The Reformed in Transylvania as Seen by the Evangelical Transylvanian-Saxons

1.1 Formation of Confessional Space in the 16th and 17th Century Transylvania

The Evangelical-Reformed of the 16th/17th centuries cultivated a self-understanding that their church was the true heir of the early-church tradition, making it the monopoly of the truth of Christian teaching.1

Accordingly, Elector Johann Sigismund’s (1572/1608–1619) court preacher Abraham Scultetus (1566–1625)2 stated upon the conversion of his lord to Calvinism that “the leftover papal dung is now to be swept completely out of Christ’s stable.”3 With the remaining papal dung he meant the conservative orientation of the Reformation in Brandenburg, which appeared to still contain significant traditional elements such as the pre-Reformation rites and paraments.4

On the other hand, Pastor Damasus Dürr (~1535–1585) in Kleinpold,5 a theologian marked by his studies in Wittenberg under Melanchthon, presented his church-fellowship in remarkable contrast to this understanding. Dürr served the end of his career (1584–85) as dean in the Capitulum Antesilvanense, in the border region of the Central Transylvanian-Saxon (Wittenberg orientated) parishes of the Unterwald chapter in the vicinity of the Hungarian speaking (confessionally undefined Protestant, and perhaps even anti-Trinitarian) congregations/counties. In this area he sought to anticipate and stop any potential influence from other confessional directions. In apologetic, polemical sermon passages, he maintains:

---

1 Graeme Murdock, Calvinism, p. 5.
2 Gustav A. Benrath, Scultetus.
3 Original text in Heinrich Heppe (ed.), Bekenntnisschriften, p. 263: “die noch hinterbliebene Unsauberkeit des Papstthums aus dem Schafstall Christi vollends auszufegen”; quotation from Graeme Murdock, Calvinism, p. 5.
4 Agnieszka Gasior, Reliquienschatz; Henry J. Cohn, Territorial Princes; Bodo Nischan, Second Reformation.
5 Damasus Dürr, Predigt-Manuskript, p. 614 called himself a “carer of souls (Seelensorger)”. 
We keep the mass-paraments, candles, paintings and festivals not because of holiness or peace for souls, but because of the honourable order, in order to distinguish the house of God, in which we hear God’s word, pray and celebrate the most worthy sacrament, from our own homes, in which we eat, curse, swear and go about our daily business. Those, who refer to these things and throw out all the splendor and ceremony from the church, abuse Christian freedom. They plunder or remove that which God-fearing men donated to God’s honour. Therefore, in no case should anybody allow such rude ways of thinking, they should not stray away from the ceremonies, for they do not work against God and can be kept with a good conscience. I mention all of this because of the great dissent and continuous conflict in the church. That is an unmistakable sign that the Day of Judgement is nigh.

6 Damasus Dürr, Predigten, pp. 13 and 14. "Wir behalten die messgewandt, die liechter, das gemäld, die feirtag, nicht deswegen, das mir die heylikeyt die seelenselikeit dabey süchenn: Sondern der ehrlichenn Ordnung wegen, das doch mög sein ein vnterscheid zwischen dem haus gottes, da mir gotts wort höerrn, da mir betenn vnd der hochwirdigen Sacrament brauchenn, vnd zwischen vnsern heüsern, da mir schlemmen, fluchenn, schweeren, aber vnser hauntierung treybenn. Jeyne aber missbrauchenn der Christlichen freyheit darinnen, das sie vnter solchem schein, all gepreng vnd Ceremonien aus der kirchen werffen, plundernn und ausstossenn, was
Dürr, in consensus with the leading figures of the South-Transylvanian Reformation, kept the paraments and other (decorative) objects in church buildings (as adiaphora), insisting on the qualitative difference between sacral spaces and buildings in daily life. (Img. 139)

1.2 A Short Sketch of the “Lutheran” Reformation in the Universitas nationis Saxonicae

The lively trade relations between the merchants and businessmen of Hermannstadt and Central-European markets were one of the conditions, which allowed Wittenberg Reformation to find early resonance in Hermannstadt in the early 1520s. (Img. 140 a–c) The ideas of reform landed in the open, humanist Transylvanian milieu of church and citizenry among the “Saxones”. With the Ottoman victory in Mohács in 1526 and especially Buda in 1541, the introduction of the Reformation appeared to be politically opportune as well. In 1542, Kronstadt introduced the Reformation, and other Transylvanian–Saxon cities quickly followed. In 1550 the Universitas Saxonum made the introduction of the Evangelical confession mandatory, in 1557 the Diet recognized both confessions – Old Believers [those adhering to the Roman obedience] and Augsburg Confession – for all of Transylvania, the latter even arousing interest among the German-speaking congregations across the Carpathians. At the same time, adherents to the Swiss Reformation were banned.

But the developments did not stop here. Under Franz Hertel/Davidis’ leadership Klausenburg opened itself for the Swiss direction of the Reformation with a large portion of the Hungarian nobility and North-Transylvanian population reorienting themselves along these lines. In Hermannstadt – the center of political representation of the Saxon Universitas nationis Saxonicae – a
gotsfurchtige leit dem haus gotts zu ehren geordnet habenn. Darumb soll man solchenn selb-wachsendenn gestern ym geringstenn nicht eynes nagelsbreyt weychenn, […] Mann soll nicht eynes strohalms breit vorn denn ehrlichenn Ceremonienn abweychenn, die nicht wider got seynn, vnd mit gutem gewissen können behaltenn werdenn. […] Dieses alles meldenn ich darumb, der grossen weynichyet wegen, die ynn der kirchenn verhandenn ist, da ein zanckenn ein ha dern am andernn hangt. Das solchs eyn gewisses zeychenn ist, wie des herrn gricht nicht aus-bleybenn wirdt.”

7 Hermann Jekeli, Bischofe, p. 35; Superintendent Hebler ordained clergy for Râmnic und Târgoviste. See also Alexandru Ciocîltan, Iradierea, pp. 130–132.
8 Márta Fata, Ungarn, pp. (97–)103–105; The Reformed were called “Sacramentarians” by their contemporaries.
9 Fata, Ungarn, p. 104. In 1568 and 1571 the Diet decided to grant freedom of proclamation (for the Protestants). Franz Davidis was drawn over to the anti-Trinitarian line propagated by Gior gio Biandrata, later representing an even more radical nonadorationist conception.
conservative line was followed. The church’s exponent of this was Hermannstadt’s City Pastor Matthias Hebler (†1571), who had been elected superintendent in 1556. His successor, Lucas Unglerus (1535–1600), moved the seat of the superintendency to Birthälm (Img. 141) upon his inauguration in 1572. The deacon Damasus Dürr stood alongside of Superintendent Hebler as one of his preachers in the city until 1568. Dürrs theological position lined up with this Wittenberg-consistent direction and remained so for the rest of his
life. He emphatically insisted on the doctrine of the “omnipresence” of human nature\textsuperscript{10}, writing:

\begin{quote}
Such a mediator or savior was born for us; he took on human nature and was raised to heaven, where he was set to the right of the Father. He can and wants to be everywhere, in every land, kingdom or place, namely there where he has bound himself to the most worthy Eucharist with his word, because Christ promises that his true, natural body and true natural blood is given to believers in the Lord’s Supper. He wants to be everywhere, in all Christian congregations, just as he has promised: where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them – as the fourth.\textsuperscript{11}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} In my opinion, Damasus Dürr used concepts of the Lord’s Supper that could not be harmonized in terms of terminology. The differences between Luther’s and Melanchthon’s teaching of the Lord’s Supper were assessed differently by contemporaries: either as clearly distinguishable or as compatible. Dürr seems to have taken the final position. Mostly he used Melanchthon’s expressions. However, there are also other expressions that clearly refer to Martin Luther’s formulations, which Dürr might have taken from Georg Major’s literature. These insights from his reading may have influenced his statements in such a way that he made use of both positions.

\textsuperscript{11} Dürr, Predigten, p. 53. “Solcher mitler, solcher heyland ist uns gebornn, der die angezogenn menschlich natur, genn himmel erhabenn, und zur rechten des vaters gesetzt hat. Das derselbige Christus nach beyderley natur, kann und will sein uberall, ynn alenn landenn, ynn alenn könig­reychen und örternn, wohinn er sich mit seynem wort verbundenn hat, Als in seynem hochwir­digenn Abendmal, da sich Christus verspricht, das[s] sein warer, natürlicher leib und blut denn genissernn des Abendmals, dargereicht werdenn. Er will auch uberall sein, ynn allen Christlichenn versamlungen, wie er verheist: Wo zween aber drey werdenn beynander kommenn ynn meynem namenn, ich will der viert darzwischenn sein.”
2. Demarcation from Polemical Theology

Dürr sought to both inform but also immunize his congregation. He counted himself among the “Lutherans,” which is why he rejected the significative understanding of the Lord’s Supper. He called the representatives of this understanding “desecrators of the sacrament” and painted a drastic picture for his congregation as to what the faith-eroding, self-destructive consequences of this Eucharistic-view would bring about:

Accordingly, nearly all people take the one Christ to themselves, targeting him [with their theological interpretations] and contradicting him. But no one can shoot him down, for all of their bullets or arrows ricochet away as from an anvil; they cannot do anything [to Christ] but only undermine their own faith.

In his sermon for Maundy Thursday in 1573, Dürr drew sharp contours of the polemical-theological, confessional difference between the Wittenberg and Roman Catholic views:

The papists blaspheme God’s Son and adulterate the Eucharist because they claim that, if the priest has consecrated the bread and wine, both elements take on a different nature; they are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ and no longer remain bread and wine [... indeed, in the Corpus Christi processions they carried both] around as a theatrical play.

He further refined his polemic against the pope:

By honouring the transubstantiated host, the Catholics committed the most scandalous departure from God and his Godly honour. The pope does not just do that, however, but he continues his mockery with the sacrament through priests and even further in the silent masses and masses for the souls.

12 Dürr, Predigten, p. 83: in the original “Lutrischenn.”
13 Dürr, Predigten, p. 82. “Dermassenn zilenn fast alle menschenn auff denn eynen Christum und widersprechen ym: Aber niemand kann ynn umbschissem, all ir kugelenn und pffyl fallenn auf ynnen störenenn ampons, die wider zu Rück schnellenn, und könnenn nichts ausrichtenn, sie stosßenn ynnenn selbs die herzer ab.”
But the polemical positions towards the Roman Catholic sacramental theology did not present the pastor of Kleinpold any opportunity to emphasize commonalities within Protestantism. Quite the contrary in fact: in his sermons he broadly and with apologetic finesse combatted the most important and condemned heresies from dogmatic history in important places. He complained that these extra-ordinary teachings were also virulent in our land. These encountered indifference or even agreement among the “common people.” The preached and proclaimed will of God was encountering a lack of faith. The sermon was considered to be a fairytale and the opinion of the congregation was that it was unbiblical.

Furthermore, Dürr claimed that if anyone tried to argumentatively deny the symbolic understanding of the Eucharist, they would be met by a dogged resistance from the enemy camp.

*If someone discusses with misguided scholars, with those who defile the sacrament, and proves to them that the true Body and Blood of Christ is received with the mouth in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper – according to the Christ’s words, then they [go so far as to] contradict the Lord Christ, for He himself has conveyed/untruthfully formulated this, because it generally is impossible, one must understand this statement metaphorically as pertaining to an absent body.*

Dürr presented the position of his opponents, whom he polemically described as “sacrament-desecrators,” who could not understand the sacramental mystery with their misdirected rationality. Thus, Dürr rejected the confession of an exclusively spiritual consumption of the sacrament in the Maundy Thursday sermon mentioned earlier: *Not enough that’s not all though, in this regard the shameful blasphemers have fantasized – the sacramentarians with their strange remarks and interpretations.* He criticizes the position of a manducatio spiritualis, when it is said: *It is a sign of His presence, just as the pillar of fire in the desert wanderings at the Exodus was a similar sign of God’s presence. Terminologically, they speak of the Body and Blood of Christ, only receiving it in faith, but not with the mouth.*

---

16 Dürr, Predigten, p. 82.
17 Dürr, Predigten, p. 82 (all citations): “*mann achts für meerr*,” the common opinion is, “*es sey neberm der Schrift geredt.*”
18 Dürr, Predigten, p. 82: “*Hat aber eyner zuthunn mit falschenn gelertenn, mit Sacramentschendernn, und beweyst yneern, das ym Abendmal kegenwertig sey der ware natürlich leib und blut Jhesu Christi, welchs mir nach denn worten Christj mit dem leiblicken mund essenn und trinchenn. Da widersprechen sie dem herrn Christo, er hab nicht recht geredt, es wer nicht seyne meynung also gewesenn, man sols verstehenn vonn eynem abwesendenn bedeütichenn leib. Denn es wer unmüglich.*”
19 Dürr, Predigt-Manuskript, p. 600: “*Damit nicht gnug, es habenn auch drüer geschwirnt die schentliche lesterer, die Sacramentarij mit irenn selztamenn gloseern vnd auslegungenn.*”
20 Dürr, Predigt-Manuskript, pp. 600 und 602: “*Es sey ein Zeichen seiner kegenwertigkeit, wie das fever ym alten Testament ein Zeichenn war der kegenwertigkett gottis. […] Sie redens zwar vnd bekennens, das der ware leib christi vnd sein wares blut ym Abendmal empfangenn werde, doch nur mit dem glaubenn, vnd nicht mit dem leiblichen mund.*”
Dürr underlined the confession of a bodily consumption of (Img. 142 a–b) Christ's Body and Blood: However, we confess that we receive the Body and Blood of Christ both through faith as well as with the mouth, but in a way, which we earthly men with our reason cannot understand, comprehend, fathom or measure; it is God’s mystery.²¹ But it is not to be considered cannibalism but rather a supernatural food: it is a spiritual food and drink, which effects a miracle against the natural order of things. We do not understand, reason fails to explain it, it is only known to God.²²

However, it is not to be considered cannibalism but rather a supernatural food: it is a spiritual food and drink, which effects a miracle against the natural order of things. We do not understand, reason fails to explain it, it is only known to God.²²

Moreover, Dürr underlined the confession of a bodily consumption of (Img. 142 a–b) Christ’s Body and Blood: However, we confess that we receive the Body and Blood of Christ both through faith as well as with the mouth, but in a way, which we earthly men with our reason cannot understand, comprehend, fathom or measure; it is God’s mystery.²¹ But it is not to be considered cannibalism but rather a supernatural food: it is a spiritual food and drink, which effects a miracle against the natural order of things. We do not understand, reason fails to explain it, it is only known to God.²²

[...]

Because we have a natural revulsion toward human flesh and blood, God made it easier for us, providing our eyes with a more comfortable elements from his creation. His body and blood are there to be enjoyed (Lat. frui), but they have the external form of bread and wine, so that we receive a greater desire for such holy food for the soul.²³ Any doubt of Christ’s presence is removed, for he is present in the Eucharist as a person with his substance and his being, for he gives his true body and his true blood to be enjoyed with the bread and wine.²⁴


²² Dürr, Predigt-Manuskript, p. 603: “es ist ein geistlichs essenn vnd trinkenn, welchs wider die ord­nung der natur auff ein wunderlich weÿse geschicht. Mir verstehens nicht, die vernunft kans nicht ausgründen, es ist dem lieben got allein bekant.”


²⁴ Dürr, Predigt-Manuskript, p. 604: “auch persönlich mit seynern substanz vnd wesen, da er mit dem brod vnd weynn darreicht, seynenn waren nn leib vnd blut zu geniessen.”
Dürrs reaction to positions tending toward the Swiss Eucharistic theology and his proclamation negating them is without a doubt apologetic. To a certain extent, he anticipates the controversial-theological positions in the era of confessionalism as well as the following Protestant Orthodoxy. It should be understood here that the lines of argument follow those of the protagonist in two ways: on the one hand, the Transylvanian-Saxon positions of the representatives at the religious colloquia and polemical publications are expounded upon, on the other hand those conventions are repeated, which were provided by Wittenberg in the context of the German-Roman Empire.

When the first congregations did orient themselves toward the Swiss direction in toward the end of the 1550s (publishing the first confession in this direction at the synod in Marosvásárhely in 1559) the conservatively minded Transylvanian Saxons, with their Wittenberg oriented centers of Kronstadt and Hermannstadt, presented their own confession. With the 1561 “Brevis confessio de coena Domini,” Superintendent Matthias Hebler of Hermannstadt distanced himself very clearly from diverging theological vanguard in Klausenburg – Franz Hertel (Dávid Ferenc) and Kaspar Helth (Heltai Gáspár). Superintendent Hebler’s (†1571) gravestone celebrated that he battled the sects and defended the holy teachings with sound faith. Both these accolades show the sharp and relentless opposition of some of the leading Transylvanian-Saxon theologians towards Swiss-Reformed theology in the second half of the 16th century. This was especially applicable to the demarcation from the Hungarian reformation movement in Transylvania, in contrast to the indefinite attempt for many years between 1566 and the 1580s to integrate and balance the different theological currents.

The position (1590) of the Royal Judge (iudex regius) Albert Huet (Img. 143a–b) followed the same direction as the Saxon Reformation, which was particularly conservative and was oriented toward the Catholic, pre-Reformation rites and customs. In his Latin cover letter for the delivery of wood for the new organ (Img. 144) in the cathedral of Weißenburg (after the Unitarians had been stopped from using this sacral space), which was addressed to Prince Sigismund Báthory, he wrote,

*And now, as your majesty is bringing the ornamentation of the church back into life, I ask Almighty God that you not be seduced in any way from Davidis’ adherents [the radical Unitarians] but that you remain in our [the traditional Evangelical-Saxon] faith and similar*

27 Jekeli, Bischöfe, p. 11.
28 Jekeli, Bischöfe, p. 15.
churches; for we have old Catholic prayers, organs, the Gospels according to the Catholic divisions, feast-days, exorcisms, individual confession, an altar, sacraments, Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, not just a mere symbol like the Calvinists, but a visible sign of invisible grace, as Saint Augustine teaches.29

It cannot therefore be doubted that, officially, the political representation of the Saxon Political University and the Transylvanian-Saxon Superintendency of Birthälm maintained an image of themselves as a confessional community, which was oriented toward the Confessio Augustana, deeply rooted in the Catholic tradi-

29 Zitiert nach Friedrich SCHULER VON LIBLOY, Türken- und Jesuitenzeit, p. 108.
tion and cultivated belligerent anti-heretical ambitions.

But when one regards the internal situation of the Superintendency of Birthälm, this image has to be questioned, for there is information and indications to be found there, which provoke the following questions:

First, one needs to ask if the election of Lukas Unglerus to the Superintendency in 1572 (elected by the synod with a margin of 36 to 15) could have been motivated by the dismissive stance of many Saxon clerics toward the conservative reformational movement of the South-Transylvanian cities Kronstadt and Hermannstadt?30 Furthermore, did the interruption at the Synod of 1572 (where the majority of the present clergy wanted to carefully get to know the Confessio Augustana before agreeing and swearing to it) signalize an indifference toward Lutheran teaching?31 Additionally, one should ask if the ultimate acceptance of the Confessio Augustana (which had been demanded by the princes) was actually a (ecclesiastical-)political decision of opportunism on the part of the synod, which the superintendency was obligated to protect in the face of any meddling from the princes? One would have to search for any clues for the repeated emphasis of theological positions and the controversies arising because of them. Later restrictions of them through synodic motions33 would also have to be investigated. There’s an additional need to clarify the fact that the synod forbade the sons of clerics and teachers to attend any schools of the Catholics or anti-Trinitarians but left the Reformed colleges and universities unmentioned. And it has to be asked what conclusions can be drawn from the indications of Crypto-Calvinist thought among Saxon clerics, even at the level of the general-deanship or superintendency.35 Could it be that moving the superintendency to Birthälm in this context was also a signal for the indecisive theological opinion among the

30 Jekeli, Bischöfe, p. 28.
31 Reinert, Gründung, p. 313.
33 Jekeli, Bischöfe, pp. 40–41.
34 Jekeli, Bischöfe, p. 32.
35 Jekeli, Bischöfe, pp. 32–33, 40, 45–46. See Ulrich A. Wien, Einleitung, p. XLII.
Saxon pastors, leading to an ambivalent formation of confessions? Finally, was the election of a native theologian to be superintendent in 1572, which was decidedly against the will of the prince and against the Political University’s explicit wish for an outside pastor – actually a rejection of this objective, which had a narrower theological permissiveness (spectrum/tolerance/allowance) than did the late Melanchthon’s theology? These questions demand increased attention for the future.

The theological demarcation, both theoretical as well as practical, can be seen in the fact that Matthias Glatz, for example, only felt ready to distance himself from Franz Davidis once the superintendency told him so. Another example is provided by the fact that the City Pastor of Schäßburg, Simon Paulinus, felt himself impelled by external pressure to cease with church usage of the Heidelberg Catechism (while some of his pastoral colleagues and lay advocates were appealing to the prince, understanding the removal of the Heidelberg Catechism as an allegedly unlawful innovation) only in 1615. This demarcation was proclaimed and carried out through official political expressions (even by means of synod-motions) and liturgical formulae. But there were nevertheless regions of overlap, both spatial and theological, which did not measure up to the self-understanding and decisions of many and various clerical synods.

Thus, it is advisable to avoid generalized statements about both the theological position of “the” Saxon-Evangelical church-community until the middle of the 17th century, as well as to avoid the general claim concerning the differences between the individual confessional groups until the resolution of this problematic.

3. Anti-Reformed Antipathy in the 17th Century

The politically dominant Evangelical-Reformed princes in Transylvania, under whose auspices Transylvania had become a signatory of the Peace of Westphalia, gave occasion for anti-Reformed polemic due to their distinct ecclesiastical-political influence – despite the regional respect for the principle of religious freedom. Starting in the middle of the 17th century, the Transylvanian-Saxon author Johannes Tröster wrote in his publication “Das alt- und neu-teutsche Dacia: das ist: Neue Beschreibung des Landes Siebenbürgen” (The old and new German Dacia:...
Img. 145a–c: Views of Sebeș, Sighișoara and Mediaș (Johannes Tröster).
Chapter XVIII

Concerning religion, the prince, nobility and common man are all members of the Calvinist doctrine; the Szeklers are the exception, having papist Catholics and Arians among them. They have excellent Gymnasium in Klausenburg, Neumarkt and other places. The best one by far is the Gymnasium Academicum, which Prince Gabriel Bethlen of Weißenburg sponsored, and where he installed the world-famous Johann Henricus Alstedius, who wrote the magnificent encyclopedia with Piscator. He also brought Johann Henric Bisterfeld to P.P. from Herborn, who is buried there. The gymnasium along with the church and library were reduced to ashes in 1660.

They do not allow any organs, paintings or altars in their churches and do not want to learn any music, regarding such singing as womanly. They only use Lobwasser, whom Molnár translated into Hungarian verse for them. They sing him without any symphonies, making the ears hurt, so that they also following Comenius Atr. Lat. De Musica. If there is someone there, who actually likes music, then he can also do the: Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La and induce head-nodding, as there are anyway many well-educated people among them. All their music is a great bagpipes of a great and crude goat-skin with a few violins and military drums [which is to say, very crude and rustic]. The trumpeters toot out on the field well enough, but they do not understand anything about music. Their pastors walk about clothed like any other laymen and have their hair dressed in the same way. They are only to be recognized as pastors [by the fact that] that they wear a great coat, which reaches down to their ankles. The people of these congregations tend to condemn these pastors because of a triviality and announce their dismissal at the end of the year, so that they [the pastors] must apply for another parish, if they want to and are able.

The situation had drifted in a direction unfavourable for the non-Reformed confessions; the political preponderance of the Evangelical-Reformed princes as well as their foreign maneuvering and power aspirations were often not in any way advantageous for the other ethnic and confessional groups in the principality. It is rather dubious that the plans for an irenic Protestant union, which were repeatedly proposed in the 1630s but never really implemented, actually led to an improvement in relations between the “Lutherans” and the Reformed in Transylvania. This
example provides us with an un-theological, albeit external, antipathy, which was probably flanked by polemical-theological, conventional lines of argument. But one should not rely too heavily on a one-dimensional conclusion, for since the middle of the 16th century there were two Saxon chapters (Tekendorf and Scho- gen) under the supervision of the Hungarian-Reformed church-leadership. There they remained until being assumed by the Landeskirche C. A. in Transylvania in 1861. The degree as to which influences crossed confessional boundaries remains to be researched.

4. The Reception of Songs from the Reformed Tradition into the Saxon Hymnals – an Irenic Trend?

Casting a glance into the manuscript of a Kronstadt hymnal (which Tamás Szöcs has edited and published\textsuperscript{45}), we are able to clearly detect a differentiation. The Manuscript I. F. 78 in the Archive of Kronstadt’s Black Church contains an agenda, catechetical parts, liturgical pieces and an extensive collection of hymns, some even polyphonic. The hymns were primarily intended for use of cantors and pastors in their private life as well as in schools. The collection has been dated between 1630 and 1706, with some songs finding their way into more official hymnals later on. In this context, it is important that there 19 songs originate from Ambrosius Lobwasser (the Lobwasser-Psalter, a translation of the “Geneva Psalter”). This psalter was not intended to be confession-specific but found little reception in the Lutheran tradition (and much more in the Reformed tradition) at the turn of the 17th century. For example, the fact that the theologically rather Reformed song \textit{Komm, Heiliger Geist, und nimm ein deiner Erwählten …} (Come, Holy Ghost, and collect one of your elect …)\textsuperscript{46} can be found there indicates that there was not a strict confessional demarcation at all. The material borrowed from the Reformed tradition is partially, and maybe locally, limited. In these cases, we can see an open, knowing perception of the recipients from Saxon circles. Nevertheless, the continued usage of songs from the Catholic tradition (including some Latin liturgical songs and choral settings) within the Superintendency of Birthälm, as well as the intensive reception of hymns of “Lutheran” origin provide obvious evidence that the conservative character of the Transylvanian-Saxon orientation toward the Confessio Augustana remained essentially untouched until well into the 18th century, and even longer with less intensity.

\textsuperscript{45} Tamás Szöcs, Kirchenlied, pp. 409–413; Szöcs, religioase, p. 162.

\textsuperscript{46} Library of the Brukenthal-Museum Hermannstadt (Sibiu), Tr. XVII/408-409: Gesangbuch … in der Hermann Stadt 1616/1617: Nr. 220.
On the other hand, the ethnic difference between the Saxons and Magyars in Transylvania was so marked that the confessional differences were considered essential group-specific factors, adding to other cultural differences in the stabilization of identity.

**Conclusion**

While the official stance of the Transylvanian Evangelical superintendency decidedly favoured the Confessio Augustana since 1572, one can only speak of a closed, uniform confessional space coined by Wittenberg starting in the 17th century. It even contained the congregations outside of the legal jurisdiction of the political estate of the *Universitas Saxonum*. The conservative side of the Reformation, which was supported by the politicians of the Nationsuniversität, at first glance appeared to be strongly aligned with pre-Reformation/Catholic traditions.

The polemical-theological tensions of the 16th century in the superintendency moved within the spaces allowed by Wittenberg and were marked by their sharp polemics, particularly concerning Eucharistic theology.

The 17th century saw the (mostly ethnic) antipathy toward Evangelical-Reformed Hungary continue in Transylvania. At the same time, two Saxon chapters survived relatively unscathed under Reformed church-leadership. Even if mutual conversation appears to be extremely marginal during the time of Ottoman rule, there are nevertheless recognizable traces which show that mutual perception could indeed lead to restricted borrowing from each other – for example, in church-music.