum Russiae etc. nomine eiusdem ac aliorum confratrum subscripsit. Sigismundus Myszkowski personaliter consentiens manu propria subscripsit. Prokop Broniewski, chorąży kaliski, ręką własną.

Erasmus Gliczner, ecclesiarum in Maiori Polonia confessionis Augustanae superintendens, suo et aliorum fratrum nomine manu propria etc. Nicolaus Glicznerus, senior districtus Posnaniensis, nomine fratrum Maioris Poloniae manu propria. Matthaeus [a] Rakow, minister Criloviensis, missus a nobilitate Belzensi manu propria. Andreas Prasmovius, minister coetus Cracoviensis, nomine fratrum, ut vocant, Valdensium, facultate sibi commissa propria manu scripsi. Simeon Bogomil diaconus, Unitatis fratrum legatus, manu propria. Stanislaus Sarnicius, senior ecclesiarum districtus Cracoviensis, suo et aliorum fratrum nomine. Iacobus Sylvius, senior districtus Chęciniensis, suo et aliorum fratrum nomine. Stanisław Karniński Iwan ręką własną, rector colloquii in synodo a fratribus electus, subscribit.

Daniel Chrobiewski, Stanislaus Rożanka medicus, consules Cracovienses et Christophorus Trecius, ecclesiae urbanae Cracoviensis seniores et ad praesentem synodum nuntii, suo et fratrum nomine subscripserunt.

Stanislaus Marcjanus, minister ecclesiae Dievołten-sis, ex Lithuania, ducis de Wiśniowiec etc. legatus. Paulus Gilovius, senior districtus Zathoriensis et

strive more and more for the building of the kingdom of God, avoiding all occasions for the alienation of the churches. Finally, we agree that unmindful and forgetful of ourselves, as is proper for true ministers of God, we shall promote the glory solely of Jesus Christ our Savior and contend for the truth of His Gospel in word and deed.

That this might be fixed sure and firm forever we pray with ardent petitions to God the Father, the Author and abundant Fountain of all consolation and peace, who rescued our churches from the morass of the Papacy and endowed us with the pure and holy light of His Word. May He deign to bless this our holy peace, consensus, conjunction, and union to the glory of His name and the building up of the Church. Amen.

Stanisław Myszkowski, Palatine of Kraków, personally consents. Piotr Zborowski, Palatine of Sandomierz, personally consents. Stanisław Bniński, Starost of the Church, in the name of Łukasz Górka, Palatine of Poznań, and in that of Jan Tomicki, Castellan of Gniezno, as well as in the name of all the churches of the Augsburg Confession. Stanisław Chrzastowski, envoy in the name of the Palatine of Russia, etc, subscribes in his own name that of the other confreres. Zygmunt Myszkowski, personally consens and subscribes. Prokop Broniewski, Warrant Officer of Kalisz, personally subscribes.

Erazm Gliczner, Superintendent of the churches of the Augsburg Confession, in Major Poland, in his own name and in that of his brothers, etc. Mikołai Gliczner, Senior of the District of Poznań signs in the name of the brothers in Major Poland. Mateusz z Raków, Minister of Kryłów, in the name of the nobles in Belz: Andrzej z Przasnysza, Minister of the Krakow assembly in the name of those who are called, the Bohemina Brethren given the authority to sign in their name. Deacon Simeon Bogomil (Szymon Teofil Turnowski), delegate of the united Brethren, in their name. Stanisław Sarnicki, Senior of the churches of the District of Kraków in his own name and that of the other brothers. Jakub Sylwiusz, Senior of the District of Krzęcice in his own name and that of other brothers. Stanisław Iwan Karniński, Rector, elected by the brothers, gathered in Synod.

Daniel Chrobierski (Chrobiewski), Stanisław Rożanka, Medical Doctors, Counselors of Kraków and Krzysztof Trecius (Trecy), Seniors of the church of the city of Kraków and envoys of the synod subscribed in their own name and that of the brothers;

Stanisław Marcjan, Minister of the church of Dziawołtów in Lithuania, Deputy of Duke of Wiśniowiec; Paweł Gilowski, Senior of the Districts of Zator and Oświęcim, in his own name and that of all the brothers.

Oświecimensis, suo et omnium fratrum nomine. Valentinus, senior, nomine ecclesiarum Podgoriensium in Dobrków, subscribit. Andreas [a] Kruszwica, minister in Lisowo, nomine suo et coetus Radzieiowiensis subscribit. Petrus Tarnovius, minister in Dębica, suo et md. Georgii Latałski nomine subscribit.

Georgius Israel, Joannes Lorencius, seniores ecclesiarum fratrum, nomine omnium ministrorum manu propria eidem consensui subscripserunt ex coetu fratrum Bohemorum Posnaniae 19 Maii.

Latin text of the *Sandomierz Consensus*: Akta Synodów <...>, 1972, s. 295–298. English translation: Pelikan, 1947, p. 826–830. First paragraph, subscription list, and footnoted editorial comments by Dr. Charles Evanson and the author.

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Walenty z Brzozowa, Senior in the name of the churches in Podgórz in Dobrków, subscribes; Andrzej z Kruszwicy, Minister in Lisowo subscribes in his own name and that of the congregation in Radziejów. Piotr Tarnowski, Minister in Dębica, subscribes in his own name and in that of Jerzy Latałski.

Jerzy Izrael, Jan Lorenz (Laurentius), Seniors of the Brethren Churches in the name of all the ministers personally subscribed in the meeting of the Bohemian Brethren in Poznań, on May 19.

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Spausdinti rekomendavo:
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SANDOMIRO SUSITARIMAS – UNIKALUS XVI AMŽIAUS LENKIJOS IR LIETUVOS PROTESTANTIŠKOSIOS KRIKŠČIONYBĖS EKUMENINIS DOKUMENTAS

Darius Petkūnas

Santrauka

1969 metų Liublino seimo baigiamojoje sesijoje Lenkijos ir Lietuvos karalius Žygimantas Augustas pra-

sitarė, kad norėtų, jog jo valdose baigtųsi disidentų persekiojimas ir būtų tik viena Bažnyčia. Karaliaus žodžius Lietuvos ir Lenkijos reformatų, Čekų brolių ir Liuteronų Bažnyčios suprato kaip užuominą, kad priėmusios bendrą tikėjimo išpažinimą jos bus pripažintos valstybėje.

Iki tol nuosaikiąsias Protestantų Bažnyčias skyrė nesutarimai Altoriaus sakramento bei kitais teologiniais klausimais. Kita vertus, 1555 metų Koźminek unija tarp Mažosios Lenkijos reformatų ir Didžiosios Lenkijos Čekų brolių parodė, kad Protestantų Bažnyčios gali sutarti kertiniais krikščioniškojo mokymo klausimais. Minėtos Bažnyčios ėmė siekti teologinės vienybės ir su Liuteronų Bažnyčia, tačiau tai padaryti nebuvo lengva, nes pastarąją nuo jų skyrė skirtingas mokymas apie šventąją Vakarienę. Liuteronai išpažino kūnišką Kristaus buvimą sakramente, tuo tarpu reformatai ir Čekų broliai teigė, kad Kristus sakramente yra dvasiški, tai yra tikintieji, priimančys šventintą duoną ir vyną, per Šventąją Dvasią priima Kristaus kūną ir kraują, kuris yra danguje. Siekti bendro mokymo šiuo klausimu bandyta 1560, 1563, 1565, 1567 m. Lenkijos liuteronų ir Čekų brolių susitikimuose, tačiau pastangos buvo nesėkmingos.

Liublino įvykiai paskatino protestantus vėl siekti bendro tikėjimo išpažinimo. Nors 1570 metų liuteronų susitikimas su Čekų broliais Poznanėje neatnešė pageidaujamų rezultatų, Vilniuje susitikę Lietuvos liuteronai ir reformatai paskelbė, kad jiems pavyko pasiekti bendrą susitarimą. Galutinis LDK ir Lenkijos protestantų susivienijimas turėjo įvykti generaliniame susirinkime Sandomire.

1570 metų balanzio 9–14 d. vykęs Sandomiro susirinkimas neatnešė pageidautinų rezultatų. Protestantai siekė bendro LDK ir Lenkijos protestantų tikėjimo išpažinimo, tačiau doktrininiai nesutarimai šventosios Vakarienės klausimu neleido tam išsipildyti. Liuteronai atsisakė priimti 1566 m. Antrąją Helvetiškąją konfesiją bei jos pakoreguotą versiją – Sandomiro konfesiją. Nepavykus susitarti dėl bendros konfesijos, šios Bažnyčios nusprendė priimti bendrą Sandomiro susitarimą, kuris visuomenei bei seimui parodytų, kad protestantai vis dėlto išsprendė doktrininis ginčus ir pagaliau susivienijo.

Teologinė Sandomiro susitarimo analizė parodė, kad šventosios Vakarienės teologiniai skirtumai, iki šiol trukdę minėtoms Bažnyčioms susivienyti į vieną Protestantų Bažnyčią, taip ir liko neišspręsti. Bažnyčios apsiribojo tik tais šventosios Vakarienės klausimais, dėl kurių sutarė ir vengė liesti tuos, kurie jas skyrė. Vietoj to, kad debatų objektu pasirinktų Kristaus Testamento žodžius „Tai yra mano kūnas“ (1 Kor 11, 23–25), delegatai diskusijų pagrindu pasirinko Ireniejaus žodžius, kuriuose bažnyčios tėvas šventosios Vakarienės slėpinį aiškina remdamasis dangiškais ir žemiškais elementais. Akivaizdu, kad šis teiginys buvo naudingas Reformatų

Bažnyčiai, kuri dangiškais ir žemiškais kategorijomis mokė apie Kristaus buvimą sakramente. Dokumente visiškai neapitariami kertiniai liuteronų eucharistinės teologijos klausimai, tokie kaip: „Ką kunigas šventosios Vakarienės metu duoda komunikantui?“, „Ar netikintieji priima Kristaus kūną ir kraują“, „Ką suteikia toks valgymas ir gėrimas?“. Nors liuteronai reikalavo, kad tekste būtų paminėtas kūniškasis Kristaus buvimas sakramente (*praesentia corporis Christi*), susirinkimo delegatai tai atmetė ir vietoj to nusprendė prie susitarimo teksto pridėti ištrauką iš 1551 Saksonijos konfesijos, kuri gana miglotai liudijo kūnišką Kristaus buvimą eucharistinėje duonoje ir vyne.

Protestantų viltys, kad susibūrę į vieną krikščioniškąją Bažnyčią jie įgaus legalų statusą valstybėje, neišsipildė. 1570 m. Varšuvos seimas atsisakė jiems suteikti religinę laisvę Sandomiro susitarimo pagrindu.

Sandomiro susitarime neatsakyti teologiniai klausimai netrukus vėl ėmė skaldyti minėtas Bažnyčias. Pirmasis šaukštas deguto bažnyčių santykiuose buvo reformatų sprendimas vietoj Sandomiro susitarimo seimui įteikti jų Sandomiro konfesiją. Liuteronai tai priėmė kaip susitarimo sąlygų sulaužymą ir grasino atsiriboti nuo susitarimo. Tačiau pirmieji akivaizdūs žingsniai prieš susitarimą įvyko 1577 metais pasirodžius *Santarvės formulėi*, kuri išsprendė visus doktrininis Europos liuteronų nesutarimus. 1578 metais Vilniaus susitikime su reformatais LDK liuteronai viešai pareiškė, kad atsisako Sandomiro susitarimo. Kunigaikščio Kristupo Radvilos (Perkūno) pastangos 1585 metais LDK liuteronus gražinti prie Sandomiro susitarimo terminų buvo nesėkmingos. 1578 metais prieš susitarimą sukilo ir Poznanės liuteronai. Nors šis susitarimas buvo dar kartą patvirtintas 1595 metų Torunės generaliniame susirinkime, tapo akivaizdu, kad tik laiko klausimas, kada Liuteronų Bažnyčia jo atsisakys. XVII a. pradžioje Liuteronų Bažnyčia ėmė atvirai pasisakyti prieš Sandomiro susitarimą, o 1645 metų Torunės kolokviume (*Colloquium Charitativum*) liuteronai ne tik atsisakė kartu ginti savo doktrines pozicijas prieš Romos Katalikų Bažnyčią, bet ir apskritai bendrai melstis su kokiokviu-me dalyvavusiomis bažnyčiomis.

Sandomiro susitarimo negalima laikyti religine unija, nes ji XVI amžiaus religiniame kontekste buvo įmanoma tik priėmus bendrą tikėjimo išpažinimą. Pastangos šiame generaliniame susirinkime priimti tokią konfesiją buvo bergždžios. Apskritai Sandomiro susitarimą sunku pavadinti teologiniu dokumentu, nes teologiniai klausimai nagrinėjami tik viename paragrafe ir tai tik vartojant miglotus terminus. Todėl galima pritarti istorikų teiginiais, kad Sandomiro susitarimas buvo tik politinė unija, kuri žlugo vėl iškilus dokumente neišspręstiems Kristaus inkarnacijos, predestinacijos bei Altoriaus sakramento klausimams.