

Reformed Political Theology in Early Modern Belarus and Lithuania: Andrzej Wolan's *De libertate* (1572)

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ABSTRACT

Andrzej Wolan (1530/31-1610) was the leading Reformed theologian of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) and an influential statesman. This thesis examines how Wolan's political theology in one of his most significant works, *De libertate* (1572), was influenced by and influenced his GDL context.

Previous research on Andrzej Wolan's political theology is limited. There is no monograph on Wolan's *De libertate*, a widely referenced but understudied text. Corrections to previous research are needed because of competing historiographies, lack of distinctiveness assigned GDL, and presumption about GDL Reformed influence.

The key research question is, after Swiss Reformed political theology was introduced to GDL, how did a distinctive GDL Reformed political theology develop in Andrzej Wolan's *De libertate*? A context-sensitive methodology is deployed.

This research finds Wolan's political theology was distinctive as a result of his adaptation of Swiss Reformed political theology, especially Calvin's, while influenced by and addressing specific circumstances of GDL. Reformed doctrines of freedom, anthropology, Christology, hamartiology, law, providence, vocation, sanctification, and equity informed Wolan's political theology, as did classical and Renaissance republicanism and Polish political theorist Modrzewski. Wolan's four main themes in *De libertate* are freedom, equality, morality, and honour. Wolan was original and creative; intellectually centred in Europe, while in a geographically peripheral context; and a representative of a wide evangelical network in GDL. Outcomes of Wolan's *De libertate* include concepts and reforms regarding consent, rule of law, limited monarchy, tolerance, peasant relief, private property, education, and constitutional and court reforms.

As the first monograph on *De libertate*, this thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge and provides insights about historiography, national context, and influences regarding GDL Reformation political thought. Further research is needed on Wolan's other works and network. Questions are raised for constructing contemporary theology or history in the region.