

Lutheran Theology and the shaping of society: The Danish Monarchy as Example



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Bo Kristian Holm / Nina J. Koefoed (ed.)

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Studying the Impact of Lutheranism on Societal Development

An Introduction

The connection between religion and social change has steadily attracted increasing interest in recent years. In some ways, the current research situation resembles the one around 1917 just prior to and following the 400th anniversary of the Reformation. It was the research interests then that formed the background for Weber's famous study on the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

This book aims to dive into the complex relationship of mutual dependency between confessional forces and societal development with Denmark as a case. The book seeks to offer new insights and perspectives on the difficult question of Lutheranism's impact upon society and mindset by focusing on 1) how core ideas in Lutheran theology can be seen to imply social teachings in various ways, and 2) to what extent social teachings inherent in Lutheran theology form the background for law and social institutions, especially the family household, in the formative period of Danish history between the Reformation and 1800.

By combining historical and theological perspectives, this project aims to offer important new insights into the formative potential of Lutheran theology and contemporary society's dependence on this confessional heritage using the shaping of early-modern Danish society between c. 1500 and c. 1800 as a key entry point. In doing so, the book's perspectives extend the tradition of Weber, Troeltsch, and others from the early twentieth century who began examining the then-contemporary social legacies of specific Protestant confessions. However, this project differs from Weber's approach and those in his wake, by focusing specifically on the Lutheran contribution to societal development. The perspectives garnered from new readings of Lutheran theology will form the backdrop for new detailed studies on the possible impact of the Reformation on everyday life.

The book combines theological, sociological, and historical approaches, using the social relations and obligations of the Lutheran household as a case study, the doctrine of the three orders as a general perspective, and the historical development of Denmark as a treasure chest for illuminating examples. Research into the interrelated historical development of theology and society has often been

done in separate academic discourses, and the present studies are an attempt to bridge the apparent gap between disciplines.

1. The Reformation in Denmark

There is no doubt that Lutheranism found particularly fertile soil in the Nordic countries. The two monarchies of Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland rapidly ascribed to the Lutheran Reformation. A remarkable number of Scandinavian students sat on the benches of Wittenberg classrooms, listening to lectures by Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon. These students brought the new theology back to their local communities and directly implemented these new teachings in their local cultures. This relation between the northern part of Europe and Wittenberg has been subjected to intense scrutiny (See Appel/Fink: 2013; Hasselsteen: 2002; Helk: 1987; Mäkinen: 2006; Lausten: 2010). Societal development in the Scandinavian states was supported by a process of confessionalization, which made the construction of confessional identity a common element in early-modern state building (Ingesman: 2016, 14ff).

In many ways, the Reformation was a process in Denmark. In 1536, the Lutheran Reformation ended a civil war in the country. The question of Lutheranism and religion had been one of the factors defining the power struggle between the king and nobility during the civil war. In 1523, the Lutheran-friendly Christian II fled the country after a failed attempt to regain power over Sweden. Christian II's uncle was crowned as King Frederik I with support from the nobility and the Catholic clergy, but the Lutheran influence proved difficult to abate completely. Christian II continued to play a role as an alternative (Lutheran) king and, in the southern parts of Jutland, Duke Christian (who later became Christian III) attempted a Lutheran reform of the church and legislation within his duchy. Lutheran pastors spread throughout the country during the 1520s. In 1530, Danish churches practiced both Protestantism and Catholicism (Bach-Nielsen: 2012, 118; Grell: 2016a; Holze: 2011, 11–47; Lausten: 1995; Lyby/Grell: 1995).

When Frederik I died in 1533 the Council (“Rigsrådet”) was not too keen to choose between the Lutheran Duke Christian and the former King Christian II as Frederik's replacement. Instead, they postponed the election of a new king for a year. In 1534, a civil war broke out between the supporters of these competing leaders. The war ended in August of 1536 when Duke Christian conquered Copenhagen with his army and supporters and became King Christian III. During the following months, Christian III consolidated power through a widespread Lutheran Reformation. The church was excluded from political power, and the Catholic bishops were blamed for postponing the election of a new king and,

thereby, for causing the civil war. The new king confiscated the bishops' property and used it to build an economic base of power independent from the nobility. The nobility had been divided by political and religious struggles, both supporting different kings and confessions. As JAKOBSEN shows in his contribution to this volume, the nobility were forced to redefine their role as a new Lutheran authority after 1536, even though Luther's social teaching had not carved out an obvious place for them. Acting as a Lutheran magistrate, the nobility took on new social responsibilities such as caring for the poor and overseeing education. The nobility played a central role in the development of an educated Lutheran elite and was crucial for Wittenberg's religious influence on Denmark (Bach-Nielsen: 2012, 120f; Grell: 2016a; Holze: 2011, 11–47; Lausten: 1995; Lyby/Grell: 1995).

In 1537, a new Church Ordinance redefined and reorganized the church as a Protestant body and also the relationship between church and state. The ordinance was written with assistance from Wittenberg reformer Johannes Bugenhagen and approved by Luther himself. The church ordinance explained the two authorities, God's and the king's. The divine ordinance was governed by unchangeable rules given by God. These matters were defined as:

The correct preaching of the law and gospel, the correct distribution of the sacraments, proper education of children in order to keep them in faith. And finally, provisions for the men of the church, the schools, and the poor (Rørdam I, 42, VI).

Every human being was required to keep this divine ordinance, which was to be ensured by the king's legislation. At the same time, the king's ordinance could regulate the practical organization of church and society, as long as the divine ordinance was retained. Through the Church Ordinance, Christian III thus positioned himself strongly as a Lutheran king, establishing the ordinance of God as the proclamation of the gospel, administration of the sacraments and pastoral care and excluding the bishops from interference in government and jurisdiction. But Christian III also legitimized himself as legislator, working to ensure that people lived according to the gospel.

The Church Ordinance also clearly defined areas now under the king's jurisdiction. As we have seen, the divine ordinance made the poor the responsibility of the king. Because marriage was no longer sacramental, its regulation became a matter of secular law while the ceremony itself remained a church matter (Rørdam I, 73–74). One result of the explanation of the king's responsibility and legislative power in the Church Ordinance was a legal consolidation of the Reformation. This led to a change in the social inheritance of Luther's theological thinking in the years immediately following 1536 and as an ongoing process over the next two centuries. ARNÓRSDÓTTIR and KOEFOED contend with parts of this legal development in relation to marriage and the household. Arnórsdóttir attaches great importance to the Church Ordinance

for establishing a Lutheran legal and social practice of marriage in the Danish kingdom including Iceland.

The Church Ordinance defined Luther's *Small Catechism* as the education guidelines for children. Furthermore, it listed seven books every pastor should own. Besides the Bible, the list named Luther's postils, his *Small Catechism*, and Melancthon's *Loci Communes* as well as his *Apology*, which included the *Augsburg Confession*. Finally, the Church Ordinance itself supplied guidelines for visitations (Rørdam I, 118–119). The Augsburg Confession functioned as the foundation for the church, but the king was not obligated to ascribe to the Augsburg Confession (cf. Lyby/Grell: 1995). This confessional situation, in which the Augsburg Confession was acknowledged without a binding commitment, allowed confessional disputes between Calvinist leanings and more orthodox Lutherans in the second half of the sixteenth century. However, THOMAS KAUFMANN points out in his essay that these disputes were never as severe in Denmark as in Germany at the time. Kaufmann highlights the role of universities in establishing a Lutheran confessional culture.

Several figures were caught up in these religious disputes with clear political implications. One such figure was a professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen, Niels Hemmingsen, the subject of MATTIAS SKAT SOMMER's and SVEND ANDERSEN's contributions to this volume. As adviser to the king, Hemmingsen played a vital role in legal developments during the late sixteenth century and exemplified the connection between theology and legislation. The two chapters on Hemmingsen in this volume argue for Hemmingsen's central contribution to the development of a confessional culture in Denmark, in which the doctrine of the three estates had a key role. Sommer argues through his reading of Hemmingsen's *Liffsens Vey* that Hemmingsen functioned as an intermediary between Luther's doctrine of the three estates, as key locations for living out the Christian life, and Melancthon's three uses of the law. Sommer thereby sees Hemmingsen as a central figure in the development of a societal structure built on the three estates, but also for the ensuring Lutheran moral codes and Lutheran culture through law. Through a discussion of the relation between and influence of the two kingdom's doctrine, the doctrine of the three estates, and natural law, Andersen argues that Hemmingsen combined natural law theory and the doctrine of the three estates, leaving out the two kingdom's doctrine.

Another consequence of the confessional situation was that in 1561 Frederik II declined an invitation from German princes to work towards a common confessional understanding, probably in an attempt to avoid further religious disputes in the country. Instead, he urged the writing of a Danish confession, a new church ordinance. The proposal was never published, but reflected the combination of a Lutheran doctrine with Melancthonian inspiration, which SOMMER

isolates as characteristic of Hemmingsen and Danish confessional culture in the period. The fear of unwanted religious influence led to increased control over the belief systems of immigrants moving to the Danish kingdom. The result was the Twenty-five Articles against Foreigners in 1569, which outlined doctrinal standards to which foreigners were required to subscribe. In these Articles, the confession of Augsburg was officially named as the confessional standard for the first time. During the 1570s, Denmark could no longer fully avoid the doctrinal discussions in Germany. Hemmingsen moved towards Calvinism and was finally removed from his university post in 1579, probably for political reasons. When the German confessional controversy was settled in 1577, and the Book of Concord was published in 1580, Frederik II refused to sign it as a means of keeping further discussions out of Denmark. Despite this, the Book of Concord laid the foundation for Lutheran orthodoxy in the seventeenth century (Bach-Nielsen: 2012, 224–229; Lyby/Grell: 1995, 117–123; Grell: 2016b, 89–100; Lockhart: 2004, 317).

The confessional disputes more or less ended in 1615, when Christian IV appointed Hans Poulsen Resen bishop over Zealand. Christian IV reigned from 1588 until 1648. As both confessional culture and legislation show, Christian IV's choice of bishop marked the start of an orthodox development during the first half of the seventeenth century. Luther's *Small Catechism* had a central position in childhood education from the Church Ordinance going forward; Resen published a new translation of Luther's *Small Catechism*, including the table of duties (Appel: 2001, 143–148). In 1629, an ordinance mandated knowledge of Luther's *Small Catechism* as a prerequisite for receiving communion, thus establishing a type of confirmation (Appel: 2001, 145). A 1643 treaty emphasized the duty of the pastor to teach the parish the content of the catechism from the pulpit as part of the sermon (Secher, V, 148 [I.1.7]) all pointing towards a strong knowledge of the *Small Catechism* and the table of duties within the Danish population.

A constitutional commitment to the Augsburg Confession came in 1665. In 1660, Lutheran influence culminated in the introduction of absolutism in Denmark and in 1665 the constitutional foundation of absolutism was given shape in the King's Code. The King's Code legitimized and defined the absolute power as the only constitution in Europe. The king was only obliged to keep the territorial unit, the line of inheritance, and finally (or actually first) to keep the Augsburg Confession and make sure the inhabitants of the kingdom did the same. Here the confessional binding and the king's role as legislator were clearly knit together. Part of the Augsburg Confession was a commitment to the Ten Commandments, and they became a central part of legislation during early absolutism in Denmark.

This development became obvious during Christian IV's reign and in some aspects even before. The Church Ordinance established the gospel as the guideline for life within the earthly regime which clearly influenced legislation on e. g. marriage and sexuality as mentioned. This culminated in a large law-codex given in 1683, the Danish Code. To a large extent, the Danish Code summed up the legal developments of the preceding period, but not exclusively. It was the first legislation covering the whole kingdom of Denmark without any distinctions based on region, social background, or gender. Equality before God was translated into equal standing before the king and, thus, the law. The Danish Code was divided into six books. The sixth book on criminal law was structured according to the Ten Commandments and thus regulated society according to them (cf. Tamm 2000). However, the structure of the three first books is interesting as well. The first book addressed the power of the king and law; the second, the clergy; and the third, the household. This indicated a social structure aligned to the Lutheran order of the three estates: government, church, and household. In 1643, a large treaty by Christian IV reflected this movement from the doctrine of the two kingdoms, represented in the Church Ordinance, to the doctrine of the three estates. The treaty was divided into two books, one on the church and one on the secular realm. This pointed towards both the doctrine of the two kingdoms or more correctly regiments and towards an early understanding of society structured by three estates because the regulating of the church and the secular were now seen as separated, but integrated into the same law book.

This development from the Two-Kingdoms-Doctrine to the doctrine of the three estates is addressed in ANDERSEN's contribution. He argues that the doctrine of the two kingdoms was abandoned first, while, as previously mentioned, Hemmingsen continued to integrate the doctrine of the three estates into his explanation of natural law. Andersen argues further for the disappearance of the doctrine of the three estates in Holberg's explanation of natural law in the early eighteenth century as a step towards modernity. Although the doctrine of the three estates disappeared from Holberg's explanation of natural law, HARSTE and KOEFOED argue in their chapters for the presence of the doctrine of the three estates in legitimizing the absolute king and in his explanation of the *Small Catechism* and, through this, in childhood education during the eighteenth century. Harste addresses the connection between the Reformation and state development across Europe and discusses the influence of Luther's doctrine of the three estates on Bodin's theory of power, sovereignty, and organization. From here, Harste shows how Bodin's theory contributed to the constitutional foundation for Danish absolutism through the King's Code in 1665. Thus, he depicts Denmark to participate in a European process of synchronization after the Wars of Religion, military development, and state-organization while also taking a specifically Danish path influenced by the translation of Lutheranism into nat-

ural law and a particular understanding of obedience and trust between the citizen, the king, and government. Absolutism and the mono-confessional situation continued until 1848 when absolutism was replaced by a constitutional monarchy. The subsequent Constitution granted freedom of religion in 1849, even though the Lutheran evangelical church remained part of the state.

2. The Framework of Confessional Culture in the Case of Denmark

Heinz Schilling, the pioneer for confessionalization theories, has examined the process of confessionalization within Scandinavia (Schilling: 2009). However, confessionalization was not just a pan-European process of synchronization between states. Despite plenty of parallel developments, state-building and cultural development occurred differently in the various states of Europe. The internal differences between European states coincide to a large degree with differences in confession.¹ In some countries, the specific confession had a more substantial impact than in others. For this reason, Schilling has highlighted Sweden as a case study for investigating specifically the Lutheran impact on society due to Sweden's centuries-long mono-confessional status (Schilling: 2009). Schilling even thinks that contemporary Swedish culture can be seen as the result of Lutheranism's particularly deep impact on Swedish culture and mindset. Through detailed empirical studies, this book will argue for an understanding of Denmark as an almost ideal Lutheran state, especially during absolutism.

Through the concept of confessional culture, THOMAS KAUFMANN has offered an alternative to Schilling's notion of confessionalization, leaving more room for variation in the characteristics of specific developments, both across confessions and between countries influenced by the same confession (Kaufmann: 2016, 128). The concept of confessional culture is a theory for societal development in the meeting between confession (as religious identity) and culture (as a broad framework of society). This concept allows an analysis of the interaction between the specific confession as a structural force and broad cultural tendencies. Central to the concept is a perception that societal development is not created primarily by state discipline, but by interactions with individual actors, allowing for internal variety within a confessional culture. Consequently, "Lutheran Confessional Culture" means precisely that the "essential aspects of contemporary culture were more or less intensely shaped by ideas, attitudes, and

1 Not only with regard to poor relief and social security, as Sigrun Kahl (2005) has noticed; but clearly most obvious here.

mentalities founded in the Lutheran interpretation of Christianity and could be legitimized by respective doctrinal norms.” (Kaufmann: 2016, 131). The concept of confessional culture has inspired the analytical approach of the authors in this book in their search for areas and points in time when the social teaching of the confession was translated into legal, cultural, and social practice.

In his chapter, KAUFMANN addresses possible ways in which confessional culture is established. He argues for the importance of universities both during the Reformation itself, but also for the development of a far-reaching confessional culture after the Reformation. Because of the ongoing confessional competition in the Holy Roman Empire, the educated elite was important. The universities stabilized the state-building process through education of local pastors, often from a middle-class background, who then brought the Lutheran confessional culture to villages. The pastor’s family also played an important role here. Moreover, the theological professors at the universities also gained importance through the development of church liturgy and regulation, not to mention their help in developing a legislative alternative to canon law. The rapid development of a confessional culture in the German region was thus dependent on a collaboration between state, church, and universities.

The situation likely looked somewhat different in the Danish kingdom.² Here, the confessional situation was only loosely defined throughout the first century after the reformation. This culture was not fundamentally challenged at any point, which might have left room for more confessional discussion at the university and between the learned up to the beginning of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, Denmark witnessed a strong Lutheran orthodoxy and mono-confessional situation in the seventeenth century that strongly influenced both the confessional culture and to a very large extent legislation and politics. Although the intensity of orthodoxy lessened, the mono-confessional situation continued until the end of absolutism in 1848/49. This book aims to discuss the divergent path and development of a confessional culture in Denmark under other political conditions. One concluding argument is that the nobility and political elite played a central role in the creation of a Lutheran authority who made legislation in line with the Augsburg Confession, childhood education following the *Small Catechism*, and social responsibility central elements in the Danish confessional culture.

While the period of a clear and identifiable Lutheran confessional culture is limited with regard to the German states, the historical development of Denmark and the other Scandinavian monarchies has resulted in a nearly mono-confes-

2 Denmark was part of the double monarchy Denmark-Norway and the confessional, political and legislative situation was to a large extent alike in the two kingdoms. However, the chapters in this book mainly address Denmark.

sional culture lasting for centuries. Moreover, although the Lutheran flavor of the national confessional culture has decreased and even changed to some kind of unconscious background culture, Denmark nevertheless offers a unique situation for investigating the social formation potential of a specific confession, in this case, Lutheranism. For example, it is possible to ask whether Lutheranism was a precondition for the establishment of one of the most absolutist monarchies in the Western world.

3. The Importance of the “Social Imaginary” for Both Theology and Social Studies

In order to proceed, a more direct connection is needed between the framework build by the concept of confessional culture and the thesis that Lutheran theology contains a certain social teaching as part of its core theological insights. Charles Taylor offers this link in his Weber-inspired research on the history of the Western mind. In *A Secular Age*, the concept of the “social imaginary” plays a central role. It offers a key to understanding the possible social impact of ideas that are not necessarily explicitly expressed in social doctrines and theories.

Taylor defines the “social imaginary” as “the ways in which [people] imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations which are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations” (Taylor: 2007, 171). For Taylor, it is important to distinguish the “social imaginary” from social theory. The former focuses on the way ordinary human beings imagine “their social surroundings, and this is often not expressed in theoretical terms, it is carried in images, stories, legends, etc” (ibid. 171 f.).

To a certain extent, Lutheranism lacked a well-formed social doctrine or theory despite its radically new and inverse understanding of the divine-human relationship. This fact complicates the search for its relation to confessional culture. Here, the concept of the “social imaginary” is helpful because it offers an interpretative tool for reading theological texts and a methodological approach to the study of historical material of various kinds. To locate the formative power of the Lutheran tradition in a society, one must look beyond explicitly formulated codes of social behavior or instruments of discipline. The change of perspective in Lutheran theology is equally important: God is active in the God-human relationship, not the human being.

From this perspective, it seems quite obvious that Reformation theology deliberately aims at altering people’s understanding of their most fundamental social relations on the basis of a new understanding of the individual’s relation to

the divine. The new understanding of the divine-human relation formed the basis of the Lutheran doctrine of the three estates and the role of the household. The understanding of authority in all three estates and the importance of the household for a pious life governed earthly work and social order. LAURA KATRINE SKINNEBACH indicates that both concepts possess the possibility for strong “social imaginaries” by pointing to religious objects as social imaginaries and part of the development of a confessional culture. In her contribution, SASJA MATHIASSEN STOPA argues that the human relationship to God in justification informs the understanding of the relationship between humans, thus generating a social imaginary. Also, VÍTOR WESTHELLE addresses the question of how theological concepts in Lutheran understanding, in this case, faith and love, are transformed into social imaginaries.

The existential-hermeneutical school of Luther research pioneered by Gerhard Ebeling (1970) has emphasized how Reformation theology altered the understanding of God, the individual, and therefore also the world. While the existential and hermeneutical readings perhaps understood the human being’s interaction in society as a vital dimension of Luther’s thought, the direct social implications or ground dimension received only scarce investigation. Prior to Ebeling and as an outcome of the History of Religion-School in Germany, scholars like Ernst Troeltsch in conversation with sociologists like Weber, Sombart, and Simmel focused on the social teachings of the Church. In this respect, this volume stands on the shoulders of these monumental works from a century ago. In his towering work, Troeltsch (1965) focused mainly on the social structures of the church through his distinction between Church, Sect, and Mystical types of the Christian religion. The impact of Lutheranism on the social imaginary of ordinary people seems to have been beyond his primary concern, although he emphasized the impact of Lutheran theology upon the individual (*ibid.*, 440f.). However, to fully understand the possible impact of a confession upon society it is absolutely necessary also to include the imaginaries of ordinary people; particularly, if the aim is to substantiate claims about Lutheranism’s impact on societal change. To investigate the impact of the Lutheran Reformation upon society is also to measure the dissemination of this change of perspective in all aspects of social life.

4. Theses

The foundation of the book is the discussion of a two-fold thesis: (1) that the core ideas of Lutheran theology can be seen as social teaching, implying a certain perception of sociality, explicitly expressed in the use of social metaphors, and to some extent also economic metaphors, for the understanding of the relationship

between a gracious God and the sinful human being, and supported by a new understanding of emotions; (2) that a better understanding of the Lutheran household, across different levels of society and including marital law and practice and social obligations within the household, offers an unrivaled means of examining the possible impact of Reformation thought on everyday life. From this perspective, the Lutheran household is a central part of the confessional culture as it was influenced by Luther's understanding of the place and role of the household, his understanding of the obligations within its social relations, and also by the specific cultural and political situation of the country.

To argue that Lutheran theology includes social teaching is almost a truism. From a comparative perspective, however, the Lutheran tradition seems relatively sparse when it comes to social doctrines. Although we find a rather elaborate ethics in Melancthon, Lutheranism does not possess corpus like in Roman-Catholicism or a developed Church discipline structure as in Reformed traditions. As will be argued in this volume, the Household Code and the interpretation of the Ten Commandments in Luther's *Small Catechism* function to some extent as a social doctrine, but possibly more important is the social teaching implicitly inherent in the core ideas of Lutheran theology. Troeltsch's work on the social doctrines of the Christian churches is, for obvious reasons, an important stepping stone for the present volume. Troeltsch (1965, 436f.) argued that Luther's understanding of grace was the main new idea in Luther's theology. Although he listed four characteristics in Luther's novel conceptualization, including religious individualism and the affirmation of earthly life as consequences of Luther's new doctrine of divine grace, Troeltsch's focus on Church formation resulted in the absence of important features of culture.

5. Lutheran Theology as a Social Teaching in Itself

The first part of the book deals with Lutheran theology in order to sketch out key concepts with potential for impacting societal formation and inner tensions with dynamic potentials. The doctrine of justification in Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon implies a specific socially-informed understanding of the relation between God and human beings. Beginning publicly with the critique of the economy of indulgences, the Lutheran Reformation reformulated key doctrines of Christian theology and rearranged key practices of Christian piety. In the first chapter THEODOR DIETER shows how Luther's 95 theses on indulgences had far-reaching consequences. On the background of the medieval role of indulgence, Dieter gives a fresh interpretation of the 95 theses by focusing on Luther's attempt to overcome economic structures in church theology and practice. Dieter

emphasizes the role of divine giving in the consequences of Luther's theses for human self-understanding.

The Lutheran reformers reduced the number of sacraments dramatically from seven to two. They redirected the most crucial one, the Lord's Supper, from the sacrifice of the mass to the distribution of divine self-giving, thereby giving faith a new meaning and role for the individual's relation to both God and neighbor. The rearranged relationship between faith and love, both understood as an alternative to the mundane economy, formed the background for a Lutheran shaping of social imaginaries, as shown in VÍTOR WESTHELLE'S chapter. Westhelle begins by placing the understanding of the role of the "social imaginary" in its historical context between two main schools of thought, the Weber-Troeltsch tradition of seeing religion as having a constitutional role and the Hegel-Marx tradition that emphasizes the "poetic agency" of religion in society. These two schools grant religion the possibility of instituting creative capability alongside a constituting function. As a consequence, societies differ primarily according to intervening factors on a given society: a constituting kind of emphasis is given to politics and an instituting kind of emphasis to economy. Westhelle connects this distinction between economy and politics to the medieval tripartite division of society, turned from static statuses into dynamic publics in Luther's doctrine of three estates. The dynamic forces of Lutheran theology are then found in the both complex and simple relations between faith and love. These relations lay the groundwork for an ethical matrix of social life diverging from other confessional alternatives and closely connected to the distinction between justification and sanctification, between the human being's relation to God and his or her relation to the neighbor.

HANS-MARTIN GUTMANN relates Luther's social thinking to the early-modern crises of communication and individualization, rejecting the view that Luther advocated a theology of order with regard to communal life. Instead, Gutmann argues that Luther was preoccupied with the formation of intimacy in social spaces and that his conception of intimacy was idealistic rather than realistic – thereby establishing another kind of dynamic tension within a Lutheran confessional culture.

BO KRISTIAN HOLM shows in his chapter that the new understanding of the Reformation can be seen as an uncompromising critique of any notion of the divine-human relationship as a reciprocal economy. Instead, the reformers used family metaphors to safeguard the idea of justification as a reestablished relationship with God. In the use of metaphors, dynamic tensions appear in the material: Luther seems to prefer nuptial imagery, emphasizing its symmetrical, rather than hierarchical, potential, whereas Melanchthon quite clearly prefers the asymmetrical and hierarchical metaphor of father and child.

Using Luther's expositions of the fourth commandment as material and the concept of honor as her focal lens, SASJA MATHIASSEN STOPA adds important insight to the understanding of Luther's view on the hierarchical relations, which sustain the order of society. She argues that the obligation of individuals to honor authorities in the God-given earthly hierarchies mirrors their obligation to honor God. Furthermore, she discusses the seemingly paradoxical relation between Luther's emphasis on hierarchical social structures upheld through exchanges of honor and his claim that all humans are equal in relation to God. The concept of honor becomes then yet another illuminating window to the duality of hierarchical and egalitarian traces in Luther's theology.

In her chapter on the gift of the indwelling Spirit, CANDACE KOHLI focuses on Luther's construction of a theological anthropology of the regenerate soul. She points towards an often overlooked dimension of Luther's anthropology, giving more room for the work of the Spirit. In sketching out a rather robust pneumatology in Luther, she argues for a more nuanced view of Luther's understanding of human obedience and neighborly love. This opens up more space for progress in sanctification than is normally allowed in Luther interpretations inspired by Kierkegaard or Kant, which through an emphasis on human passivity have struggled to relate the works of the outer human being to the human soul. Her reading makes more room for interplay between the inner person of faith and the outer person of works.

As a whole, the book argues that the existence of tensions between hierarchy and equality, symmetry and asymmetry in the metaphors and concepts the reformers used to understand the divine-human relationship provided the Lutheran confessional culture with a certain dynamic. This dynamic was observable both in the understanding and use of the doctrine of the three orders or estates and in the actual formation of social relations and life within these three orders. For this reason, the understanding of the doctrine of the three estates as a social teaching and its influence on Danish society becomes central to the book (see below). This becomes important for understanding the Reformation's impact on law and social practices, including social relations and the question of gender. The focus on the household makes it possible to substantiate claims of an intimate relationship between a specific confession and cultural development.

Luther's thoughts had far-reaching consequences for the understanding of the household and the pious life. The priesthood of all believers and the corresponding rejection of the clergy as a special link between God and human included a break with the idealized life of isolation in the abbey. This suggested that the pious life was to be lived in the social world and, most of all, in the household. The household became the center of Luther's doctrine of the three estates, but also the locus for living out a pious life according to the will of God. In her chapter, SKINNEBACH addresses the gradual confessional adjustment through

everyday devotional culture within the pious household after the Reformation. She argues for a new position of the household within Lutheran social thinking and the household as a new devotional space. Through the analysis of devotional books and epitaphs, she describes the process of establishing this devotional culture and practices within the household in both text and materiality.

AGNES ARNÓRSDÓTTIR in her chapter further argues that marriage became a model for divine life on earth by borrowing central aspects of loving care attached to the church before the Reformation. Thereby, she shows how, in practice, the family took over for monastic life as a social institution. The change in the status of marriage from sacrament to social model also meant a change from the heavenly family to the earthly. This change was reflected in practices of donation and inheritance, but also in an increase in secular control within marriage and sexual life. Arnórsdóttir goes on to argue that the authority of the husband over the household increased, but so did the mutual support between the spouses. The status of the married women also increased at the expense of the unmarried virgin because the pious life of a woman was within the household context instead of in institutions attached to the church.

The question of women's positions within the Lutheran household is also addressed by SØREN FELDTFOS THOMSEN. In his chapter, Thomsen asks how Luther's concept of marriage as a partnership built on spiritual and emotional equality between husband and wife was balanced with a traditional hierarchical understanding of gender. He focuses on the description of gender roles and emotional norms in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century marriage and household handbooks. Thus, he addresses the affective dimension of household and confessional culture. He points at the emotional ideas linked to the wife's obedience to her husband in order to highlight a tendency in the literature to marginalize emotional reciprocity out of concern for maintaining the social hierarchy.

In NINA JAVETTE KOEFOED's contribution, she emphasizes Luther's *Small and Large Catechism*, read as a social teaching that defines the social and emotional obligations placed within the household and the resulting influence of this on legislation. She argues that the doctrine of the three estates and the fourth commandment as a model for social relations played a central role in the development of Danish confessional culture, especially in early absolutism during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. But she also draws a more gender-equal picture, underlining the shared position of authority between the married couple in relation to the rest of the household. The understanding of social relations as constituted by mutual obligations is central to the argument. Through this, she highlights the obligations of authority and the obligations to honor – crucial to Luther's anthropology (cf. STOPA's chapter).

The present volume endeavors to continue scholarly discussions on the relation between religious confessions and societal development begun by Weber

and others by analyzing new kinds of material: key theological ideas in combination with daily practices. In order to reach new conclusions, it is necessary to search for “social imaginaries” in the theological texts from the formative period of the Lutheran tradition and to compare these findings with the study of the “social imaginary” in various kinds of historical material and from multiple layers of society. This goal is ambitious and demands much more than a single volume to attain. The present volume shows, however, how Reformation research can benefit from combining numerous disciplinary approaches under a common auspice to increase our understanding of the relation between theology and everyday life, religious confession and the formation of society. The authors in this volume want to develop an approach that makes it possible to draw strong conclusions about both the role of Reformation theology in the shaping of Danish society and the social dimensions of Lutheran confessional culture, in so far as it is possible to detect such a culture.

At a concrete level, this book analyzes the social dimensions of key Lutheran concepts and their translation into the doctrine of the three estates (church, household, and state). This is deepened by investigating the level of lived experience of life within these three orders, especially within the household, which is so important in forming the ideal for both church and state. Thus, the chapters in the book work to connect the social ideas inherent in the Lutheran confession with the social formation of the Danish state from the Reformation into the period of Absolutism. The focus is on basic mediums that translated Lutheran ideas into social practice: law, primarily connected to marriage and family; and the role of the household, both as primary social relations and as basic social and political model. Although the examples in this book come from Denmark, the approach has been designed to provide new and relevant research about the relation between religion and the shaping of particular societies both on the national scene and in an international comparative context.

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