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Russian Imperial Lutheran Liturgy since the Publication of the 1832 Agenda

The appearance of the officially sanctioned and authorized Russian imperial Lutheran Church law and agenda of 1832¹ drew all Lutheran congregations and their members together into a single church. Now Lutherans in a far-flung empire would for the first time worship using the same rites. Congregations would continue to worship in Estonian, or Latvian, or Swedish, or Finnish, or German but all would follow the same pattern of worship and say the same prayers. This was everywhere seen to be an important step forward. Russian Lutherans now began to gain a greater awareness of their liturgical heritage, and with this awareness came also a new appreciation for the church's traditional worship. Theological scholars began to show new interest in the liturgical heritage of the Lutheran Church and began also to take up the wider study of the role of the liturgy in the life of the church in other ages and in other confessions. The scholars were now increasingly aware of the growing body of liturgical literature coming from the pens of theologians in Germany who shared their interests and had greater resources available to aid them in their research.

Within a decade after the first appearance of the 1832 liturgy calls were heard for continued study and the incorporation of the results of that study in the church's official rites. Scholars sought to lead the clergy to a better understanding of the liturgy and further improvements in the imperial rite. Progress along this path would in the course of time lead to the publication of voluminous literature on the liturgy and would become evident in the publication of the 1885 Livonian Agenda and finally the imperial liturgy of 1897, the so-called St. Petersburg Agenda. Interest in the liturgy did not end with the appearance of the 1897 rite, but the perils and privations which the Lutheran Church in the empire would experience in the coming decades finally bring that work to a halt.

Few have given careful attention to the history of liturgical developments in the post-1832 period. Material is available, but it has not received adequate attention. The possibility of moving forward in this study during the Communist period proved to be impossibly difficult for the Lutheran Church in Russia was virtually destroyed and the Baltic Churches struggled to maintain themselves. The congregations which survived continued to worship according to the directives of the 1897 rite, and for the most

1 *Gesetz 1832; Agenda 1832.*

part they continue to do so today, both in the Baltic States and in the reestablished Lutheran Churches in the territory which once comprised the Russian empire. Today these churches are endeavoring to formulate new liturgical rites which will be true to the church's theological heritage and commitment. However, they are not themselves sufficiently aware of the liturgical heritage from which they have come and how that heritage came to develop as it did.

The aim of this article is to throw light on that heritage and, it is hoped, to encourage further discussion of this significant liturgical tradition. The article gives particular attention to the important work of the liturgical committee of the Livonian consistorial district and its leader, the prominent confessional Lutheran theologian Theodosius Harnack. It recounts the developments which led to the appearance of the 1885 Livonian Agenda and the provisional 1893 St. Petersburg rite, the two most important forerunners of the 1897 Agenda. Moving beyond the 1897 rite it describes attempts in the opening years of the 20th century to formulate further revisions of the agenda. These attempts abruptly ended with the October Revolution. Only in Estonia did some measure of liturgical revision continue. Since the question of liturgical revision is a matter of pressing concern in the churches today, a final word about it will be added in the closing paragraphs of the study.

This study is based chiefly on primary source material. This material includes the synodical protocols of the various consistorial districts, the results of the investigations of their liturgical committees, and articles by the theologians and pastors most involved in the work. In addition the theological writings of Theodosius Harnack and the provisional and official agendas of the period stand chief among these documents. There is little secondary material available apart from the liturgical discussions in which the churches are presently engaged and which seek to take into account some 19th century liturgical developments. It would not be incorrect to say that this subject covers what might be termed *Terra incognita*. It offers rich rewards to those who are willing to devote time and careful attention to it.

Initial Reaction to the 1832 Agenda

The *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche* (*Agenda for the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in the Russian Empire*) 1832 was accepted by the church without significant dissension. After a period of acknowledged theological and liturgical impoverishment the church now had a rite strongly influenced by the 1693 Swedish handbook and its liturgical provisions. To some extent the 1811 Swedish Handbook and the new 1822/1829 Agenda of the Prussian Union also exerted influence on the new agenda.² It was the Swedish rite which exerted the strongest influence on the committee which produced the 1832 rite, but the committee also chose to incorporate some features of the Prussian Union Agenda while avoiding some of its

2 *Kyrko-handbok* 1811; *Kirchen-Agende* 1822; *Agende* 1829.

pitfalls. The influence of Rationalism which had formerly been so evident in many liturgies in recent years found no place in the new rite. This was clearly a Lutheran liturgy, incorporating the most essential elements found in traditional Lutheran liturgies, including both common and proper Eucharistic Prefaces and the Sanctus. Two obvious weak points of the new rite were the separation of the celebration of the Lord's Supper from the ordinary Sunday Divine Service and the permissive usage of the Prussian Union Agenda's distribution formula: "'Take and eat', says Christ, our Lord, 'This is my body - - .'"³ Noteworthy also was the incorporation of the Kyrie into the Confessional Act between the Confession of Sins and the Declaration of Grace. This made of the Kyrie a plea for forgiveness instead of a petitionary greeting directed to the Lord who was now coming among his people. So too, the Gloria in excelsis was made into a Hymn of Thanksgiving for the Absolution instead of a remembrance of the Incarnation. There was no Introit, but this element of the service had in some church orders been eliminated already in the 16th century. Where it had survived the Rationalist liturgies had eliminated it altogether.

For over a decade there were no significant complaints or criticisms directed against the new 1832 service. The church was preoccupied with translating the rite into the languages of the people and the publication in 1835 of an edition which pastors could carry with them. The fact that the new agenda had originally been bound together with the new 1832 Church Law led some to incorrectly esteem the agenda as just as sacrosanct as "the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed."⁴ Later editions of the church law had to make it clear that although it was the church law which established the agenda, the agenda itself was not a constitutive element of the church law. The 1832 rite created a new appreciation for the church's liturgical tradition and in some it also fostered a desire for deeper study and the incorporation of the results of that study in a future revision of the agenda.

Liturgical Reforms in the Period 1849–1883

Awareness of the need for liturgical reform resulted from the new awakening of confessional consciousness which appeared throughout the Baltic lands wherever contact with Germany made pastors aware of the work of Wilhelm Löhe, Theodor Klicfoth, Johann Wilhelm Friedrich Höfling, and others. These men were publishing the results of their careful examination of the historic liturgies of the church and had themselves come to a new appreciation of the relationship between the liturgy and the church's Confessions. The first liturgical committee in the Russian empire to suggest revision of the 1832 Rite was established by the Livonian Synod in 1849. Chosen to head this committee was Doctor Theodosius Harnack of the University of Dorpat. The committee immediately undertook a study of the church's liturgies,

3 *Agende* 1832, 12.

4 Daniel 6:8.

their historical roots, and their underlying principles. Its report to the 1851 Livonian Synod included several suggestions for corrections which would bring the 1832 rite into closer conformity with historical norms. Later that year Harnack published *Liturgische Beiträge*. In it he provided concrete examples of corrected forms. The 1855 Livonian synod expressed the desire that the church-at-large should be made aware of the liturgical committee's findings and recommendations. Already pastors in the city of Riga and Estonia had indicated their interest in these Livonian developments and expressed the desire that some Livonian recommendations be adopted in their own districts.⁵

Liturgical progress in Livonia was soon confronted by a formidable obstacle. In 1853 Harnack departed to take a position at the University of Erlangen. This gave occasion to Livonian Pietists and other critics under the leadership of Pastors Hugo Braunschweig, Gotthard Vierhuff, and others of a strongly Protestant spirit to launch a vigorous campaign against the committee and its proposals. Their battle cry was no changes to the 1832 rite. These complaints crippled but did not halt the efforts of the committee to move forward in its work. Its final proposals were brought before the synod in 1859. Many of these proposals dealt with minor matters, but two must be noted, i.e., the reintroduction of the Introit at the beginning of the Divine Service and the insertion of a Prayer of Blessing in connection with the consecration of the bread and wine. The synod accepted these proposals and declared that the revised liturgical report should be submitted to a future general synod. The opponents, however, were able to effectively block implementation of the proposals. Their spokesman was Pastor Moritz Georg Kauzmann. He insisted that the synod had no right to implement these decisions until they had been agreed in every parish. At the same time it was pointed out that the committee's proposals would need to be forwarded to and approved by a general synod, otherwise the proposals would remain tentative and local. The General Consistory in St. Petersburg had little interest in promoting the recommendations. It regarded the present liturgy as adequate to the church's needs, and in any case, a general synod would need to be called to approve the new liturgy and it was scarcely conceivable that the tsar would allow that. Those who were critical of the committee and its recommendations stepped up their criticisms claiming that the committee had produced little more than disputes and contentions.⁶

New impetus toward reform came when Harnack returned to Dorpat in 1866. He began at once to lay a firmer foundation for a liturgical renewal built upon preaching, Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, and the Lord's Supper – the means by which the favor and mercy of God are offered, conveyed, and received. In 1871 and 1874 he published two volumes of *Liturgische formulare* which included a revised liturgy of Holy Baptism,

5 *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1849, 10, 14; *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1851, 12–13; Harnack 1851; *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1855, 10; *Protokoll der Synode der Prediger des Rigaschen Consistorial-Bezirks* 1855, 14–15; *Protokoll der Synode des Estländischen Consistorial-Bezirks* 1857, 9.

6 Braunschweig 1857 a; Braunschweig 1857 b; *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1857, 16–18, 23; Vierhuff 1859; *An die Lvl. Sprengels-Synoden vom Liturgischen Comité* 1859; *Extract aus den Protokollen der Sprengels-Synoden* 1859, 9; Kauzmann 1860, 66.

together with the rites of Confirmation, Marriage, and other pastoral acts. In 1877 the first volume of Harnack's *Praktische Theologie* appeared. Harnack articulated the rationale behind the church's liturgical worship and offered a concrete outline of the shape of the Mass. He proposed that a Prayer of Blessing modeled after the prayer found in the Church Order of Pfalz-Neuburg 1543 should be included in the rite. The third of Harnack's liturgical formularies appeared in 1878. It was devoted to a detailed description of the structure of the Mass and went one step beyond *Practical Theology* by proposing a more developed Prayer of Blessing before the Words of Institution which invoked the Holy Spirit upon the blessing of the communicants.⁷

Harnack's research excited the interest of pastors in many consistorial districts. The Courlandian 1874 Synod established its own liturgical committee under the leadership of Pastor Reinhold Friedrich Julius Räder of Goldingen. Räder informed the 1876 synod that his committee was in essential agreement with Harnack's recommendations. However, two years later, 1878, he told the synod that it was evident to him that the Preparatory Service needed to be rearranged, so that the Confession and Absolution would now precede the Introit. It was evident also that the Introit, Kyrie, and Gloria in excelsis constituted the opening portion of the Service of the Word. The 1878 Courlandian Synod decided that it was not willing to make any radical alteration in the existing rite.⁸

The recommendations of Harnack and his Livonian committee were received coolly in the St. Petersburg consistorial district. The St. Petersburg pastors had little interest in the church's western catholic liturgical heritage. Some of them preferred a Lutheranism which was academic, anti-Roman, and authentically Protestant. They looked upon the Livonian proposals as the reintroduction of Romanism into the church. They found the proposal that the ancient Introits be included to be a clear indication of this Romanizing tendency, along with the notion that the sacrament was consecrated by the recitation of the Verba and the Our Father. This they regarded as "superstitious, sacramental magic"; they preferred instead the conclusion of recent students of liturgy that the consecration in the upper room was effected when Christ spoke his prayer of thanksgiving and that the church needed such a prayer. They stated that the inclusion of such a prayer as a consecratory act was necessary. Harnack wanted a Prayer of Blessing but still regarded the Verba and Our Father as the center of the Consecratory Act. The St. Petersburg committee reported to the 1879 synod that they found little of value in the recommendations of Harnack and the Livonians. In the minds of the committee members the reintroduction of the Introits at the beginning of the Divine Service seemed to be a Romanizing error.⁹

The first Russian language edition of the 1832 Agenda, *Евангелическо-Лютеранскій краткій служебникъ (Агента) (Short Evangelical Lutheran Service Book (Agenda))*,

⁷ Harnack 1871; Harnack 1874; Harnack 1877; Harnack 1878.

⁸ *Protokoll der Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1876, 12, 19–22; *Protokoll der Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1874, 7–8; Räder 1878 a; Räder 1878 b; Räder 1878 c; *Protokoll der Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1878, 21–25.

⁹ *Protokoll der St. Petersburgischen Predigersynode* 1876, 19–21; Nöltingk 1877; *Protokoll der St. Petersburgischen Predigersynode* 1879, 15–16.

appeared in a compendium only in 1872. In earlier times Lutherans, who were foreigners, were expected to worship only in their mother tongues. Now the Russian language was the mother tongue of the children of the Lutheran immigrants, and the minister of the interior offered no objections to Russian Lutheran services as long as it was understood that proselytizing was not permitted. In addition to this Russian edition a linguistically revised version of the Estonian Agenda appeared in 1877 with a supplement in 1878. A new Latvian translation was published in 1882.¹⁰

The Livonian Agenda of 1885

In 1883 the Livonian Synod decided to move ahead with the publication of its own proposed agenda. They saw no canonical impediment, because they reasoned that Canon 140 of the church law stated that liturgical changes could be made only with the written approval of higher church authorities. The synod decided that its authority was high enough. No approval from the St. Petersburg General Consistory or a General Synod was needed to publish a provisional rite. In 1884 the Livonian 21 page *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche* appeared. The agenda was officially authorized only for use in Livonian parishes but the title made clear that other consistorial districts might find it useful. The agenda contained only the chief Divine Service. It was divided into four major sections: Preparatory Rite, Service of the Word, Service of the Sacrament, and Conclusion. An alternative ending was provided for occasions when there was no Communion. The Preparatory Rite: Hymn – Introit with Gloria Patri – Invitation to Confession – Confession of Sins – Kyrie – Absolution and Amen – Gloria in excelsis (various forms provided); Service of the Word: Salutation, Versicle, Collect – Epistle or Gospel and appropriate responses (both readings on feast days) – Apostles' Creed (Nicene Creed at high feasts) – Hymn – Pulpit Office (Pericope, Sermon, Hymn stanza, Announcements, Intercessions, Votum) – Prayer of the Church (if not already prayed in the Pulpit); Service of the Sacrament: Hymn – Invitation – Preface, Sanctus and Benedictus qui venit – Prayer of Consecration – Verba – Our Father – Pax Domini – Communion (Distribution, Agnus Dei, and other hymns) – Versicle and Response – Post-Communion Collect – Aaronic Benediction – Hymn stanza. A unique feature of this rite was the inclusion of a prayer of consecration which asked that the Father would bless the bread and cup which the congregation set before him and would by the Holy Spirit grant that the communicants would receive the body and blood of Christ under bread and wine for the strengthening of their faith and as the pledge of eternal life. The Kyrie remained in the Preparatory Act connected to the Confession of Sins, as in 1832."

10 *Евангелическо-Лютеранскій краткій служебникъ* 1872, 3; *Agenda* 1877; *Agenda* 1878; *Pauck* 1885, 75; *Masing* 1914, 85–87.

11 *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode* 1883, 10–12; *Agende* 1884.

The first volume of the complete agenda again titled *Agende für die Evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche* appeared in 1885. It included the Divine Service and propria. In 1886 the second volume was published including in it the pastoral acts. Latvian and Estonian translations of the complete work were published in 1889.¹²

Throughout the church the conviction was growing that the official 1832 liturgy, which had been republished in 1835, 1844, 1860, 1866, and 1879, was no longer a suitable norm. Dissatisfaction was cause of concern to the General Consistory. Preparations would need to be made for an official revision of the liturgy. Liturgical committees in consistorial districts could make proposals and formulate provisional rites but only a general synod could formulate an official agenda. No such synod had ever been held nor was the tsar likely to allow it. Therefore the General Consistory decided to put the Livonian proposal before a meeting of the general superintendents of the consistorial districts to meet on November 10, 1892 in St. Petersburg. Complications soon developed. Pastor Julius Hermann Müthel of St. Anna's church in St. Petersburg who claimed to be an expert in Lutheran theology and liturgy insisted that changes must be made in the Livonian proposal to accommodate what he believed to be the correct doctrine of the consecration of the sacrament. He and some supporters in the St. Petersburg consistorial district insisted that the consecration was effected not by the Words of Christ but by the invocation of the Holy Spirit. He insisted that a prayer of blessing must be added to the consecration. The notion of including such a prayer was neither new nor hotly disputed but no one had previously claimed that the inclusion of such a prayer was absolutely essential. Müthel's theories required also the elimination of the *Benedictus qui venit* as inappropriate before the consecration and the elimination of the sign of the cross over the elements which Müthel claimed led some people to believe that the Words of Christ were consecratory. He dismissed the sign of the cross as fostering notions of sacramental magic. Where the sign of the cross belonged, he said, was at the end of the Our Father. He gained a hearing before the superintendents by invitation of the General Superintendent Conrad Raimund Freifeldt, the vice-president of the General consistory and an old friend and colleague. The general superintendents were weary of some of his proposals but were willing to incorporate some of them into the proposed rite. In addition they named him project manager.¹³

The superintendents' proposal was a revised version of the Livonian 1885 Agenda. They published it in 1893 in St. Petersburg under the title *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche*. In the new proposal the Verba was followed by a Consecratory Prayer which asked for God's blessing on the bread and wine and invoked the Holy Spirit for the blessing of the communicants.¹⁴

Questions concerning this new provisional agenda and the Lutheran understanding of consecration were raised in the Dorpat Pastoral Conference in January 1895. There

12 *Agende* 1885; *Agende* 1886; *Agenda II* 1889, 2; *Agenda I* 1889.

13 Müthel 1895, 119–120; Müthel 1898, 20; *Zur Agende* 1898, 2–3.

14 *Agende* 1893.

was much contention concerning whether the sacrament was consecrated by the Verba Christi or by the invocation of God through a Prayer of Consecration. Some pastors argued in favor of the practice of the Eastern Church, others stated that according to the Western Catholic tradition, Luther, and the Book of Concord the Words of Christ were consecratory. Müthel and some of his St. Petersburg colleagues insisted that a special Prayer of Consecration was needed and copies of the prayer they had formulated were distributed. No agreement could be reached. Dissatisfied with the lack of any positive approval of his efforts Müthel published *Ein wunder Punkt in der lutherischen Liturgie* (*An Amazing Point in the Lutheran Liturgy*) in which he contended that the traditional Western understanding of the consecration was in error. He went on to list five specific errors in the Lutheran rite and six actions which must be taken to correct them. His chief concern was that the connection between the consecration and the Words of Christ must be severed.¹⁵

The 1895 Livonian Synod discussed Müthel's paper and stated that there should indeed be a Prayer of Thanksgiving but it insisted that this prayer must be closely connected with the Words of Christ over the bread and cup. The 1895 Courlandian Synod was not as congenial to Müthel's views. It stated that his position had no support in the Lutheran Confessions or in Luther's writings.¹⁶ Elsewhere Pastor Alfons Meyer of Sarata in Bessarabia complained that Müthel had not gone far enough. He insisted that the Words of Christ had no place in the consecration. Indeed they should be moved to the pastoral address to the communicants before the Preface. In this way they would be seen as simply an historical recitation of the occasion of the first communion service and the impression that the Verba were consecratory would be eliminated.¹⁷

The 1896 Courlandian Synod presented Müthel with documentary evidence refuting his position and the 1896 Livonian Synod decided that it must now reconsider their partial acceptance of his views they had earlier affirmed. They decided that as an alternative the new liturgy should permit consecration by the Verba and Our Father alone as in the 1832 rite.¹⁸

1897 St. Petersburg Agenda and Subsequent Developments before the October Revolution

The final revision of the new agenda was completed by the general superintendents meeting in the General Consistory in December 1896. Their final draft was presented to the government in February 1897, and before the end of the year the new agenda was in print under the familiar title *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden*

15 Müthel 1895, 119–120, 129–130.

16 Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode 1895, 18–19; Protokoll der Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode 1895, 14–17; Müthel 1896.

17 Meyer 1896, 354–356.

18 Protokoll der Kurländischen Provinzial-Synode 1896, 12–18; Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode 1896, 17–19.

im russischen Reiche. The work appeared in two volumes. The first included the chief Divine Service and the Propria and the second, the pastoral acts.¹⁹

The structure of the chief Divine Service followed the Livonian order of 1885 as revised in the 1893 the St. Petersburg edition. The rite consisted in four parts. (1) Act of Confession: Hymn – Introit with *Gloria Patri* – Invitatory, Confession of Sins, *Kyrie* – Absolution – *Gloria in excelsis* (2) Service of Word and Prayer: Versicle (on high feasts and Lent) – Salutation and Collect – Epistle – Alleluia or Gospel, Response – Apostles' Creed (Nicene Creed on high feasts and Trinity Sunday) – Hymn – Pulpit Office (Apostolic Greeting, Pericope, Sermon, Hymn stanza, Announcements, Intercessions, Admonition to Christian living, and Votum) – Hymn – Prayer of the Church or Litany. (3) Service of the Lord's Supper: Communion Hymn – optional Invitatory – Preface and *Sanctus* (no *Hosanna* or *Benedictus*) – Consecration (I: Our Father – *Verba* or II: Prayer – *Verba* – Our Father) – Exhortation and *Pax Domini* – Distribution (*Agnus Dei*, Communion hymns). (4) Act of Thanksgiving and Blessing: Versicle – Post-Communion Collect – Aaronic Benediction – concluding Hymn verse. An alternative ending was provided for occasions when there were no communicants.²⁰

A Russian language edition *Служебникъ Евангелическо-Лютеранской Церкви въ Россійской Имперіи* (*Service Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Russian Empire*) was published in 1897, a Latvian translation appeared in 1900 for the Livonians and in 1901 for the Courlandians. A southern Estonian edition appeared in 1899, and the northern edition was published in 1902. A Finnish edition for Finnish speaking Ingrians was published in 1900. Organist Mooses Putro of St. Mary's Church in St. Petersburg produced a special musical setting for the Finnish translation of the St. Petersburg Agenda. It appeared in both Russian and Finnish in 1900. In addition to providing Finnish music Putro also made some changes in the text of the liturgy which brought it into closer conformity with the 1832 rite. The church could not officially condone this action, and it established a commission to produce a music supplement which could be officially authorized. The new supplement appeared in 1906. It brought Putro's work into closer conformity with the 1900 Finnish translation of the Imperial Agenda and served the Ingrian Church for several generations. It came to be called the "Ingrian Mass."²¹

A second edition of the German version was published in 1898 with nine minor corrections. One word was changed in the Eucharistic Prayer of Thanksgiving to clearly identify the bread and cup with the body and blood.²²

Almost immediately after the publication of the agenda a call for change was heard from Pastor Meyer in Sarata. He insisted that the chief Divine Service must be simplified and changes must be made in the baptismal and confirmation rites.

19 *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode 1897*, 21; *Zur Agenda 1898*, 3.

20 *Agende I 1897*, 1–15; *Agende II 1897*.

21 *Служебникъ I 1897*; *Служебникъ II 1897*; *Agenda 1899*; *Agenda 1900*; *Liturgijas rokas gramata 1900*; *Kirkk-käsikirja 1900*; *Agenda 1901*; *Agenda 1902*.

22 *Agende I 1898*, 18–19; *Agende II 1898*.

Although dissatisfaction with the confirmation rite was widespread, most of Meyer's views were rejected by the Courlandian and Livonian Synods.²³

Within a few years the call for the revision of the rite of confirmation was widespread. Newly raised concerns about religious self-consciousness and its development in adolescents led the 1907 Livonian Synod to establish a committee to examine the proper goals and procedures for catechesis and Confirmation. A proposed rite was offered for examination in the deaneries and the 1908 synod but no decision was reached. In the St. Petersburg consistorial district there was concern about the Confirmation rite but uppermost in the minds of the pastors was their continuing criticisms of the Introits. In the 1910 synod a new series of Introits, changes in the Confiteor and Absolution, an alternative series of collects, and other changes were proposed. In 1913 the Livonian liturgical committee reacted against the St. Petersburg complaints, stating that none of their proposals constituted any real improvement. Proper improvements should include greater use of the treasures of the ancient church, especially the Eastern Church, and the introduction of a Eucharistic Prayer modeled after the Prayer of Thanksgiving in the *Didache*. However, the form proposed offered no clear witness to the presence of Christ's body and blood in and under bread and wine. It asked only that those who would receive the earthly elements in remembrance of Christ's sufferings and death might have their portion in his promises.²⁴

With the coming of World War I liturgical interests were laid aside. Preaching in the German language was no longer permitted, but the liturgy could still be in German. Nothing could be printed in the German language, but in 1916 the church was allowed to reprint the Russian edition of the 1897 rite. After the abdication of the tsar all reference to him in the Prayer of the Church was removed and replaced by intercessions on behalf of the provisional government. A General Synod was planned for October 1, 1917 to discuss the place of the church in times of tumult. When October came Russia was occupied with other pressing matters and no General Synod was convened until 1924. In the 1924 meeting little was said about the conduct of public worship, excepting that parish councils were reminded that they were responsible to see that order was kept in the churches and that the reading of the services was provided when clergy were not available.²⁵

Movements towards Liturgical Reforms in the post-Soviet Era

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became independent states at the end of WWI, and the Russian imperial liturgical tradition survived in all three churches. It would continue to serve these churches in the decades to come. The Baltic consistories saw little need for mutual consultation in liturgical matters. Each church would pursue

23 Meyer 1904 a, 27; Meyer 1904 b; Meyer 1904 c.

24 *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode 1907*, 17–19; *Protokoll der Livländischen Provinzial-Synode 1908*, 19–21; *Protokoll der St. Petersburgischen Predigersynode 1910*, 35–36; *Anhang zu der Agenda 1911*, 3; *Gutachten des livländischen liturgischen Komitees 1913*, 125–139.

25 *Служебникъ I 1916*; *Служебникъ II 1916*.

its own particular interests and concerns in theology and liturgy until 1940 when all discussions were stilled. The churches faced new peril when their countries were occupied by a foreign regime which was totalitarian and aggressively atheistic. Before 1940 some steps toward liturgical revision had been taken in Estonia, but they ceased at the beginning of the World War II. During the Soviet period the church in Russia ceased to exist as an organized body; there were only of a few local parishes. In the Baltic Republics liturgical revision was not a matter of significant concern.

It was not until the 1990s that the Baltic and Russian Churches, which formerly comprised the Russian Imperial Church, began independently to consider the revision of the 1897 Imperial Agenda. In 1994 the Estonian Lutheran Church printed the 1951 and 1979 linguistically updated version of the 1902 translation of the 1897 rite which had been prepared by the Estonian Lutheran Church in Exile. The new Estonian Agenda was published in 2009 and showed a strong appreciation for the catholic heritage of Lutheran worship. However, pastors and congregations are permitted to continue to use the 1994 Agenda.²⁶

The Latvian Lutheran Church had republished the Latvian translation of the old rite in 1928 with some linguistic improvements and some minor changes, and the German Synod in Latvia had published in 1930 a shortened edition of the 1897 German version. In 1998 the Latvian Church published a provisional liturgy which offered three forms of the Divine Service. Service A reformulated the service along traditional lines taking advantage of modern research. Service C reproduced the old imperial liturgy and Service B offered a transitional liturgy for congregations moving from the old liturgy to Form A. The new Latvian Agenda was published in 2003 which provided two forms of worship. Pastors and congregations might choose either Form 1 which follows the path of Service A in the 1998 rite or Form 2 which perpetuates Service C based on the old 1928 Agenda.²⁷

The Lithuanian Lutheran Church had never had its own official translation of the Imperial Agenda. In addition western Lithuanian parishes in the Klaipėda Region (Germ. Memelland) had formerly been part of the Prussian Union Church and had used the 1897 Lithuanian translation of the revised 1895 Prussian Union Agenda. Congregations in Suvalkija, which had formerly been under the Warsaw consistory, had continued until 1944 to use the 1886 Agenda of the Polish Lutheran Church. A new provisional liturgy more cognizant of the church's catholic heritage and recent liturgical research was introduced in 1997 and a new agenda is currently being readied for publication. A revised version of the liturgy was included in the new Lithuanian hymnal published in 2007.²⁸

The official agenda of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States was published in 1999. It reproduced with only minor changes in prayers the old Imperial Agenda in modern speech.²⁹

26 *Agenda* 1939; Vihuri 2007, 245–255; *Agenda* 1951; *Agenda* 1979; *Agenda* 1994; *Jumalateenistuste käsiraamat* 2009.

27 *Agenda* 1928; *Agende* 1930; *Agenda* 1980; *Dievkalpojuma kārtības* 1999; *Rokasgrāmata* 2003.

28 *Agende* 1 1886; *Agenda* 1897; *Pamaldy liturgija* 1997; *Krikščioniškos giesmės* 2007, 775–800.

29 *Agenda* 1999.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia decided in its 1993 synod to follow liturgical models which were predominantly Finnish. However, congregations were allowed to continue to use the old Imperial Agenda in its 1900 Finnish translation. A new Ingrian Agenda came off the press in 2005. The service is based on the old Imperial Agenda, with less than a handful of options and some prayers from other sources.³⁰

The Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church has not yet published its agenda. At first the church used the 1897 Russian language rite but later a new liturgy was formulated using liturgical elements taken from Lutheran Worship 1982 (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) and Alternative Service Book 1980 (Anglican).³¹

Since the 1990s independent Lutheran Churches have been established in Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Belarus, and elsewhere in former Soviet Socialist Republics. Some of them continue to use the old imperial Lutheran rite and in the case of the reestablished Ukrainian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, which was organized in 1926 in the Galicia and Volhynia (until 1939 a part of Poland), uses a form of the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom revised and adapted for Lutheran congregations.³²

Committees charged with responsibility for liturgical renewal in these churches today have been eager to acquaint themselves with liturgical research done in other Christian churches and make use of the fruits of that research. These committees have shown themselves open to influences from non-Lutheran sources and they have given close attention to the revisions of the Roman rite in the post-Vatican II period, as well as recent Anglican renewal efforts.

Despite the wide variety of forms which have appeared, in most cases it is still possible to discern the influence of the old imperial liturgical tradition in these churches.

Conclusions

Interest in the revision of the Russian Imperial Lutheran Agenda of 1832 arose from the newly awakening confessional consciousness and the results of the careful studies of the Lutheran liturgy undertaken in Germany.

The synod of the Livonian consistorial district, the district with the greatest concentration of Lutherans in the Russian Empire, took a leading role in the work of producing revised rites. A central figure in the program of liturgical renewal was Professor Theodosius Harnack of the theological faculty of the University of Dorpat, Livonia. After a period of increased interest in the liturgy, progress on the formulation of revised rites came to a halt after 1859 as the result of Pietist reaction against the introduction of what was termed "Catholic" influences in the Lutheran Divine Service. The return of Harnack from Erlangen to Livonia in 1866 gave renewed impetus to the forward movement of liturgical reform. A major obstacle to the issuance of a new

30 *Ritipildinien* 2007, 55–56, 96–98; *Благинин* 2001, 44; *Литургический сборник* 2005.

31 *Первое воскресенье Адвента* 2008.

32 *Український Євангельський Службник* 1933.

agenda was the question of who had the authority to do so. It was generally asserted that only a General Synod had the authority to approve and issue official liturgical forms.

In 1883 the Livonian Synod decided to move ahead without General Synod approval to produce trial rites. The result of their work was a two volume agenda for the Livonian consistorial district, published in 1885 and 1886 under the pretentious title *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche*.

Because of outspoken calls for a new agenda the General Consistory in St. Petersburg issued in 1893 its own trial agenda produced under the supervision of St. Petersburg Pastor Julius Müthel. With only minor alterations it reproduced the Livonian proposals, adding to them a Prayer of Blessing which Pastor Müthel insisted should be inserted after the Verba. This and other proposals of Müthel caused much dissension, and the final approval of the new agenda did not take place until 1897. The 1897 *Agende für die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden im russischen Reiche*, slightly amended in 1898, was the complete and final expression of the Lutheran liturgy and associated rites in the Lutheran church of the Russian Empire. The October Revolution and its effects made future revisions impossible.

With the exception of the Lutheran Church in Estonia no major work of liturgical revision was undertaken until the end of the Soviet Union. The work of liturgical revision in the churches of the former Russian Empire and the Soviet Union have already produced revised rites for trial use which clearly show their Lutheran pedigree and ecumenical influences as well.

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