



KĀRLIS IRBE

1861–1934

150 GADU
JUBILEJAS
KONFERENCES
MATERIĀLU KRĀJUMS

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1861–1934

150 gadu jubilejas konferences materiālu krājums

Sastādījis Voldemārs Lauciņš



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Dr. theol. Darius Petkūnas,
Helsinki universitātes Teoloģijas fakultāte,
Klaipėdas universitātes Teoloģijas fakultāte

Efforts by the Lutheran Churches in Courland, Livonia, and Independent Latvia to Revise the 1897 Russian Imperial Agenda

Dr. theol. Darius Petkūnas,
Faculty of Theology, Universities of Helsinki and Klaipėda

In the eyes of many the 1897 Russian Imperial Agenda, *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche* (*Agenda for the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in the Russian Empire*), was the high-water mark and the last word of the Lutheran Church in the empire on the subject of liturgy. Later generations gained this impression because it was this agenda which was reprinted again in Russian, Latvian, German, and Estonian editions with at most only minor modifications.¹ This impression, however, is misleading. The twenty year period between the publication of the agenda and the October Revolution was a time of intense liturgical research in the Russian Lutheran Church, particularly in the Livonian, Courlandian, and St. Petersburg consistorial districts. The projected goal was the formulation and publication of a new Imperial Agenda. WWI and the October Revolution made this goal unachievable; however, modest efforts to revise the agenda continued in both the Latvian and German Synods in Independent Latvia. What resulted was the publication of Latvian and German language agendas in 1928 and 1930.

The aim of the present study is to offer a picture of the early attempts to revise the 1897 Imperial Agenda in both Courland and Livonia and the liturgical reforms incorporated in the Latvian and German editions of the agenda of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church before WWII. Special attention is given to the rite of Confirmation and the Chief Divine Service, both of which were matters of special concern among many Lutherans at the beginning of the 20th century. The study is based on primary source

¹ *Служебникъ Евангелическо-Лютеранской Церкви Россійской Имперіи*. Петроградъ 1916; *Agenda Latwijas Ewangeliskas-Luteriskas Basnizas latveeschu draudsem*. I. und II. dala. Riga 1928 (henceforth – *Agenda* 1928); *Agende für die deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden Lettlands*. In gekürzter Form herausgegeben im Auftrage der Synode der deutschen evang.-luth. Gemeinden Lettlands. Riga 1930 (henceforth – *Agende* 1930); *Eesti Evangeeliumi Luteri Usu Kiriku Agenda*. Tallinn 1994;

material, including liturgical agendas, draft proposals, and synodical protocols, as well as historical secondary source material.

1. Introduction

Modern Latvia first appeared on the map only after World War I and the 1920 Peace of Riga. Although Latvians were the largest single ethnic group in the Lutheran Church in the Russian empire – there were no less than 1,293,000 of them – they had no special sessions of their own in the synods until the end of the 19th century, when they were allowed to meet as an ethnic interest group in the Courlandian and Livonian Synods. Lutherans in Latvia were always divided between those who spoke German and those who spoke Latvian. There were in 1914 75,000 German speaking and 575,000 Latvian speaking Lutherans in Courland. In Livonia at that time there were 100,000 German speaking Lutherans and 650,000 who spoke Latvian.² The Germans had traditionally been predominate in the church, but after the collapse of the Russian empire and German imperialism that situation quickly reversed. In 1922 the church established an episcopal-synodical form of church government with Archbishop Kārlis Irbe, a Latvian, at its head. The Germans also had their own synod; their Bishop was Peter Harald Poelchau. These two bishops served the Latvian and German speaking groups in the Latvian Church.

Among both Latvian and German groups the standard agenda was the 1897 St. Petersburg Agenda. Two German language editions of this book were published. The 1897 edition was followed by a slightly corrected second edition in 1898.³ The single Latvian translation of the agenda appeared first in 1900 for use in Courland and 1901 for Livonia. Both bore the title: *Agenda preeksch ewangeliumatizigahm Lutera draudsehm kreewu walsti* (*Agenda of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in Russian Empire*).⁴

The 1897 Agenda was generally regarded as satisfactory and it was well accepted in the churches; however, by 1913 voices were being raised in Livonia calling for further study with a view toward the publication of a revised edition. This was a reaction against the efforts to reform the liturgy which had been initiated in the St. Petersburg consistorial district in 1908. In that year a commission had been established to examine the

² *Luthers Erbe in Russland*. Moskau 1918, 98.

³ *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche*. St. Petersburg 1897; *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche*. St. Petersburg 1898.

⁴ *Agenda preeksch ewangeliumatizigahm Lutera draudsehm kreewu walsti*. I. un II. dala. Jelgawa 1900; *Agenda preeksch ewangeliumatizigahm Lutera draudsehm kreewu walsti*. I. un II. dala. Jelgawa 1901.

1904 proposals of Pastor Alfons Meyer of Sarata. In his draft recommendations, *Entwurf zu einem Anhang zur Agende* (*Draft of a Supplement to the Agenda*), Meyer contended that the Divine Service needed to be simplified. He insisted that the printed collects needed to be replaced by free prayer and that the chanting of prayers should be eliminated entirely. He wanted to further eliminate the singing of the Kyrie after the Confession of Sins, stating that a simple Amen was quite sufficient. He also called for the elimination of the traditional practice of the laying-on-of-hands at the Our Father in Holy Baptism, asserting that it supported the erroneous notion that a blessing was being imparted. He went on to declare that the vows imposed upon children in the Rite of Confirmation were inappropriate.⁵

Livonian and Courlandian deaneries discussed Meyer's critique and proposals in 1904 and declared them out of order.⁶

2. Concerns about the Rite of Confirmation

In Courland and Livonia, as in Germany, there were some continuing questions about Confirmation. New attention was being given in academic circles to religious education, and churchmen were beginning to join in the discussion. As early as 1903 Pastor Traugott Hahn, the university preacher at Dorpat, had brought up the matter of Confirmation in the Livonian Synod. He wondered aloud whether the church's Confirmation requirements ought not be rescinded. Confirmation involved the taking of oaths by persons not sufficiently mature to do so responsibly. Further, some unbelievers might be willing to be confirmed simply so that they could get married, since priests would marry only those who had been confirmed. He suggested that the agenda rite of Confirmation should be revised so as to completely separate mandatory religious instruction from the laying-on-of-hands and blessing and First Communion associated with Confirmation. In this way legal requirements could be fulfilled without requiring that unbelievers participate in the religious ceremony of Confirmation.

In the heated discussion which followed Senior Pastor Thomas Girgensohn of St. Jakob Church in Riga stated that it was up to the deaneries to find ways to make appropriate exceptions to the regulations. They must decide what latitude should be allowed in framing Confirmation questions about the confession of the faith and related matters, and their decisions

⁵ Alfons Meyer Einige Vorschläge für den Anhang zur Agende. Odesa 1904, 35–52.

⁶ Protokoll der 70. Livländischen Provinzial-Synode, gehalten in Werro vom 25. bis zum 30. August 1904, 22–23; Protokoll der im Jahre 1905 in Mitau abgehaltenen 70. Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode, Mitau [190?], 25.

should be brought to the synod for discussion and action. The deaneries should also discuss how freedom of conscience and its relationship to mandatory Confirmation were to be understood. Dean Kārlis Irbe of Wenden (Latv. *Cēsis*) took a different approach. If Confirmation were eliminated, he wondered aloud, what would be the mark of belonging to the Lutheran Church? How could it be known whether one was a member or not? If the church were to repeal its Confirmation requirement to meet the demands of modern unbelief, she would be engaging in an act of self-deception, he asserted. Behind this was the unspoken question of whether or why the church should shape her actions so as to accommodate unbelievers. A commission was established to examine the matter and to draw up a series of questions for the deaneries to discuss.⁷

The matter came up again in the 1905 Livonian Synod, which met at a time of revolutionary change in Russia. On October 30, 1905 Tsar Nicholas II issued a *manifesto* on freedom of conscience which allowed even the Russian Orthodox the possibility of leaving that Church and joining another. It was reported to the synod that the deaneries were almost unanimously agreed that the Confirmation vows were an integral part of the rite and that the public confession of faith was also essential. Several speakers raised questions concerning the relationship between Confirmation and the Marriage service. They wondered whether these services ought not be completely separated and an optional civil marriage ceremony be devised for the unconfirmed. Questions arose concerning the form and shape of Confirmation. Pastor Hahn again brought up the question of freedom of conscience, Communion requirements, and the possible introduction of a civil marriage ceremony. Delegates noted that according to the present church law no one could be married who had not been confirmed. Dean Irbe contributed to the discussion by warning the pastors that they must not allow themselves to be put into the position of being required to marry atheists. It was decided that a new commission should be appointed to prepare a revision of the Confirmation rite. A motion to eliminate the Communion requirement for catechumens was referred to the deaneries.

Dean Dr. Roderich Bidder of Dorpat urged the 1907 Livonian Synod to divide its Confirmation proposals into several groups. The assembly decided to take up first the matter of whether there ought to be a formal ceremony for the completion of catechetical instruction separate from

⁷ Protokoll der 69. Livländischen Provinzial-Synode, gehalten in Wenden vom 20. bis zum 26. August 1903. Riga 1903, 14–15.

Confirmation. This would make it possible for unbelievers to go through the course, get some sort of certificate of completion to satisfy legal authorities, and yet not be required to be confirmed. This proposal provoked much discussion both *pro* and *con*. It appeared to some to be a solution to a difficult problem. Others objected that it solved nothing, because it did not ensure that atheists and agnostics would decide to forego Confirmation. In other words they might choose to be confirmed and fly under a false flag as though they were earnest believers.

A second category of questions concerned the liturgy of Confirmation and the formulation of an appropriate affirmation of faith. It was agreed that such an affirmation was necessary and some were emphatic in their insistence that the Apostles' Creed was not a suitable affirmation of faith, since adolescents were not yet sufficiently mature to study it in depth. Pastor Theodor Hoffmann warned the assembly that to abandon the Apostles' Creed was to take a step toward theological liberalism and that this first step would inevitably lead to further steps. Those who could not bring themselves to confess the Apostles' Creed ought not to be confirmed or communed at all, he stated. The Riga city deanery offered a shortened version of the Creed for consideration, and taking a very different approach the Wolmar (Latv. *Valmiera*) pastors insisted that everything in the Creed was important and it ought not to be shortened. It was more than a suitable confession of faith; it was the church's confession. Some offered the opinion that the confession of faith had only subjective value, while others insisted that it was important objectively.

Yet another committee was formed to examine the matter. In 1908 Pastor Hoffmann, a member of this committee, reported that on the basis of inquiries made in the deaneries a revision of the order of Confirmation and the examination of the confirmands had been prepared. The new order retained the Apostles' Creed as the principle expression of the faith of the church drawn from the Holy Scriptures and confessed by the Lutheran Church. It was decided that a preliminary confession of faith in the triune God over and above the Apostles' Creed was not needed. Three questions should be put to the confirmands. The old scrutiny which asked whether the confirmand promised with all zeal to continue to walk in faith following his Savior in humility and obedience and loving God with his whole heart and his neighbor as himself, must now be modified: "Trusting in God's mercy will you truly follow your Savior in this faith, then answer: 'Yes'." The further question whether the confirmand would live and walk

in the means of grace with constant prayer, that is, faithfully use the Word and Sacrament, was modified to: "Do you also wish to live accordingly, remaining in prayer and faithfully using God's Word and Sacrament, then answer: 'Yes'." The old third question, asking that the confirmand pledge that he would continue steadfast in this faith in life and death, was dropped altogether.

None of these were major changes but the ensuing discussion made it evident that the synod was not yet ready to make a decision. Further input was needed from the deaneries. The 1909 synod was still not ready to act, and the matter was put off until the 1910 synod, at which Dean Thomas Girgensohn of the Riga city deanery reported that the second commission had completed its deliberations and found itself unable to come to agreement. His committee opted for the 1908 formulary with a few minor adjustments. Again in 1913 the matter of the Confirmation formula was brought before the synod, this time by the Riga city deanery, which wanted to allow the optional use of the amended Confirmation formulary of 1909 and 1910. The question was put to the entire assembly. The General Superintendent Theophil Gähtgens, president of the synod, stated that this was not a matter which one provincial synod could decide. The General Consistory in St. Petersburg would have to be consulted.⁸ Before this could be done the guns of August were sounding and Europe was going to war.

In the Courlandian consistorial district as well questions concerning the "what, when, and why" of Confirmation were being raised. In the 1905 Courlandian Synod Pastor Theodor Becker of Frauenburg (Latv. *Saldus*) proposed that a committee be selected to draft a new Confirmation liturgy for study at the next synod.⁹

In the 1906 synod Pastor Eduard Wieckberg presented a paper, entitled: *Die Reformbewegung in der Konfirmationsfrage* (*The Reform Movement in the Question of Confirmation*). In it he offered an overview of developments in Confirmation practices since the Stuttgart *Kirchentag* of 1869. Wieckberg stated that there were certain parameters which Confirmation reform must not transgress. Confirmation reform was necessary, but it needed to be formulated according to Gospel principles. Furthermore, the proposal that the Apostles' Creed be replaced with some free confession

⁸ Protokoll der 75. Livländischen Provinzial-Synode, gehalten zu Dorpat vom 2. bis zum 8. September 1909. Riga 1910, 28-30; Protokoll der 76. Livländischen Provinzial-Synode, gehalten zu Fellin vom 18. bis zum 23. August 1910. Riga 1911, 25-26; Protokoll der 79. Livländischen Provinzialsynode, gehalten in Wolmar vom 21. bis zum 27. August 1913. Riga 1914, 13.

⁹ Protokoll der im Jahre 1906 in Mitau abgehaltenen 71. Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode. Mitau [190?], 17.

of faith developed especially for the Confirmation service was unacceptable. Also unacceptable was the notion of a special act to serve as admission to the Lord's Supper, since admission to Communion was an essential component of the act of Confirmation itself. Finally, the notion that the declaration of intention of the confirmand might be replaced by a churchly admonition was also deemed unacceptable. Essential to Confirmation, he asserted, was its three components: the confession of faith, the declaration of intention, and the Confirmation blessing. Wieckberg stated that the new agenda must necessarily transform the vows into a declaration of intention and join the several questions presently asked into one or two questions which would cover the same content but in an improved form. However, he noted, the improvement of the Confirmation rite was not really the burning issue. Of far greater concern was the question of how the church was to carry out its responsibility for its young people both before and after Confirmation. Consequently, he suggested that two questions needed to be addressed. First, from the standpoint of the church, school, and home does the rite of Confirmation do what needs to be done for those who are being confirmed? Secondly, what can be done to keep confirmed young people in the church? A lively discussion followed with contributions by Pastor-emeritus Dr. August Bielenstein, Pastor Theodor Becker, and Pastor Alexander Bernewitz. Pastor Becker asked that a commission be established to formulate a new Confirmation rite and Pastor Bernewitz suggested that other consistorial districts should also become involved. Finally, General Superintendent Otto Panck, the president of the synod, proposed that a commission of three members be established to report back to the next synod. The three clergy members of the consistory were chosen.¹⁰

The protocols of subsequent synods in Courland do not indicate that these issues were ever addressed. The Courlandians were more conservative in their approach than the Livonians. It had been the Courlandians who had effectively blocked the radical proposals of Pastor Julius Müthel of St. Petersburg, who had insisted that a special invocation of the Holy Spirit over the bread and wine was absolutely essential to a valid consecration of the Sacrament of the Altar. It had been at the insistence of Courland that the 1897 Agenda allowed for consecration by the *Verba* and Our Father alone.¹¹

¹⁰ *Protokoll der im Jahre 1906 in Mitau abgehaltenen 71. Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode*. Mitau [190?], 16–18.

¹¹ *Protokoll der im Jahre 1895 abgehaltenen sechzigsten Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode*. Mitau [189?], 12–17; *Protokoll der im Jahre 1896 abgehaltenen ein und sechzigsten Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode*.

Consequently the 1897 rite provided two forms of consecration, one by means of a Prayer of Blessing, the *Verba*, and the Our Father and the other by means of the Our Father and *Verba* alone.¹²

3. Efforts to Revise the Chief Divine Service

The St. Petersburg consistorial district had a higher aim than the revision of a ceremony practiced only once a year. In its 1908 synod it called for the revision of the Chief Divine Service which was used every Sunday. A commission was appointed to examine the 1904 proposals of Pastor Meyer which others were now beginning to consider. The 1909 synod heard General Superintendent Guido Pingoud, the president of the synod, give a report on the committee's progress. He drew attention to the commission's printed document *Entwurf zu einem Anhang der Agende für den St. Petersburger Konsistorialbezirk* (*Draft for the Supplement of the Liturgy for Use in the St. Petersburg Consistorial District*) which called for revisions in the Chief Divine Service, the Confession of Sins, and Confirmation. A year later, in 1910, a report on the study of the draft proposals was presented. A new series of Introits were to replace those in the 1897 Agenda. The St. Petersburg clergy had never liked the 1897 Introits. It labeled them Romanistic. There were changes in the *Confiteor* and Absolution and an alternative series of Collects was proposed. It was suggested that a Collect of Thanksgiving be inserted before the Prayer of the Church and that the introductory versicle be dropped. The committee's work was published in St. Petersburg in 1911 under the title: *Anhang zu der Agende für den St. Petersburgischen Konsistorialbezirk: zusammengestellt von der Synode dazu erwählten Kommission* (*Supplement to the Agenda for the St. Petersburg Consistorial District, assembled for the Synod by its select Commission*).¹³

These proposed changes did not constitute either an improvement or an impoverishment. The response to them in the other consistorial districts

Mitau [189?], 34–35.

¹² *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche*. I Theil. St. Petersburg 1897, 15.

¹³ *Protokoll der einundsiebzigsten Prediger-Synode des St. Petersburgischen Ev. Lutherischen Konsistorialbezirks gehalten in St. Petersburg vom 17. bis zum 20. Februar 1908*. St. Petersburg 1908, 23–24, 3; *Protokoll der zweiundsiebzigsten Prediger-Synode des St. Petersburgischen Ev. Lutherischen Konsistorialbezirks, gehalten in St. Petersburg vom 1. bis zum 4. Februar 1909*. St. Petersburg 1909, 43–44; *Protokoll der dreiundsiebzigsten Prediger-Synode des St. Petersburgischen Ev. Lutherischen Konsistorialbezirks, gehalten in St. Petersburg vom 21. bis zum 24. Februar 1910*. St. Petersburg 1910, 35–36; *Anhang zu der Agende für den St. Petersburgischen Konsistorialbezirk zusammengestellt von der Synode dazu erwählten Kommission*. St. Petersburg 1911.

was cool. The Courlandians and Livonians were looking for a revision of the Confirmation rite and had no interest whatever in making any changes in the Sunday Divine Service.

By 1913 the attitude was changing, at least in Livonia. In reaction to the St. Petersburg proposals they issued an official opinion, entitled: *Gutachten der livländischen liturgischen Komitees zum "Anhang zu der Agende für den St. Petersburgischen Konsistorialbezirk"* (*Opinion of the Livonian Liturgical Committee Concerning the "Supplement to the Agenda for the Use of the St. Petersburg Consistorial District"*). In it they decried what they described as the "huffing and puffing" of the St. Petersburgians and their notion that their persistent harping about the liturgy would eventually wear their opponents down. They were still grumbling about the traditional Introits but what they were offering in place of them was no improvement at all. The Livonians stated that they were not suggesting that improvements were not possible, but in their view improvements would include making more and better use of the treasures of the ancient church, especially the Eastern Church. By way of example they suggested that a prayer after the manner of the *Didache* should be introduced after the *Sanctus*. The following scheme was suggested:

Pastor: "Holy Father of all the world, we praise you and give you thanks for the bread of life and the source of salvation which of your eternal grace you have given us in Jesus Christ. To you be praise forever. We now bring before you what you have given to us, and we implore you that you would take and bless it. We bring to you our heart and life for it belongs to you. Bless us, fill us with your grace, sanctify us through and through that we may be worthy of eternal life, and just as this bread was made from many grains of wheat from the field and this drink was made from many grapes from the vine to be one bread and one cup, so gather your congregation together from the ends of the earth into your eternal kingdom. Amen."

Congregation then sings stanza eight of Nicolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf's "Heart and heart made one together" (*"Herz und Herz vereint zusammen"*):

Let us thus be joined together,
Just as you are with the Father,
Until here on this earth
There are no more severed members
And only from your wick

Let our light shine,
So that all the world will acknowledge
That we are your disciples."

Three other alternatives are provided, all from Pietist or Reformed sources. Suggested are such stanzas as "You who Still in the Last Night" (*"Der du noch in der letzten Nacht"*) and "Remember your disciples' flock" (*"Erinnre deine Jüngerschar"*) from Nicolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf's "O Love, who in the deepest need" (*"O Liebe, die in fremde Noth"*), "Bind together Heart to Heart" (*"Bind zusammen Herz und Herz"*) – the tenth stanza of "Behold, how good and how pleasant" (*"Sieh, wie lieblich und wie fein ist's"*) by Michael Müller, a disciple of Francke, and "One Flock and One Shepherd" (*"Eine Herde und ein Hirt!"*) by the Reformed theologian Friedrich Adolf Krummacker.

Pastor: "Almighty God, heavenly Father, in deepest humility we implore you; let us receive bread and wine in remembrance of the sufferings and death of your Son and by this means make us to be partakers of his body and blood according to his promise, for our Lord Jesus Christ in the night in which he was betrayed ...

In Jesus name we pray: Our Father, etc."

Congregation: "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

Pastor: "As often as you eat this bread, etc." "The peace of the Lord be with you all." Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: "Lord Jesus Christ, you are the living bread which came down from heaven, so unite yourself to us that none of us can be wrested out of your hand. You are the vine, we are the branches. Let us continue to grow in you that abiding in you and you in us we may bring forth fruit that abides forever. Amen."¹⁴ Distribution and *Agnus Dei* follows.¹⁵

The prayer is indeed lofty and builds on ancient models, but it could perhaps have articulated more clearly the Lutheran doctrine that the body and blood are communicated in and under the bread and wine. It asks

¹⁴ The prayer, which is based upon the Prayer of Preparation for Communion in the Roman Mass: *Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi etc.*, is taken from the *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche in Hessen. Entwurf auf Grund der althessischen "Agenda, das ist Kirchenordnung etc."* von 1574. Cassel 1894.

¹⁵ *Gutachten des livländischen liturgischen Komitees zum "Anhang zu der Agende für den St. Petersburgischen Konsistorialbezirk."* – *Mittheilungen und Nachrichten für die evangelische Kirche in Russland*, begründet von Bischof Dr. C. C. Ulmann, gegenwärtig redigirt von G. Hillner. Bd. 66. Riga 1913, 133–138.

that those who receive the earthly elements in remembrance of Christ's sufferings and death might have their portion in his body and blood – an expression capable of interpretations and fully acceptable to the Reformed and Anglicans.

The Livonians were dissatisfied with the unadorned *Verba* and wanted a more historic liturgy which would draw on the heritage of the medieval church and Eastern Orthodoxy, as well as recently discovered manuscripts such as the *Didache* and the *Clementines*. On the other hand, the St. Petersburgians wanted a more thoroughly Protestant rite – a “true” Lutheran liturgy in down to earth terms, shorn of ceremonials reminiscent of medieval Catholicism. It might well be asked whether either alternative would have been adequate.

4. Revision of the Latvian and German Agendas in independent Latvia

Word War I brought an abrupt end to discussions about liturgical revision. At the end of the war Lutheran parishes in Russia proper found themselves in the hostile environment of the Soviet Union. For them it was survival and not the revision of the liturgy which was their pressing concern. Courland and Livonia disappeared from the map. They were drawn together in the emerging nation of Latvia. Standing on the altars of the churches in Latvia were the same agendas that had been in use since 1897 – the German and Latvian editions of the 1897 St. Petersburg Agenda. Some changes in it were needed. The agenda mandated prayers for the tsar, his household, his government, and his ministers. These no longer existed. The tsar and his household were lying in shallow graves in Yekaterinburg, and the tsarist government and ministers had been replaced by Bolsheviks. Latvia now had a president and was governed by the *Saeima*. The president and *Saeima* were very much in need of prayers, and the consistory prepared new petitions calling upon God on their behalf. Apart from this it appears that the concerns raised before the WWI about the revision of the Chief Divine Service and the consecration of the Sacrament were no longer a matter of high priority. It was also evident that the language of the agenda needed to be brought up to date.

A new edition of the Latvian Agenda incorporating some linguistic improvements and minor changes was published in Riga, in 1928. It was entitled: *Agenda Latwijas Ewangeliskas-Luteriskas Basnizas latweeschu draudsem* (*Agenda for the Latvian Congregations of the Latvian Evangelical*

Lutheran Church). This was the first revision of the 1897 St. Petersburg rite to be published after the war and the first to be revised and published in Latvia.

As in the case of the Imperial Agenda, the revision appeared in two parts. Part one was entitled "The Divine Service." It included the order for the Divine Service on Sundays and feast days with Communion and a special concluding service to be used when the Lord's Supper was not celebrated. Also included were the Litany, the Introits for Sundays and feast days, Collects for the growth of the inner man, Antiphons, Collects and Prayers of the Church for church feasts, festal seasons, and festival days, Bible verses to be used at the announcement of intercessions in the pulpit, dismissal verses after the Lord's Supper, the order for the Sunday Children's Services, the order for Divine Service on State Occasions, orders for special services such as Bible and Mission gatherings, New Year's Eve, Passiontide, Mission Festival, Cemetery Service, Festal liturgical services for Christmas Eve, Good Friday (two services), Easter, Pentecost, Commemoration of the Faithful Departed, Liturgical Catechetical Divine Service for Children and Confirmands. Part two included pastoral acts such as the Baptism of Children, the Affirmation of Emergency Baptism, the Baptism of Adults, Confirmation, the Reception of new members and those returning to the Lutheran Church, General Confession in the Divine Service, General Confession outside the Divine Service, and Private Confession, Communion of the Sick with Scripture passages for use in the sick room and prayers for the sick and dying, Marriage, a special form for the Marriage of a couple of differing confessions, Funeral Services for Adults and Children in the home, in the funeral chapel, and the church, as well as the Burials of adults and children with lessons, collects, and admonitions, and a form to be used at the Burial of a Suicide. Included also were the Service of Ordination to the Holy Ministry, a form for the Induction into Office of a Bishop, a Pastor, a Missionary, a Congregational Officer, and Pastor's Assistants, the Consecration of cornerstones, new churches, and cemeteries, the Dedication of school buildings and dwellings, the Reconciliation of those previously under the Bann, and a form for the administration of various oaths.

The new revision was based on the 1900/1901 Latvian Agenda. Little was changed, even to the point of retaining the same numbers for the various parts of the Chief Divine Service. The Introit remained unchanged except that the division of parts between pastor and choir was eliminated and in

a few cases there were minor changes in wording. There was still only one Scripture reading from the altar and its invariable response was the threefold Alleluia. The Gospel response "Praise to you, O Christ" was dropped. The directives for the continuation of the Pulpit Office after the sermon were simplified, since there was no longer a tsar to be prayed for or imperial *manifestos* to be announced. In place of them petitions were included for the president, the government, and all in authority in church and state. In the Communion Service no attempt was made to restore the Hosanna and *Benedictus qui venit* to the *Sanctus*. Only one form for consecration was given. It called for the Our Father, the *Verba*, and then the short Prayer of Blessing following the *Verba*:

"We call upon you, merciful heavenly Father, to bless this Holy Supper to all who are gathered at your table to eat this bread and drink from this cup, that according to the promise of your Son they may receive His body and blood."¹⁶

In order to avoid theological controversy the 1897 reference to the blessing of the bread and wine was dropped.

It appears that there was thought to be no need to print a new agenda for any other purpose than to demonstrate that Latvia was now an independent nation. The fact that the agenda was now almost 30 years old and many copies of it were wearing out provided the occasion to demonstrate the need. The most significant change in the new liturgy was the revision of the Prayer of the Church to reflect new political realities. The new liturgy also accommodated itself to the fact that in many parishes there was no choir to sing the Introit, and therefore there was no need to differentiate between pastor and choir. Another innovation was the decision to put the Prayer of Blessing after the *Verba*, perhaps to satisfy those who insisted that the Our Father must come first.

Meanwhile the German Synod set about to publish its own shortened edition of the Imperial Agenda for use in its congregations. It appeared in 1930 under the title: *Agende für die deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden Lettlands* (*Agenda for the German Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of Latvia*); it was published in Riga.

This agenda was printed as a 99 page supplement to the existing German hymnal with a short introductory word by Bishop Peter Harald Poelchau, Pastor Maximilian Stender, and Pastor Theodor Taube. The preface stated that it was for this reason that the numbering of its pages began where the

¹⁶ *Agenda* 1928, 9.

hymnal left off. Included in the book were selected materials from the 1897 edition of the St. Petersburg Agenda, as well as forms which had not appeared in the earlier work but which, according to the editors, had long been in use. The editors called the book an “emergency agenda.”¹⁷

The table of contents of this supplement listed the order for the Chief Divine Service on Sundays and Feast Days, Introits, the Litany, Collects and Prayers of the Church for ordinary use, and Collects and Prayers for feast days and seasons. Formulas for pastoral acts included in the book were Baptism, the Recognition of Emergency Baptism, the Churching of Woman, Confirmation, General Confession, Private Confession, Communion of the Sick, Marriage and Anniversary of a Marriage, the Placing of the Body in the Coffin, the Funeral Service at home or in the Burial Chapel, the Burial itself, and finally, pericopes and preaching texts.

The Chief Divine Service corresponded in most respects to the 1897 service and maintained its four part structure: the Service of Confession (*Beicht-Act*), the Service of Word and Prayer (*Wort- und Gebets-Act*), the Service of the Lord’s Supper (*Abendmahls-Act*), and the Service of Thanksgiving and Blessing (*Dank- und Segens-Act*). However, the various components of these acts were no longer numbered. New to the book was the inclusion of material explaining the Chief Divine Service and its four-part structure, all of it abstracted from Harnack’s *Liturgische formulare III*, 1878.¹⁸ The old agenda had included music and rubrics but the new edition gave neither. Unlike the 1928 Latvian book, the German edition maintained the division between the pastor and choir in the Introit. The 1897 Agenda had offered a choice of two Invitatories before Confession; the new gave only one. The *Sanctus* had no Hosanna or *Benedictus qui venit*. Two alternative forms for consecration (Prayer of Blessing – *Verba* – Our Father; Our Father – *Verba*) were still offered but it was the 1897 Prayer of Blessing rather than the corrected 1898 form which was given. Nowhere in the liturgy was the sign of the cross to be found and the *Verba* in the Communion Service was not printed out. The ending of the service without Communion was simplified from 1897 to include the *Laudatio* and Response, Collect and Amen, Benediction and the threefold Amen. The final hymn stanza was to follow the Benediction. A final note stated

¹⁷ *Agende* 1930, 423.

¹⁸ *Agende* 1930, 426–427; *Theodosius Harnack Liturgische Formulare. Zur Vervollständigung und Revision der Agende für die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche im Russischen Reiche*, herausgegeben von Th. Harnack. Drittes Heft. Der Hauptgottesdienst und die Nebengottesdienste. Dorpat 1878, 3–7.

that when the Prayer of the Church was to be said from the altar to replace the final Collect, it was to be followed by the Our Father.

The major change in the service was the Prayer of the Church, which, as in the Latvian 1928 edition, now reflected the altered political circumstances of the nation. German-speaking Latvians would now pray for their Latvian speaking president and his Latvian speaking government.¹⁹

Conclusions

The early attempts to revise the liturgy in Livonia and Courland had to be dropped because of WWI and the October Revolution. When changes did appear, they appeared as a result of the new geopolitical situation. Although their northern neighbors, the Estonians, would take a more venturesome attitude and make more provocative proposals for the alteration of the 1897 Agenda in their churches, the congregations of the Latvian and German Synods in Latvia appear to have been well satisfied to make only very minor revisions to the 1897 rite. No further revisions would be made until 1980 when the Latvian Church in Exile would publish its own *Agenda* in Toronto, Canada. This revision incorporated some alterations in the Chief Divine Service and provided for changes in the ordination service necessitated by the adoption of new views concerning the pastoral office and its constitution. More extensive changes by the Latvian Church both at home and abroad would be undertaken only after the homeland again regained its independence.

¹⁹ The Prayer of the Church in the agenda now included the following petition: "Bless the President of the state, the parliament, and the government that they may guide the destiny of the land according to your good pleasure." ("Segne den Staatspräsidenten, den Landtag und die Regierung, dass sie des Landes Geschicke lenken mögen, wie es dir gefällt.") *Agende* 1930, 459.

Kopsavilkums priekšlasījumam
Kurzemes, Vidzemes un neatkarīgās Latvijas luteriskās
Baznīcas darbība, revidējot 1897. gada Krievijas impērijas
Agendu luterāņu baznīcai

Dr. theol. Darius Petkūnas,
Helsinki universitātes Teoloģijas fakultāte,
Klaipēdas universitātes Teoloģijas fakultāte

1897. gadā Krievijas impērijā tika izdota Agenda luteriskajai baznīcai. Tā tika izmantota arī latviešu valodu lietojošās draudzēs. Tomēr laika posmā līdz nacionālas baznīcas nodibināšanai Latvijā notika vērā ņemama disuksija par liturģijas jautājumiem gan Vidzemes, gan Kurzemes, gan arī Pēterburgas konsistoriju iecirkņos. Šīs liturģiskās diskusijas pamatā bija vairāki radikāli priekšlikumi.

Sarunas par Agendas saturu noveda pie ticības mācības satura pārskatīšanas. Viens no pamatjautājumiem bija par iesvēti baznīcā. Viedokļi dalījās, vai tai ir tradicionālā nozīme, vai sekularizācijas laikmetā tā būtu baznīcas praksē paturama, vai arī tā būtu kardināli jāmaina. Šajā diskusijā Kārlis Irbe, tajā laikā Cēsu iecirkņa prāvests, iestājās par iesvētes tradicionālo nozīmību.

Tika aktualizēti arī vairāki dievkalpojuma kārtības jautājumi, tai skaitā Sv. Vakarēdiena liturģija. Vairākos gadījumos tika piedāvāts nomainīt līdz šim praktizēto luteriski skaidro terminoloģiju ar jauninājumiem no citu protestantu baznīcu un pareizticīgo teoloģijas.

Latvijas Pirmās republikas laikā izdotajās Agendās latviešu draudzēm (1928) un vācu draudzēm (1930) tika veiktas redakcionālas izmaiņas. Šīs korekcijas neienesa teoloģiskus labojumus, bet skāra politiskos aspektus, proti, tajās vietās kur draudzes lūgšanās 1897. gada Agendā tika minēts cars un Krievijas impērijas valdība, tika ievietoti jaunās Latvijas Republikas prezidents un valdība. Tika veikti arī valodas labojumi, kuros izteiksmes veids pietuvināts aktuālajam valodas lietojumam.