The ‘long reformation’ in Nordic historical research

Report to be discussed at the 28th Congress of Nordic Historians,
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Preface

This report is written by members of a working group called Nordic Reformation History Working Group, that was established as a result of a round table session on the reformation at the Congress of Nordic Historians in Tromsø in Norway in August 2011. The purpose of the report is to form the basis of discussions at a session on “The ‘long reformation’ in Nordic historical research” at the Congress of Nordic Historians in Joensuu in Finland in August 2014. Because of its preliminary character the report must not be circulated or cited. After the congress in Joensuu the authors intend to rework and expand the report into an anthology, so that it can be published by an international press as a contribution from the Nordic Reformation History Working Group to the preparations for the celebration in 2017 of the 500 years jubilee of the beginning of the reformation.

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**The ‘long reformation’ in Nordic historical research -**

**Introduction**

We are approaching 2017 when the 500 years anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation will be celebrated all over the world. Scholarly preparations for the jubilee include conferences and exhibitions, books and articles. This report written by members of a ‘Nordic Reformation History Working Group’ established in 2011 must be seen in this connection, as part of a reformation commemoration initiated by Nordic historians and Church historians. To directly connect the results of Nordic scholarship to the international research development it opens with a paper by Otfried Czaika on the debates and discussions about reformation and confessionalization within the last generation of German historians and Church historians. After this follows national reports for each of the five Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.

These reports draw a picture of research in the history of the Reformation in the Nordic countries during the last generation. The intention is to pave the way for future studies of a comparative nature, that try to move away from the traditional national approaches, that have characterized the writing of Reformation history in all of the Nordic countries. A comparative approach is of value in itself, opening of for a deeper understanding of the Reformation as a process with both common Nordic features and special national variations in each country. But it is also important if research on the Reformation in the Nordic countries shall be able to make a contribution to ongoing international research on the history of the Reformation as a common European event.

As a normal rule the Nordic countries do not take up a very large chapter in general histories of the European Reformation. Besides from a typical tendency in international historical research to concentrate on the history of large and important countries like England, France and Germany, this has to do with the fact that Reformation history traditionally has concentrated on the beginning and
the early phase of the Reformation. In this connection, the history of the Reformation in the Nordic countries has been regarded mainly as an example of how, why and when Reformation ideas and movements spread from the ‘centre’ in the German Empire to more ‘marginal’ neighbouring countries such as those in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe.

Important trends in international research on the history of the Reformation since the 1980s have, however, changed the precondition for regarding the Nordic countries as only marginal to the history of the European Reformation in general. Especially important here are the current tendencies to stress the Reformation as a process lasting for a long time period, and to concentrate on later stages of this process, on what it has been common to term the era of confessionalization or the confessional epoch. In this connection, the Nordic countries can no longer be regarded as only of marginal interest. The two realms of Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland were among the largest and most important countries within the Protestant camp of Early Modern Europe, and it is of great importance to bring them into the general historical debate on the topic of reformation and confessionalization.

This can best be done by Nordic scholars themselves, but it requires that they approach the development in the Nordic countries as a whole and in a comparative way, that they formulate research problems and questions with continuous attention to their relevance for discussions in international scholarship – and that they present the results of their efforts in English or another language accessible for an international audience.¹

With this point of departure it can seem like a paradox, that this report on the ‘long reformation’ in Nordic historical research is subdivided in ‘national’ reports for each of the five Nordic countries. This is, however, a simple consequence of the fact that existing historical research in reformation and confessionalisation – as in most other historical periods and problems – since the nineteenth century has been dominated by a strong ‘national’ focus. This focus has determined fundamental facts about research, such as what frames and questions for research were applied, who undertook research, and in what language research results were presented. The five ‘national’ reports here do in no way intend to cement this traditional approach, but are thought of as a necessary instrument – or a kind of preliminary station on the way – to break away from it.

¹ A short summary of the development of historical research on reformation and confessionalization in Scandinavia since 1945, written for an international audience, is Czaika 2009(a).
Historiographical studies – that is studies of the way in which earlier scholars pursued their academic research and presented its results in their historical writing – are a necessary part of all attempts to break new ground in studies of the past. They are especially important if particular research traditions or historical schools have had a dominating influence on research in a certain time period, topic or problem. It will then be relevant to make clear what this meant to the outcome of that research. Applied to research in the history of the Reformation, this would raise fundamental questions like: Did a strong national tradition of historical research tone down, or even ignore, important influence from abroad? Or: Was a historical school focusing on the state and the political development without understanding for the importance of church and religion in the past?

The five reports presented here are national in their description of existing research, but they intend to open up for future research that will finish with the national framework and try to apply a comparative Nordic approach. This is the basic purpose of the individual reports, but the authors have been asked to address in their reports a series of common questions formulated in a way so that the report as a whole hopefully will fulfill also a number of more specific purposes. At least four such additional purposes could be mentioned.

The first one is to break down borders between academic disciplines in reformation research in the Nordic countries. The quest for interdisciplinarity has become almost a commonplace in for instance applications for collective research projects, but when it comes to historical research in reformation and confessionalization, an interdisciplinary approach is absolutely necessary. This has especially to do with the fundamental fact that in the Nordic countries this research is pursued both by historians and by theologians specializing in Church history. The fact that the five national reports here are written by historians and Church historians in cooperation, testifies to the intention of trying to bridge, from the onset, the gap between these two academic disciplines.

The second purpose is to cross dividing lines between historical periods. A traditional periodization, with roots back to Leopold von Ranke, has determined the Reformation period as starting with Luther’s Thesenanschlag in 1517 and going to the Augsburg religious peace of 1555. This periodization takes pivotal events in the German Empire as a point of departure, and is, alone for that reason, not quite appropriate for the situation in the Nordic countries. But it is also no longer
upheld as fitting in international research, that now tends to see the Reformation period as part of a larger period of reform that started somewhere in the Late Middle Ages and continued until at least 1650, but perhaps even to 1700 or 1750. An important consequence of this is to play down the importance of the long and very well established dividing line between the Middle Ages and the modern period, but also to see the Reformation as a process lasting for much longer time than according to the traditional periodization. This development in international research is reflected in the choice of the term the ‘long reformation’ for this report.

The third purpose is to introduce new problems and approaches in Nordic research. In international research on reformation and confessionalization a general trend to break away from traditional approaches to the topic has been dominating at least since the 1970s, most explicitly to be seen within the discipline of history, where a development from social history over the history of mentalities to cultural history has made religion an important topic also for historians. Also future Nordic research in reformation and confessionalization must be prepared to be influenced from recent international scholarship, including the much discussed ‘cultural turn’, ‘linguistic turn’ and ‘material turn’, but also applying for instance gender perspectives on the religious development.

The fourth purpose is to point to desiderata in existing research. Surveying the last generation of research should make it possible to point to new questions that have arisen from this. Obvious research desiderata should of course be pinned down, but it is also essential to underline if there are special sources with good research potentials that have not yet been exploited, or that could be utilized much more than has been done. Especially important is if Nordic sources – either because they are unique, or are preserved to a higher degree than elsewhere – could bring about research results of an interest to international scholarship.

In the following I will develop further the basic and the four additional purposes of this report on the ‘long reformation’ in Nordic historical research.

**Applying a comparative Nordic approach**

A short survey of the history of reformation and confessionalisation in the Nordic countries will show both why it has been natural within the national traditions of historical writing to tell this
history as five individual histories, and why such an approach ought to be complemented, and to a certain degree supplanted, with a comparative history of the long Nordic reformation.²

The two crucial events in the introduction of the Reformation in Scandinavia were the radical reduction of episcopal power and the secularization of ecclesiastical estates carried out by Swedish King Gustav Vasa in 1527 and by Danish King Christian III in 1536. Both events were closely connected to the breakdown of the political union between Denmark, Norway and Sweden which had been established at the end of the fourteenth century. The formation of the so-called Kalmar Union in 1397 had brought the Kingdom of Norway, which included Iceland, Greenland and the other North Atlantic isles, and the Kingdom of Sweden, to which Finland belonged, into the hands of the Danish kings. In principle they upheld their position as kings of all three realms until 1523, when the Danes were driven out of Sweden in a national uprising led by a young nobleman, Gustav Vasa. He achieved the liberation of Sweden and was made king. That signaled the final breakdown of the Kalmar Union, and afterwards Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland have individual histories.³

In Denmark, dissatisfaction with the King, Christian II (1513-23), had been growing ever since his accession, and after the disastrous Bloodbath of Stockholm in November 1520, hatred arose against the King and his advisors. In the autumn of 1522, leading bishops and noblemen in Jutland asked the King’s uncle, Duke Frederik of Schleswig and Holstein, to become king instead of Christian. The rebellion found general support among the nobility, and without fighting, Christian chose to leave Denmark in April 1523, with the purpose of seeking assistance from Emperor Charles V, to whose sister he was married, to regain his realms.

During the reign of Frederik I (1523-33), Denmark was in a very difficult situation. There was widespread social unrest among the peasants, to which was added religious unrest caused by the spread of evangelical ideas from the middle of the 1520s. Agents from the exiled Christian II – who had met and become an adherent of Martin Luther in 1524 – tried to exploit the unrest and provoke uprisings against the new regime. However, when Frederik and his son, Duke Christian, converted

³ The breakdown of the Kalmar union and the emergence of two new states is treated by Gustafsson 2000. An English book treating the same topic is Larson 2010.
to Lutheranism in 1525, they removed much of the basis for Christian II’s agitation. A peasant uprising in Scania in 1525, which Christian II supported actively, was defeated, and so was Christian himself when in 1531-32 he finally had succeeded in financing an army to invade Denmark and Norway. He seized Norway, but was betrayed and taken captive, and afterwards was held imprisoned until his death in 1559.

After the death of Frederik I in 1533, the Catholic faction of the Council of the Realm refused to elect his son, the Lutheran Duke Christian, as their new king, and a civil war broke out between the Duke’s followers and those of the imprisoned Christian II. The latter were led by a young count, Christopher of Oldenburg – after whom the war took its name, the “Count’s War” – and were supported also by Lübeck. Together with peasants who were also in revolt, Christopher’s troops soon controlled most of Denmark, and the bishops and the nobility were forced to turn to Duke Christian for help. In 1534 he was elected king, as Christian III, at a meeting in Jutland and soon started reconquering the realm.

In August 1536, Christian III stood victorious in Copenhagen and immediately launched the Reformation there. In a real coup d’etat, the bishops were arrested, and their properties, as well as those of the disbanded monasteries, were handed over to the Crown.4

After the formation of the Kalmar Union, Norway had slowly lost its political importance in Scandinavia. With the gradual dying out of the old Norwegian nobility by the end of the Middle Ages, the Norwegian Council of the Realm became more and more powerless. To a large extent, Norway’s political sovereignty was upheld by the bishops who were ex officio members of the Council. That proved fatal when the old church fell in the 1530s. In 1536 the Reformation was introduced into Norway by Christian III, and at the same time Norway was declared to be no longer a realm in its own right, but rather a mere province of Denmark. The Norwegian Council of the Realm was abolished, and its head, Archbishop Olav Engelbrektsson, who had been the leading advocate of both Catholicism and Norwegian independence, left Norway, never to return. There

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4 The most detailed studies of the introduction of the Reformation in Denmark are Lausten 1987(a) and 1987(b). A survey can be found in Lausten 2011. A German translation of a previous edition of this survey is Lausten 2008. For a survey in English see the relevant parts of Grell (ed.) 1995.
was some popular opposition to the introduction of Protestantism, but no serious threats to the new regime.\footnote{On the Reformation in Norway see [reference to be inserted]. For a survey in English see the relevant parts of Grell (ed.) 1995.}

Only Iceland, which had been under the Norwegian Crown since 1260/62, saw a serious attempt to resist the introduction of the new religion by the Danish King. The Bishop of Hólar, Jón Arason, started a religious and political uprising which went on for several years, until the bishop finally was captured and beheaded in 1550. Thereafter Iceland itself provided a number of Lutheran bishops who did a large and important work to propagate the new faith, including setting up printing presses to print the necessary translations into Icelandic of the Bible and other religious literature.\footnote{On the Reformation in Iceland see Vilborg Auður Ísleifsdóttir-Bickel 1996. An Islandic translation of the German book appeared the following year: Vilborg Auður Ísleifsdóttir 1997.}

The reign of Christian III (1534-59) laid the foundations of the strong monarchy of early modern Denmark and Norway. Important financial reforms were carried through, which made it possible to transfer much larger resources to the central administration than in the medieval period. The confiscation of the estates of the bishops and the monasteries during the Reformation increased the size of the royal domains. By eliminating the Church as an independent institution in society, the Reformation also caused a decisive strengthening of the state politically and ideologically.

In Sweden, the long reign of Gustav Vasa (1523-60) played the same crucial role in bringing about the early modern state as the reign of Christian III did in Denmark and Norway. In the Late Middle Ages, Sweden had endured heavy conflict among the aristocracy between a “unionist” and a “national” party, but now peace and prosperity finally came to the realm. After a long period with a weak central government, Gustav Vasa built up a strong monarchy. Much of his efforts concentrated, with great success, on improving the economic foundations of the state. Gradually a considerable army and a strong navy were created.

As in Denmark, the reformation contributed to strengthening the monarchy. Evangelical ideas had spread in the Swedish towns, especially Stockholm, since the early 1520s. In 1527 Gustav Vasa persuaded the Diet of Västerås to approve handing over the lands of the Church to the Crown and to
support evangelical preaching. The organization of the Church was left intact in Västerås, but was later reorganized by the King in the 1540s. The Swedish church did not, however, receive the same decidedly Lutheran character as the Danish until the decisive Diet of Uppsala in 1593.\textsuperscript{7}

Although officially a part of medieval Sweden, Finland had a semi-independent de facto status. Originally split into various tribes, in the course of the medieval period the Finns developed a sense of national unity. The Church played an important role in the unifying process since all of Finland constituted one diocese, that of Turku (Åbo). In addition, the Reformation furthered the creation of a Finnish national identity through the fact that the reformer Mikael Agricola, who brought the Lutheran faith from Germany to Finland in the beginning of the sixteenth century, created a Finnish literary language to propagate the new faith. The semi-independent status of Finland endured until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Finland was integrated into the Swedish kingdom, and the upper class gradually became Swedish-speaking.\textsuperscript{8}

The introduction of the Reformation in both Denmark and Sweden at approximately the same time could have made these two kingdoms allies, with a substantial reinforcement of Protestant Northern Europe as a result. As a matter of fact, there were friendly relations, including mutual support, between the two ‘Reformation kings’, Christian III in Denmark and Gustav Vasa in Sweden. During the reigns of their sons and successors the two realms developed, however, into bitter foes, and in the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century a series of wars over the Dominium Maris Baltici – the question who of them should have the hegemony in Scandinavia – were fought between the two competing Protestant powers.

At the same time, also a confessional difference between the two Nordic realms developed.\textsuperscript{9} In Denmark Christian III’s introduction of the Reformation in 1536 had started a confessional development that accelerated – in close connection with what was happening on the international scene, especially in the German Empire – during the reign of Frederik II, and finally culminated under Christian IV in the first half of the seventeenth century. The result was that an originally loosely described ‘Lutheran’ form of Christianity gradually changed into a precise and clearly

\textsuperscript{7} On the Reformation in Sweden see A. Andrén 1999. For a survey in English see the relevant parts of Grell (ed.) 1995.

\textsuperscript{8} On the Reformation in Finland see [reference to be inserted]. For a survey in English see the relevant parts of Grell (ed.) 1995.

\textsuperscript{9} On the confessional development see Asche and Schindling (eds.) 2003.
defined public religion that had the Confessio Augustana in its ‘unchanged’ version from 1530 as its binding confession.\(^\text{10}\) The difference between Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland in a confessional respect arose concerning the Book of Concord, which in 1580 ended the confessional discussions among Lutherans in Germany, characterised by fierce strife between so-called ‘Gnesio-Lutherans’ and ‘Philippists’. Whereas Frederik II in Denmark refused to accept this new Lutheran confession and platly forbade the import of the book into his realms, the situation in Sweden was different. Sweden also accepted the Confessio Augustana \textit{invariata} as its basic confession, through a decision made at the Uppsala meeting of 1593, but during the process of confessionalization in the seventeenth century the Book of Concord came to play a crucial role as a supplement to it. The confessional development culminated in the ecclesiastical law of 1686, which obliged all inhabitants to confess Christianity in the form explained in the Book of Concord.\(^\text{11}\)

Especially the history of the introduction of the Reformation, with its own domestic context and its own course of events in each of the five Nordic countries, makes it perfectly understandable that existing retellings of this history has applied a ‘national’ approach. On the other hand, the short retelling of events in a common Nordic context presented here will, hopefully, make it obvious why a Nordic comparative approach is needed, especially from the ‘long reformation’ point of view. Strictly speaking there was no ‘Danish Reformation’, or Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish reformations. There was a reformation carried through by the Danish kings in their realm, besides from Denmark, Norway and the North Atlantic isles comprising also the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, and there was a reformation carried through by the Swedish kings in their realm, which – besides from Sweden and Finland – during the seventeenth century came to encompass also parts of Northern Germany along the southern shore of the Baltic Sea. All attempts to write ‘national’ histories of parts of these two processes are ignoring in an anachronistic way past political and geographical realities.

This is one thing. Another thing is that so many fruitful research questions arise when you try to compare developments. The first and most obvious purpose for future research must be to compare similarities and differences between the two realms of Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland. Why did Denmark and Sweden take separate ways? Why didn’t they – like for instance the two old foes on the British Isles, England and Scotland, did, exactly because they both adopted the same

\(^\text{10}\) I have outlined the development in Ingesman 2014.
\(^\text{11}\) See Czaika 2007 pp. 78-86.
Protestant religion – approach and ally with each other politically, instead of fighting each other, thus weakening both themselves and the common Protestant cause?

But also many other research questions could be formulated, if you apply a comparative approach. What was the relation between national identity and the introduction of the Reformation in the three countries, that had their own national or ethnic identity and their own language, but lacked political independence, i.e. Finland, Iceland and Norway? Why did the introduction of the Reformation lead to a strengthening of Finnish and Icelandic language and identity, whereas the same process in Norway resulted in the fact that Danish gradually ousted the old Norwegian language? The list of questions could be continued almost indefinitely.\footnote{For a discussion of research questions see especially the report on Iceland below.}

**Breaking borders between academic disciplines**

To break down borders between different academic disciplines engaged in reformation research is, as remarked in the introduction, especially important in the Nordic countries since research in history and Church history here is pursued both by historians and theologians. They have hitherto been working within distinctly different scholarly traditions, but internal developments during the last couple of decades in both of them – although perhaps especially within the discipline of history – have made the prospects for cooperation and cross-disciplinary research approaches nowadays more promising than before.

As academic disciplines, pursued by scholars educated at universities and practiced according to scientific methods, history as well as Church history are products of the second half of the nineteenth century. Both Denmark and Sweden have universities going back to the Late Middle Ages, the Swedish in Uppsala founded in 1478, the Danish in Copenhagen in 1479.\footnote{There is no comparative history of the universities in the Nordic countries, but all of the five universities mentioned here have their own written histories. Since the information I provide is uncontroversial I regard it, however, as superfluous to give detailed references.} These two institutions took care of university education for all inhabitants of the two Nordic realms, until universities were established also in Finland, Iceland and Norway as part of the process in which these countries gradually achieved political independence in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Of the three countries Norway was the first to obtain its own university, in Oslo, and this happened
in 1811, a few years before the country in 1814 was separated from Denmark and received its own constitution. In Finland the university in Helsinki was founded in 1829, a couple of decades after Russia in 1809 had conquered the country from Sweden and made it an autonomous Grand Duchy under the formal rulership of the czar. Finally, Iceland founded its university in Reykjavík in 1911, some years prior to the country becoming a free and sovereign state in 1918.

The purpose of the early modern universities was to educate the professional officials that the state needed, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries primarily theologians, intended to become bishops and pastors, later on also lawyers and doctors, trained in law and medicine. During the nineteenth century the universities in the Nordic countries developed into modern institutions of education and research, organized primarily after the German model developed in Prussia by Wilhelm von Humboldt. As part of the development history became a university subject of its own, in the same way as many other disciplines within the humanities and the social and natural sciences did. Concerning theology the Nordic universities – situated in countries with strong Lutheran state churches – shared the opinion, convincingly put forward by Friedrich Schleiermacher around 1800 and soon adopted by leading German Lutherans, that it had its natural place among the disciplines in the university, but then should be pursued with the same scholarly methods, and live up to the same academic standards, as other university disciplines within the humanities. This basic view secured that theology was preserved at the universities in the Nordic countries in spite of the secularization and the scientific revolution that characterized the nineteenth century. In our context it is important to notice that this development has had the effect of securing, as something completely outside discussion, that a theological ‘subdiscipline’ such as Church history basically must follow the normal methods and standards of the academic discipline of history itself.

Apart from having this same basic fundament – which is, of course, also today a presupposition for all cooperation and scholarly exchange and discussion across the academic border lines – the two university disciplines of history and Church history developed more or less independent traditions. This took place based on a kind of ‘labour division’, which was never directly outspoken, but was

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14 In the large history of the University of Copenhagen that was published to celebrate its 500 years jubilee in 1979, the historical development within each academic discipline receives its own detailed treatment. The description of history is to be found in vol. 10 and of theology in vol. 5: Ellehøj (ed.) 1980(b) and 1980(a). For the other universities in the Nordic countries see [reference to be inserted].

15 The relation between history and Church history has not been described with a Nordic perspective. An interesting introduction, with good case studies, can be found for Norway in an anthology on the challenge from Church history to historians working mainly on the Middle Ages: Imsen (ed.) 2005.
clearly seen in practice: While the Church historians trained in theology stuck to their well-defined field of church and religion, the historians concentrated on state and society, politics and economy, and all other such ‘temporal’ aspects of the past. This division of labor was cemented by the establishment of scholarly associations and journals, university chairs and departments, through which each of the two academic disciplines were institutionalized and professionalized. It was not uncommon for theologians who wanted to specialize in Church history to attend courses, for instance in historical method, given by university professors of history, but apart from that only very few people crossed the borderline between history and Church history. Thus, historians and Church historians, as a consequence of the professionalization and related development within the universities and the academic world, had developed into two separate scholarly communities.

It can be difficult – if it isn’t simply impossible – to summarize the development within two academic disciplines that has taken place in five different countries over more than hundred years, from the second half of the nineteenth century to our own time. I shall, however, dare to undertake the attempt, taking my point of departure in the hypothesis that the development within the academic discipline of history in each of the five countries mainly is to be seen in connection with the development in the nation in case, especially national politics, whereas the development within the academic discipline of Church history mainly is to be seen in connection with the development in the church, including theology, revival movements etc. To illustrate this I will shortly outline the development in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, but not go into the more complicated – and, especially for linguistic reasons, more inaccessible – situation in Finland and Iceland.16

In all of the Nordic countries the writing of the history of the nation was seen as the most important task for the new academic discipline of history established in the nineteenth century. Here it can be seen very clearly that the establishment of modern universities were closely connected to the nation building process that was, of course, especially strong in the ‘new’ nations of Finland, Iceland and Norway, but also influenced the development in the old nations Denmark and Sweden which during the nineteenth century had to change national self perceptions as a consequence of the fact that both of them after the Napoleonic Wars had been reduced from large and nationally mixed ‘empires’ to small-scale national states. In both Denmark, Norway and Sweden the duty of history to legitimize the national state can be seen with some of the leading historians, strongly influenced by national

16 Details on the development in these countries will be given in the national reports. Since I am most familiar with the situation in Denmark, my description takes its point of departure and finds most of its examples in this country.
romanticism, around the middle of the nineteenth century, but also with some of the “founding fathers” of the modern historical disciplines in these countries, the university professors who in the decades around 1900 – inspired by Ranke and other German historians – introduced systematic source criticism in historical training: Kr. Erslev in Denmark, Gustav Storm in Norway and Harald Hjärne in Sweden. Although they distanced themselves from older historical writing, often characterized by a combination of national romanticism and political conservatism, and advocated liberal political viewpoints, they still had a clear national framework for their historical writing: They would tell the history of their nation, but in a new, more unprejudiced and more scholarly way, appropriate for the new era of democracy, freedom of thought and a scientific view of life that was opened up at the dawn of the twentieth century.\(^{17}\)

Especially in Denmark Kr. Erslev and his successor as professor of history at the University of Copenhagen, Erik Arup, came to form a historical school, that would be dominant during most of the twentieth century. This so-called “radical historian tradition” has been given its name from the fact that it was closely connected to the little, but extremely influential social-liberal party called “Det Radikale Venstre” (The Radical Left), which normally joined forces and formed governments with the large Social Democratic Party. In short, the school of radical historians were characterized by having (1) source criticism as its predominant method, (2) positivism as its predominant theory of science, and (3) social liberalism as its predominant ideology or view of society.\(^{18}\) Its favourite aversions were – explicitly when radical historians engaged in public debates, more implicitly and hidden when they taught and wrote history – all the forces and institutions, ideas and feelings that they regarded as ‘reactionary’ in regard to the historical development towards a modern democratic society: monarchy, army and nobility, all kinds of conservatism, nationalism and militarism, and last, but not least, the Church, the clergy and the Christian religion.\(^{19}\)

In Sweden a related historical school was formed by and around professor Lauritz Weibull in Lund, to whom Erik Arup had close relations, but besides from that the Swedish historical discipline was more divided, with both a more conservative school of historians and a school of historians with

\(^{17}\) There has been a comprehensive historiographical research since the 1970s, especially in Denmark, but also in Norway and Sweden. For Denmark see the synthesis in Mørch (ed.) 1992. For Norway see [reference to be inserted]. For Sweden see [reference to be inserted]. A survey of Nordic historiography in the twentieth century, with articles on the development in the different countries, can be found in Meyer and Myhre (eds.) 2000.

\(^{18}\) Manniche 1981.

\(^{19}\) Especially in the treatment of the Middle Ages, this disinterest in and dislike of Church and religion had fatal consequences. Cf. Ingesman 1992.
close ties to the Social Democratic Party dominating Swedish politics for the most of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{20} Also in Norway a number of leading historians in the twentieth century belonged to the Social Democrats, “Arbeiderpartiet”, and some of them, like Halvdan Koht and Andreas Holmsen, were, if not Marxists, then at least ‘materialists’. Especially Holmsen established a very strong tradition for social and economic history in Norway.\textsuperscript{21}

Although there were exceptions, when leading historians took up subjects in Church history,\textsuperscript{22} the general trend within all the historical schools or traditions dominating or thriving in Scandinavia in the twentieth century was a clear disinterest in church and religion: History had to do with the state, its development and its relation to other states, with society, social classes and their relations, with politics, administration and law, with economy, production and trade, or – to put it short – with all the things important to uphold and develop a modern secularized nation state.\textsuperscript{23} The nation and state centred concept of history was even so strong that a historian like Troels-Lund in Denmark had to defend and argue explicitly for the relevance of writing cultural history, history not focusing on the state and politics.\textsuperscript{24}

Around the middle of the nineteenth century there had been no clear borderline between history and Church history, and you can mention several works of history being written by scholars educated as theologians, as well as several works of Church history being written by men educated as historians.\textsuperscript{25} During the twentieth century a vague borderline was, however, replaced by a gap that seemed almost insurmountable. The Danish development within the discipline of Church history is especially illustrative when trying to explain what was going on.

Histories of the Danish church had been written since the end of the sixteenth century, some of them by historians, some of them by theologians.\textsuperscript{26} The first steps towards the establishment of Church history as an academic discipline in a Danish context was taken with the founding in 1849 of a Society for Danish Church History (“Selskabet for Danmarks Kirkehistorie”) that gave out its

\textsuperscript{20} See the classical study by Odén 1975 as well as more recent treatments in [reference to be inserted].
\textsuperscript{21} For the dominant historians and historical schools in Norway see [reference to be inserted].
\textsuperscript{22} For instance Bull 1912.
\textsuperscript{23} The strong focus on the state in the research of the historians is especially clear in Sweden. See the report on this country below.
\textsuperscript{24} See the treatment of cultural history as an ‘alternative’ historical traditional in Denmark in Christiansen 2000, especially pp. 30-59.
\textsuperscript{25} An example in Denmark is C.F. Allen (1811-71), in Norway Rudolf Keyser (1803-64).
\textsuperscript{26} The history of this development is described in details in the report on Denmark below.
own periodical, *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger* (“Church Historical Collections”). The originators of the project were inspired by and adherents of the dominant figure in Danish church life in the nineteenth century, N.F.S. Grundtvig, and his special combination of the Danish people and Christianity.27

The basic Grundtvigian point of departure that the history of the Church is an integrated – and extremely important – part of the history of the Danish people, has been an underlying opinion for Danish church history ever since. It has become influential also outside the circles of Church historians because of Grundtvig’s and Grundtvigianism’s increasing influence in general on Danish cultural and intellectual life from the second half of the nineteenth and well into the second half of the twentieth century. Grundtvigianism developed from a religious revival movement to a more general popular movement in a way that its large counterpart and rival among the revival movements of the nineteenth century, the “Inner Mission”, never did. For that reason, and because the “Inner Mission” – at least until very recently – has regarded history as a ‘matter of the world’ not worth being involved in, there never developed any real alternatives to the Grundtvigian tradition in Danish Church history.

In the decades around 1900 the rather conservative Faculty of Theology at the University of Copenhagen gradually opened up theologically and intellectually, first to Grundtvigians, then to adherents of the so-called Liberal Theology, imported from Germany. Since the time of Fredrik Nielsen, who was professor of Church history from 1877 to 1900, most of the professors of Church history were more or less outspokenly Grundtvigians.28 This didn’t change until after the Second World War when adherents of a special Danish version of the dialectical theology developed by Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann in Germany began to enter the university. A special feature of the Church historians influenced by dialectical theology was a very strong sympathy for Luther and the Reformation, that has triggered off much valuable research by Danish scholars in the Lutheran Reformation in both Denmark and Germany.29 This sympathy is, however, combined with an equally strong dislike of, or at least disinterest in, phenomena in Church history that were seen as opposed to ‘true Lutheranism’, such as for instance the late-medieval church and religion, Luther’s

27 For this and the following see Bach-Nielsen and Ingesman (eds.) 1994.
29 Cf. Gregersen (ed.) 2012, especially pp. 181-202. It can be regarded as part of the general ‘Luther renaissance’ that has been influential in both Germany and Scandinavia in the twentieth century. The Luther renaissance is treated in both the Danish and the Swedish reports below.
adversaries at the time of the Reformation such as radicals, Zwinglians and Calvinists, and – to go to a later period in Church history – Pietism. While a Grundtvigian approach often has opened up for good cooperation between Danish Church historians and historians – a number of them strongly affected by Grundtviganism themselves – the influence from dialectic theology on the academic discipline of Church history has given parts of it a confessional mark, which has contributed to making cooperation between Church historians and historians more difficult. Especially when a couple of historians in the 1970s began to introduce viewpoints from Marxism and from the history of mentalities to Reformation history, a sharp confrontation with the leading Danish Church historian, and specialist on Luther, Leif Grane, resulted.30

In Norway and Sweden there has not been the same strong connection as in the Grundtvigian tradition of Church history in Denmark between one of the revival movements of the nineteenth century and the establishment of the academic discipline of Church history. In these two countries the developments within Church history must rather be seen in connection with the development of the national churches and their relation to the state.31 [To be inserted here: an elaboration of the development within the academic discipline of Church history in Norway and Sweden, with mentioning of relation to the Church, most important figures and institutions, associations and periodicals]

Approximately since the 1980s the sharp dividing line between history and Church history, and the unspoken division of labour between Church historians specializing in church and religion and historians concentrating on the state and all ‘secular’ aspects of the past, has gradually been disintegrating. Developments within both academic disciplines have resulted in their coming closer to each other.

The development within the discipline of history must be seen in connection with developments in international historical research. It is not least the so-called ‘cultural turn’ in history that has brought religion into the fore. The development within the historical discipline since the 1980s from social history to cultural history means that historians nowadays are interested in not only how people in past times lived their daily lives, but also in their way of interpreting the world and the society they

30 Kyrre and Wittendorff 1986(a); Grane 1986(a). Kyrre and Wittendorff 1986(b); Grane 1986(b). A little more about the debate can be found in the report on Denmark below.
lived in.\textsuperscript{32} Central also to historians today is the definition, put forward by the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz, of culture as ‘a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life’.\textsuperscript{33} With this definition, religion with its symbols and rituals is being moved from the margins to the centre of human culture.

It is of special importance for studies of the Reformation – seen in its ‘long’ version as something starting in the late Middle Ages and continuing until at least around 1700 – that most of the leading cultural historians during the last one or two generations have been working on Europe in the medieval and early modern period. They have underlined, that the period before Europe became secularised was characterised by a total dominance of the Christian religion in culture and society. It was religion that delivered the worldview and the mental outlook according to which people understood what was happening in the world; religious belief was ‘the fundamental cosmology underlying the cultural framework of society’.\textsuperscript{34} Religion was a system that gave a value-orientation to both individuals and the collective, and at the same time legitimised the existing natural and socio-political orders.\textsuperscript{35} There was, as Richard van Dülmen has said, ‘no room free from religion’: Religion was intimately connected to life in every social unit, be it household, community or society, and it determined all cultural processes as well as formed an important foundation for every authority or power holder, including the state as such.\textsuperscript{36}

Also in the last generation of historical research in the Nordic countries it can be seen that being a cultural historian, and working on the late-medieval and early-modern period, you have to be concerned about religion. This will be obvious when you read the reports on the research that have been carried out by historians in each of the five countries on the topic of the ‘long reformation’.\textsuperscript{37}

For the development within the academic discipline of Church history during the last generation it is important that it has left, or is in a process of leaving, its strong national and confessional profile, to adopt a more international and non-confessional outlook. Also here this will be obvious when

\textsuperscript{32} On the ‘cultural turn’, see Burke 2008. Cf. also Rubin 2002.
\textsuperscript{33} Geertz 1973, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{34} Johnson 2005, p. 145. See also Rubin 2011, p. 319.
\textsuperscript{35} Greyerz 2008, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{36} Dülmen 1994, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{37} It is especially underlined in the report on Sweden below.
you read the five national reports on the reformation research that have been carried out by Church historians.

There are still basic differences between the interests of historians and Church historians. It is for instance obvious that the focus of cultural historians on religion is something else than the focus on institutions, hierarchies and theology, that traditionally has characterized Church history. But this can not conceal that the developments within both of the academic disciplines of history and Church history now show a convergence, of importance for future cooperation and concentration of research effort. Also a number of examples show that such a cooperation is already a reality in many cases. In Denmark you could for instance mention that the Society for Danish Church History during the last few years has included a number of historians on its board, so that about a third of the board members now are historians. For Norway it can be mentioned that a number of large collective research projects, initiated by historians and carried through solely or mainly by historians, have concentrated on topics within ecclesiastical and religious history, or have ecclesiastical and religious aspects as an integrated part of broader project topics.38 [To be added: corresponding examples from Sweden]

Crossing dividing lines between historical periods

To cross established dividing lines between historical periods is an important task for future reformation research undertaken with a comparative approach and in cooperation between Nordic historians and Church historians. It has become normal to do this in international research during the last generation, but in a Nordic context it still seems necessary to point to the fact that crossing chronological borders is necessary, and also has very many benefits.

In a traditional view still very influential the Reformation was the great dividing line between the medieval and the modern period. The question whether the Protestant reformation created modernity, or at least was crucial in bringing about the modern world and modern society, has been

38 I am thinking especially of the project on 'Norgesveldet' (the Norwegian Dominion), led by Steinar Imsen in Trondheim, that includes an investigation of the role of the Church in the making of the Norwegian domination in the Norse World, and the project on 'The Protracted Reformation in Northern Norway', led by Lars Ivar Hansen in Tromsø. For results of these projects see Imsen (ed.) 2012; Hansen, Bergesen and Hage (eds.) 2014.
the subject of a long and important debate, a debate, that I have, however, to pass over here, in order to concentrate on the specific question of periodization.

There are several problems in the traditional view of the Reformation as representing a sharp break with the Middle Ages, and international research in both the Late Middle Ages and the Reformation during the last one or two generations have pointed to them. One of the problems is that the ‘sharp break’ point of view ignores, or at least underestimates, the many factors of continuity from the Late Middle Ages to the Reformation. To mention just one example, the recent biography of Martin Luther by Volker Leppin underlines how ‘medieval’ Luther was in his thinking, and how he never really came out of the monastery. Another is that it takes a firm stand on one side of a discussion about the Reformation that Heiko A. Oberman in a debate with Leif Grane gave a famous formulation, when he asked, whether the Reformation was “Epoche oder Episode”? It was only by choosing the ‘event position’ that the traditional view could regard the Reformation as the crucial dividing line between medieval and modern, but what if the Reformation was not a singular event, but – as for instance Stephen Ozment and also Heinz Schilling have argued – part of a larger historical development, integrated in an ‘age of reform’ starting back in the Middle Ages? A third problem with the traditional view is that it makes ‘the Reformation’ one phenomenon, thus ignoring that there were several reformations, including also – an important result of recent international research – a ‘Catholic Reformation’. Many more points where international scholarship during the last couple of generations has criticized the traditional view of the Reformation as the singular event marking the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern period could be pointed to, but the three here mentioned must suffice. Now to the proposed ‘solutions’, or the alternatives to the traditional view, when talking Reformation and periodization.

Within the general history the use of the concept of ‘early modern’ could be regarded as a solution in itself to the problem of dividing between medieval and modern. This concept says that – roughly

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39 In the early twentieth century German scholars like Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch laid the foundation for all subsequent discussions of the importance of the Protestant reformation for modernity, Weber with his theory of the connection between the Protestant ethic and the rise of capitalism (Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus, 1904/05), Troeltsch with his opinion that it was the Enlightenment rather than the Reformation which created the modern world (Die Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die Entstehung der modernen Welt, 1911). A modern treatment of the discussion concludes that although the Reformation was not the crucial dividing line between the Middle Ages and the modern era, in many aspects it started or established the fundament for developments, which were later to create modern Europe: Dülmen 1999.

40 Leppin 2006.

41 Oberman 1977. See further the summary of the debate in Otfried Czaika’s contribution to this report.

speaking – the last hundred years of the Middle Ages and the first hundred of the modern period forms a period of its own, the early modern period c. 1400-1600. This general historical periodization includes the Reformation in the early modern period, but doesn’t assign the religious and ecclesiastical change any constituent status for the period as such.

To a certain degree the same can be said about another, very similar, proposal to leave the traditional great divide between medieval and modern behind, namely the one put forward by P.O. Kristeller. This specialist on the Renaissance proposed that instead of using Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation as – partly competing – epoch designations, we should rather see the period c. 1300-1600 as a period of its own.

More interesting in our connection are, of course, those periodization proposals that try to define an epoch placed between the Middle Ages and the modern period by taking its point of departure in the Reformation itself, either regarding it as the central element in an epoch or putting it together with related phenomena in a larger period definition. As mentioned in the beginning a traditional periodization has singled out a special ‘Reformation period’ that started when Luther published his 95 theses against the sale of indulgences in 1517, and ended when a religious peace between Catholics and Lutherans in Germany was agreed on in Augsburg in 1555. There are several problems with such a narrow definition of a ‘Reformation epoch’, especially the fact that in many countries outside Germany the introduction of the Reformation was in no way completed around 1555 – and that also in the German Empire itself a number of states in the second half of the sixteenth century went over to the Reformation, now preferably to Calvinism, through the process often called ‘the Second Reformation’. For these and for other reasons various proposals have been put forward to establish a longer Reformation period. I shall only mention three.

An American historian just mentioned, Stephen Ozment, has proposed to talk about the period from 1250 to 1550 as ‘an age of reform’. This proposal underlines especially the continuities between the development in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation, whereas it doesn’t go much into detail

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43 This time period is proposed in Brady, Oberman and Tracy (eds.) 1994-95.
44 Kristeller 1962. The proposal was followed, for instance, in an almost classic book on the genesis of modern Europe by the German historian Erich Hassinger: Hassinger 1957.
45 For an interesting discussion of this particular periodization, originally put forward by Leopold von Ranke, see Kaufmann 2009, pp. 20-32.
47 Ozment 1980.
with effects of the introduction of the Reformation to be seen especially after the middle of the sixteenth century. Also to let the age of reform start as early as in the middle of the thirteenth century seems problematic – is at least not followed in general by Reformation scholars.\footnote{Also Heinz Schilling has proposed to talk about an age of reform, without, however, giving it the same chronological borders as Ozment. See the details in Otfried Czaika’s contribution below.}

Opposed to this, two other alternative periodizations could be mentioned. The first one is to talk not about an age of reform, but about a ‘long reformation’. At least two recent books have the expression the ‘long reformation’ in their titles (although they do not agree on the period covered by this expression),\footnote{Tyacke (ed.) 1998: 1500-1800; Wallace 2004: 1350-1750.} and the latest synthesis in English of the history of the European Reformation, written by Diarmaid MacCulloch, determines the chronological framework to be 1490-1700.\footnote{MacCulloch 2003.}

The second alternative is to regard reformation and confessionalization as the two halves of one long period. In the German Empire this would mean that you have the period 1517-55 under the heading ‘Reformation’ and the period from the religious peace of Augsburg to the peace of Westphalia, ending the Thirty Years War, i.e. 1555-1648, under the heading ‘Confessionalization’.\footnote{Schilling 1988. See also Kaufmann 2009 pp. 20-24, 155-59.} In other countries the chronological periods could be placed somewhat different, but this is not a serious challenge to this periodization proposal. The important thing is that this periodization underlines that in the wake of the Reformation there followed a process of confessionalisation, and that these two phenomena can not be separated: At the Reformation a programme was launched, and the Reformation epoch didn’t end until this programme – with the necessary changes, revisions and modifications – was carried out into life, and this happened in the process of confessionalization.\footnote{The most recent survey of the debate on reformation and confessionalisation can be found in Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann 2014. See also the contribution by Czaika in this report.}

Whether you talk about a long reformation era or of an epoch combining reformation and confessionalisation is more or less a matter of taste. Both solutions have the same advantages of seeing the Reformation as the central phenomenon or core in a longer historical development, but they also both have the same problems, especially that none of them make it clear exactly when the epoch began and when it ended. These problems are also – perhaps – impossible to solve, since
chronological frameworks depend both on your basic view of what characterized the period, and on 
which country, and perhaps even which region, you are talking about.

In this report it has been chosen to use the general concept of a ‘long reformation’. The reason is 
that this concept explicitly includes parts of the late Middle Ages, without in any way excluding the 
process of confessionalization from research focus. Without giving them any exact chronological 
determination three periods are covered in the national reports’ survey of existing research: (1) the 
late-medieval background to the Reformation, (2) the introduction of the Reformation, and (3) the 
consolidation of the Reformation – whether this is characterized as the process of 
confessionalization, or it is rather described under headings common in older research such as ‘the 
period of Lutheran orthodoxy’.

Introducing new problems and approaches

To introduce new problems and approaches is necessary if Nordic reformation research seriously 
wants to leave an oldfashioned national way of writing history and contribute with their results to 
international research. As the five national reports below will show, new problems and approaches 
inspired by international research have to a certain degree influenced Nordic research during the last 
generation, and there is no reason to believe that this development will not continue in the future. In 
this section of the report introduction I will not give a complete ‘catalogue’ of all the new problems 
and approaches, which it could be relevant to introduce in future comparative studies on the history 
of the Reformation in the Nordic countries. Instead I will first present a couple of new approaches 
for each of the three time periods covered in the national reports, then go more into detail with and 
unfold the topic that the Nordic Reformation History Working Group has chosen as subject for a 
common collective research project, namely “Confessional cultures in the post-reformation Nordic 
countries”.

For the late medieval period I find it especially important to penetrate further into the religious 
culture of the period since this is, of course, necessary to understand the changes that happened at 
the Reformation and what these meant to the lay people. This is especially required since 
international research in the latest generation has shown that the religious culture of the late Middle
Ages in no way was in a general decay, but was alive, vibrant and dynamic.\textsuperscript{53} I think that studies of the late medieval religious culture in the Nordic countries should look especially to the so-called ‘material turn’ for inspiration. Christianity was, such as it has been underlined recently by for instance Caroline Walker Bynum, a material religion, a religion in which the holy was present not only in places and persons, but also in material objects such as bread and wine, bones and other relics.\textsuperscript{54} A full understanding of this religious culture requires that you take seriously this basic idea that physical objects you can see and feel, touch and hear with your senses, are vehicles for human experience of and exchange with divine power.\textsuperscript{55} Another aspect of this is the fact that the evidence from material culture is very important for our understanding of the religious culture of the late Middle Ages. As pointed out by Eamon Duffy the material sources, especially pictures, holy vessels, gravestones and furniture in the parish churches, can tell us things that supplement the written sources, and give us a picture of an active lay involvement with the church and the religious life.\textsuperscript{56} I find this extremely important for the Nordic countries, where we have, on the one hand, only a rather meager and very onesided written source material, but on the other hand, a wealth of church buildings with their pictures and furniture so rich that it is a source of general European importance.

Another approach to be applied in studies of the religious culture of the late Middle Ages is the gender perspective. It has been extremely influential in international research on medieval religion during the last generation,\textsuperscript{57} but still awaits more comprehensive and serious application in the Nordic countries. The large and fundamental question here is, of course, whether the religious culture of the late Middle Ages was more open to women and had a more ‘feminine’ character, that the Reformation more or less erased, to let religion appear as more of a ‘patriarchal’ matter?\textsuperscript{58} Also Nordic scholars should approach this question, and could start by researching for instance the active role of women, including special categories such as nuns and widows, in the religious culture, or the prominent role attached in both official and popular religious practice to the Virgin Mary, as expressed in pictures and sculpture, prayers and songs etc.

\textsuperscript{53} Especially the comprehensive study by Eamon Duffy on England can be mentioned: Duffy 1992.
\textsuperscript{54} Bynum 2011.
\textsuperscript{55} In Denmark this has been underlined in a recent study by Pil Dahlerup: Dahlerup 2010.
\textsuperscript{56} Duffy 2009.
\textsuperscript{57} For a couple of English case studies see Erler 2002; Peters 2003.
\textsuperscript{58} In international research the question has been debated especially since Lyndal Roper argued that the Reformation worsened the status of women. Roper 1991. Cf. also the remarks about gender studies in the report on Sweden below.
Going to the period when the Reformation was introduced in the first half of the sixteenth century, I think it especially important, and having the potential to produce new insights, to apply new approaches to the question how reformation ideas were imported to and spread in the Nordic countries. Two approaches or methods have here proved to be fruitful in international research. The first one studies the new media of the printed book as an exceptionally important means of spreading the ‘message’ of the Reformation. It is well-known and recognized by all scholars that the printing press was a necessary precondition for the successful dissemination of reformation ideas, but for the Nordic countries we still lack the detailed studies of the whole system of book production and distribution, including book import from abroad, translations and the setting up of ‘national’ printing presses, the economics and function of the book market, official attempts to either promote certain books or prohibit them by introducing book censorship, how books were used by lay people for private devotion etc. In these years the digitalization of many early printed books, and the possibility of using computer technique to catalogue and study the spreading of them, has opened fruitful new perspectives for research. I will return to that point below, when pointing to source material with unexploited research possibilities.

The second approach of relevance for studies of the import and diffusion of reformation ideas is network studies. International research has shown how reformation ideas spread though networks of reformers and their adherents, and there is no doubt that this way of exchanging ideas and information through personal contacts were used with a strong and conscious awareness of its usefulness. That many reformers and their adherents had to go into exile, either for short periods or permanently, made such networks stretch all over Europe. As an example you could mention Ole Peter Grell’s recent study of the network that exiled Calvinists constituted in Reformation Europe. In Nordic research Otfried Czaika has shown how the Swedish students educated by the prominent professor David Chyträus in Rostock came to form a kind of network that was important in bringing about, by the end of the sixteenth century, the final decision of Sweden to adhere to the Reformation in the Lutheran version. Much more can, however, be done using the network studies approach. Studies could naturally begin with the most important reformers in the Nordic countries,

59 On the general media historical context see Faulstich 2006, especially pp. 143-49. For the importance of the book in the period of the renaissance and reformation see Pettegree 2010, especially pp. 91-129.
60 Studies in the book history of the reformation period have, however, been begun by especially Otfried Czaika for Sweden and Tuija Laine for Finland. See the more detailed accounts in the reports on Sweden and Finland respectively below.
61 Grell 2011.
62 Czaika 2002.
looking closer at questions like: At which Protestant universities abroad had they studied and with which professors and fellow-students? With whom did they exchange letters, be it persons at home during their years of study abroad, or with foreign scholars and clergymen after having returned to their home countries? To whom did they dedicate their books? To whom did they enter into patronage relationships, either by being promoted or favoured by for instance king or noblemen, or by exercising patronizing functions themselves, towards for instance younger students or relatives or fellow countrymen?

For the confessional epoch in the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century I find especially two, interrelated approaches worth introducing to Nordic research: the creation of religious identities and the establishment of a memorial culture to celebrate the introduction of the Reformation. The Reformation and the succeeding confessionalisation created new identities based on religious allegiance. Also in international research very many questions within this topic are still awaiting an answer, but it is, however, clear that new and very strong religious identities were established in the second half of the sixteenth century. The formation of religious identities as Catholic and Protestant respectively was especially fast and strong in areas were adherents of different denominations lived close to each other, such as in parts of Germany or France. This could make you think that the new identities as Lutheran Christians were perhaps weaker and later developed in the Nordic countries, but the whole question of the creation of new religious identities – and, as already touched upon, the relation between religious and national identities – in the post-reformation Nordic countries definitely calls for future studies.

The question of personal religious identities is of course closely related to the question of how a whole nation regards its confessional adherence and works to inculcate in its subjects a feeling of belonging to a confessional community. Important here is the remembrance of the introduction of the Reformation, especially when you are two or three generations after the event, and all the people who had themselves experienced the religious changes had died. Historical writing about the introduction of the Reformation in a given country is of course important, but this approach is not really new. Instead the approach from cultural memory studies should be mentioned as an important

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63 Dixon, Freist and Greengrass (eds.) 2009. For Germany, see for instance Forster 2001. Although most of the articles in Wolfe (ed.) 1997 are concerned with the question of national identity, also regional and confessional identities are treated in that connection. Case studies of Eastern Europe can be found in Crăciun, Ghitta and Murdock (eds.) 2002.
new approach absolutely necessary to introduce.  

The application of this approach means that you should study for instance jubilees celebrating the centenaries of the beginning of the Reformation in Germany, or that you should study how “lieux des mémoires” or “Erinnerungsorte” were established that contributed to fix the introduction of the new religion to certain places. Litterature and pictures commemorating important events and figures – especially, of course, Luther, but also Melanchthon and various ‘national’ reformers – were important in creating a narrative that would contribute to give a confessional identity to individuals as well as society.

Concerning new problems relevant to introduce in future reformation studies I have, as already mentioned, chosen, instead of mentioning many problems, to unfold a single one, namely the development of new religious cultures in the Nordic countries after the Reformation.

It is clear that the religious culture of the late Middle Ages underwent a thorough transformation at the Reformation. Based on studies of English sources, but probably with a much wider range than only England, the Irish historian Eamon Duffy has said that at the Reformation the symbolic world of late medieval religion passed away, and you moved “from image to word, from a culture of symbol to a culture dominated by speech”.

During the confessional epoch following in the wake of the Reformation new religious cultures developed within Protestant as well as Catholic contexts. For the Nordic countries it is natural to study this process by using the concept of ‘confessional culture’ developed by Thomas Kaufmann in his studies of German Lutheranism.

Kaufmann’s concept was conceived as an alternative to the paradigm of confessionalisation that was developed by the German historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling in the 1980s, and

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64 The whole field of cultural memory was opened up by Jan and Aleida Assmann. See J. Assmann 1997; A. Assmann 1999. Important is also Erll 2005. For the application of cultural memory theories to the Reformation see [reference to be inserted].

65 In Denmark Carsten Bach-Nielsen (Aarhus) has started such studies, but they should, of course, also be pursued in the other Nordic countries. Also the official introduction of the Reformation in the various countries has been celebrated. For Sweden and Finland pioneering studies on this have been done by Otfried Czaika, see Czaika 2009(b) and 2011.

66 In Norway Tarald Rasmussen (Oslo) has just received a large grant to carry out such a project, under the title “The ambiguous memory of Nordic Protestantism”. I am grateful to Tarald Rasmussen for having provided me with a copy of the project description from his application. Among the international inspirations behind the project is the only attempt hitherto to adopt the lieux des memoires perspective to Church history, Markschies and Wolf (eds.) 2010.

67 Duffy 2009, pp. 175-76.
since then has become a common basis of a lot of research in the ‘confessional age’ in European history. Reinhard and Schilling argued that a process of confessionalisation, following in the wake of the Reformation, was an important phase in the development of the modern state. Within all of the three dominant confessions of Germany, Lutheranism, the Reformed Church, and Roman Catholicism, the outcome of the process was confessional societies in which church and state worked closely together, and ecclesiastical and social discipline played an important role in making people think and behave like devoted Christians. In opposition to this view, Kaufmann has pointed to the fact that although Lutheran, Reformed and Catholic territories in the German Empire to a certain degree went through the same social and political development, there were substantial differences within the cultural sphere: Each confession developed its own distinct confessional culture, Konfessionskultur.

That the Nordic Reformation History Working Group has chosen “Confessional cultures in the post-reformation Nordic countries” as topic for a collective research project reflects a growing interest among historians and church historians there in applying Kaufmann’s concept to Scandinavia. Such an application could not only enhance the understanding of the confessional age in the Nordic countries, but could also contribute to develop the concept itself and to help make clear what the special characteristics of the German Lutheran confessional culture were. It has been normal to use German Lutheran concepts of confessional identity as normative models for Lutheranism in the Nordic countries as well, but this ignores the fact that the cultural and political conditions were very different. Although the forms and consequences of Lutheranism in the different German territories and estates and in the Nordic countries might be similar, they are by no means identical. Above all there seems not to be a Nordic parallel for the theological struggles that were so characteristic of German Lutheranism. The overall purpose of the planned project is to characterise the confessional profile of Nordic Lutheranism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including to make clear what was common for all of the Nordic countries and what had a special national, ethnic or regional mark. The special Lutheran book and reading culture will, of course, play a central role, but the project will aim also to reveal specific Lutheran types of

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68 A very informative survey can be found in Schilling 2002. A shorter version of this article in English is Schilling 1995. Since its formulation in the 1980’s there has been a rather heated debate over the confessionalisation thesis put forward by Reinhard and Schilling. For an overview of the debate on – including the critique of – Reinhard and Schilling’s concept of confessionalisation, see Boettcher 2004; Lotz-Heumann 2008; and – most recently – Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann 2014

mentality or life style more in general. Furthermore examples on the way that special Lutheran characteristics came to expression in legal, institutional, educational, liturgical, doctrinal and devotional regards will be included in the project.70

**Pointing to desiderata in existing research – and to important source material**

The authors of the five national reports have been asked not only to give a survey of existing research in reformation and confessionalisation in their respective countries, but also to point to *desiderata* mentioned in or to be concluded from it. Included in this task is to remark in particular if there are in the country special sources with good research potentials that have not yet been exploited, or that could be utilized much more, by reformation scholars. Examples of research *desiderata* as well as special sources will be mentioned in the national reports. In this part of the introduction I shall only give a few examples, taking source material with unexploited research possibilities as my point of departure, and at the same time pointing to cases where an interdisciplinary approach is especially relevant, and other academic disciplines than history and Church history can contribute decidedly to reformation research. I will again organize my treatment after each of the three time periods covered in the national reports.

The evidence from material culture is, as I remarked above, an important source for the religious culture of the late Middle Ages. Work to make this source material available for scholarly use is most advanced in Denmark. Here all churches in present day Denmark since the beginning of the 1930s have been invented and described in a very comprehensive and detailed work called *Danmarks Kirker* (“Denmark’s Churches”).71 It is mainly produced by architects, art historians and archeologists specializing in ecclesiastical buildings, furniture and art. For historians and Church historians *Danmarks Kirker* is a source publication with immense research potentials. The same is the case with two related works, an inventory and description of murals in the Danish churches,72

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70 I am grateful to Thomas Kaufmann for having allowed me to use formulations he has written for a ’call for papers’ to a conference on “Lutheran Confessional Cultures in Early Modern Germany and Scandinavia”, that we are organizing together, to take place at Aarhus University in Denmark in January 2016.

71 *Danmarks Kirker*, 1933ff.

72 Originally a paper register to be consulted in the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen, the inventory of the Danish murals can now be consulted on the internet through the homepage of the National Museum.
There are, however, serious desiderata to be mentioned in connection with these works. The first desideratum is to have Danmarks Kirker completed since it is only about in the middle of the work, having described the churches in about half of Denmark, and proceeding slowly through the other half. The second desideratum is to have works of the same broad scope and high standard produced for the other Nordic countries, so that also their church buildings and ecclesiastical furniture and art will be more easily accessible for scholars doing research in the religious culture of the later Middle Ages. The third desideratum is, however, to have historians and Church historians actually do research in this important source material! As Lars Bisgaard pointed out in an article that he wrote about the Danish research traditions twenty years ago there has been a strong convention that historians concentrated on documents and other archival sources, Church historians on books and other printed material, and art historians on the murals and the altarpieces and the other pictorial sources. Together with a strong materialist tradition, already mentioned, within the discipline of history this has blocked for studies of the late medieval religious culture that include using the material evidence. Although the changes that Lars Bisgaard was beginning to see in 1994 still haven’t come into full expression, the situation has improved very much. It would, however, be fine if historians together with Church historians, art historians, archaeologists and perhaps also specialists from other disciplines would go together and make a truly interdisciplinary project that had as its first aim to use the evidence from material culture as a source for the religious culture of late medieval Denmark. Such a project could later on give valuable inspiration and experiences to similar projects in the other Nordic countries.

Book historical studies will, as I mentioned before, be an important new approach to the introduction of the Reformation in the Nordic countries, allowing to throw light on printed books as an important means for importing and disseminating the new religious ideas. Another use of books as sources for reformation history can, however, be mentioned as an important research desideratum, namely detailed studies of the writings of important Nordic reformers and theologians. Collected writings of important figures in the Nordic reformation have been published in good editions, and are easily accessible. In Denmark this is the case with for instance Christiern Pedersen, Hans Tausen and Peder Palladius, but only in the case of Palladius more detailed studies have been made.

73 Plathe and Bruun 2010. Also the inventory of the altarpieces can be consulted on the internet through the homepage of the Danish National Museum.
74 Bisgaard 1994.
carried out. For Sweden and Finland it could be mentioned that we have editions of the works of Olaus Petri and Mikael Agricola, that still awaits thorough investigation.

While several of these editions of the writings of leading reformers have been available for scholarly use for many years, access to the very many other books that were written by Nordic churchmen and theologians during the epoch of the Reformation in the sixteenth century has been rather difficult. They have to be researched from the original versions kept in various libraries, and not only the leading national libraries of the five Nordic countries, but also in local libraries and in libraries in other European countries. In these years national as well as international projects are carried out to digitalize early printed books and make them accessible on the internet. This will bring about a revolution in reformation history studies, suddenly establishing easy access to an enormous amount of source material, that earlier on was extremely difficult both to survey and to exploit. The possibility of using the written literature of the Reformation epoch much easier than before will open for studies of the theological thinking of important Nordic reformers, but also for research into very many aspects of culture and society that were treated in written form by churchmen and theologians, be it in the national languages as part of a public discourse, or in Latin to address a scholarly world and take part in academic debates. To mention only a few examples you could point to more practical questions of how poor relief and marriage should be regulated on Protestant principles, or to more complicated legal or ethical questions that had to be reevaluated as a consequence of the new Lutheran theology. Admonitory literature with advice to husbands and families on how to live your life, treat your wife and bring up your children can be mentioned as an important new genre that shows how Nordic reformers contributed to the transmission of Luther’s doctrine of the three estates, the oiconomia, politia and ecclesia, from the sphere of theological ‘theory’ to actual social practice.

For the confessional epoch an important research desideratum is an investigation of the place and role of Nordic theologians and scholars in the learned community of the Protestant world. We know, for instance, that the Danish theologian Niels Hemmingsen (1513-1600) was influential far

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55 Lausten 1987(b); Ertner 1988.
56 To be mentioned first and foremost is the project ”Early European Books”, that ultimately intend to make all European books printed before 1700 accessible online.
57 This theme is at present one of the main projects of a research unit for reformation theology and confessional culture at Aarhus University.
beyond the borders of Denmark, his books being translated into several foreign languages. How they were received and what influence they had on further thinking and writing within for instance the German Lutheran context is, however, not fully explored. Sources for such investigations are, of course, books and translations themselves, but to this comes another source, more difficult to approach, namely letters exchanged within the learned community between Nordic scholars and their colleagues abroad. Such letters were exchanged for instance between professors at foreign universities and former students now holding prominent posts in the Nordic countries, or between people who had studied together at a certain university, but afterwards ended up in different countries. For more famous scholars such letters have been studied, and some of them also edited, but it is definitely a source group with unexploited research possibilities. For the histories of science, theology and humanities the letters exchanged between prominent professors might be the most interesting, but for historians and Church historians trying to characterize the confessional culture that developed in the Nordic countries after the introduction of the Lutheran reformation letters exchanged by more ordinary members of the clergy could have much larger interest. They will reveal what bishops, pastors and other members of the clergy thought, how news, informations and ideas were exchanged and disseminated in an international as well as a national context, and also the extent to which the learned or intellectual group of society put its mark on the Lutheran confessional cultures developing in the Nordic countries in the second half of the sixteenth and in the seventeenth century. Since most of such letters were written in Latin it will be natural to involve specialists in Latin philology and manuscripts in an interdisciplinary approach together with historians and Church historians.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this report is to give a survey of Nordic research in the history of the ‘long reformation’, that is the Reformation including its late medieval background and its effects in the confessional epoch following in the wake of it. It is planned, and has been given its specific design, with the intention of paving the way for a future research project within the frames of the Nordic

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78 On Hemmingsen see most recently Lausten 2013.
79 An example of such letters already hinted at is the letters exchanged between David Chythræus, professor in Rostock, and his former students in Sweden, cf. Czaika 2002, especially pp. xx. Otfried Czaika has kindly informed me that he plans to edit parts of Chythraeus’ correspondence with the Nordic countries. See also the remarks on contributions to reformation history from intellectual history (lärdomshistoria) in the report on Finland below.
Reformation History Working Group that will go beyond the national frames hitherto dominant in reformation historiography and try to apply a truly comparative approach to reformation and confessionalisation in the Nordic countries. In addition to this main purpose, the authors of the five national reports have, however, been asked to address a series of common questions intending to secure the fulfillment also of four additional purposes. These purposes are to break down borders between academic disciplines in reformation research in the Nordic countries, to cross dividing lines between historical periods, to introduce new problems and approaches in Nordic research, and to point to desiderata in existing research or sources deserving more detailed examination.

There is at least a couple of reasons for publishing this report to a broader audience instead of letting it have the status of a working paper for internal use in the Nordic Reformation History Working Group in its research project plans. The first one is that the Working Group welcomes all kinds of comments, ideas and proposals of importance for its plans, and is also open for scholars who want to take part in the work and meetings of the group. The second – and most important – is that the report hopefully can have a general interest besides from its purpose of preparing a collective Nordic research project. The report provides a survey of existing research in the Nordic countries, that deserves attention from historians and Church historians specializing in the European reformation, and wanting to have information about reformation research going on everywhere as a preparation for the 500 years anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. But it gives also information on the political and ecclesiastical context of the reformation research that could have a broader relevance for historians and Church historians interested in the Nordic countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For scholars preoccupied with the history of historical writing or with the history of science the report will be of interest by showing to how high a degree research is a product of the society and culture in which it is carried out.
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1) Preface

The German-American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr described in his book *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* the Kingdom of God as an impossible possibility: "[T]he kingdom of God is [...] not here. It is in fact always coming but never here."¹ To me it seems likewise to be an impossible possibility to describe and discuss about half a century of the international discourse and research on reformation and confessionalization. Reformation still matters: Archive for Reformation History publishes every year around 600-700 reviews of books and articles dealing with the history of the 16th Century. In addition to that the so called confessionalization-paradigm has since the 1980ies served as a central category for the description of early modern history. Consequently numerous monographs and articles on confessionalization have been published. In fact, the number of works dealing with confessionalization is so overwhelming that it cannot be handled by a single researcher. A more detailed overview on reformation and confessionalization research would result in a monograph covering many hundred pages. I will therefore discuss in this paper the most important outlines of reformation and confessionalization research during the last decades. Furthermore I will limit my paper to the discussion on reformation and confessionalization in the German speaking parts of Europe as they still have been leading in research on reformation and reformation theology. The outlines I will discuss deal essentially with questions related to the periodization of late medieval and early modern history. The periodization of history is in respect to reformation and confessionalization the fundamental theoretical question which inevitably affects the historic narrative.

Moreover it is nearly impossible to present a paper like this in English. In the aftermath of the German Luther renaissance and in the spirit of Karl Holl research on reformation is still extremely productive in the German speaking parts of Europe. The so called confessionalization-paradigm is a child of the German academic discourse dealing with reformation and early modern history. Even though the confessionalization-paradigm claims to be a heuristic category for the description of the entire history of Europe the major language for publications discussing the confessional age is still German. A waste number of publications dealing with confessionalization outside the borders of the German Reich has been published during the last two decades by researchers which are not German native speakers. It may be enough to name here the anthologies on Scandinavian, Baltic or Hungarian History edited by Matthias Asche and Anton Schindling in the series *Katholisches Leben und Kirchenreform im Zeitalter der Glaubensspaltung* at Aschendorff in Münster\(^2\) or Mata Fatas monograph on *Peregrinatio Hungarica*.\(^3\) As at least reading knowledge of German is required for any deeper understanding of early modern history and historiography discussing confessional matters I will cite - when needed - in German and use at least partly the German terminology.

2) 1977 - Grane versus Oberman

In 1977 the Dutch Church historian Heiko A. Oberman had reviewed the Danish Luther researcher Leif Grane’s latest book on Martin Luther’s theology *Modus loquendi theologicus: Luthers Kampf um die Erneuerung der Theologie (1515–1518)* in Archive of Reformation History, the most important periodical for reformation research.\(^4\) In his review Oberman accused his Danish counterpart for an anachronistic view of reformation history. Oberman claimed that Grane had described Luther in terms used by the Swedish and German Luther renaissance and that this was not an appropriate description of the reformation. The Luther renaissance interpreted Martin Luther as a kind of Genius and claimed thus that with Martin Luther and the reformation a new epoch had begun, especially a modern one that had still effects for religion and society during the 20th Century. This interpretation claims that there is a clear break between the late middle ages and the

\(^2\) See below.

\(^3\) Márta Fata, (red.) *Peregrinatio Hungarica: Studenten aus Ungarn an deutschen und österreichischen Hochschulen vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2006).

reformation - and includes some kind of black and white picture of the middle ages versus the reformation. Oberman on the other hand pointed out that the reformation transformed ideas and political, theological and social developments that had already started during the middle ages. Or in other words: Thus Oberman concludes that a clear border does not necessarily exist between those two epochs and recommends to operate with more than one chronological period. The hermeneutical approach Oberman recommended was that what he called for "Epochenpolyvalenz" - a polyvalent description of history through using different periodizations in a supplementary way. This discussion shaped the awareness of historians dealing with mediaeval or early modern history for that what these two periods have in common. Nowadays the vast majority of historians would accept that both Martin Luther’s life and theology has to be understood in the light of the religious, political and social background of the late middle ages. But to me there seems to be anyway some relicts of the different positions represented by Grane and Oberman. Firstly the discussion between Grane and Oberman may have caused that systematic theology has developed the position of Grane while Church historians have been more and more directed towards the medieval background of reformation. Maybe the discussion can be described as a double truce: Church historians do not longer quarrel about that, at least not openly, and Church historians and systematic theologians do in fact not really speak with each other about their differences concerning the periodizations of history and the modernization reformation may have caused. But there is probably another relict of the Oberman-Grane discussion. From 1977 until the beginning of the third millennium existed still two camps of historians: those who have carried out mostly research on the late middle ages - or are at least interested in the medieval background of reformation - on the one hand, and those who merely study the early modern period. The question is still - albeit somehow hidden - if researchers approach reformation from the late middle ages or if they use reformation to approach early modern history and confessionalization. E.g. Bernd Hamm and Volker Leppin have carried out research in the spirit of Heiko A Oberman. Hamm´s theory of "normative Zentrierung", which means a process of standardization that started during the late middle ages, may illustrate that: According to Hamm this process reaches its summit around 1550 through the formulation of confessional standards and the Peace of Augsburg.

The Grane-position has probably been more modified since the 1970ies, but it lived quite obviously on in the confessionalization paradigm, which claims that reformation and the following process of confessionalization laid the fundaments of modern Europe that took form after the Napoleonic wars.
The early modern period - including reformation - is therefore described as the intrinsic forerunner of the modernization of Europe after 1800, the early modern period encloses reformation and confessionalization and is "Vorsattelzeit der Moderne".

3) The Tübingen connection: Profane history as the driving force of confessionalization research

When Oberman and Grane discussed the periodization of European history, especially the middle ages and reformation, another theoretical approach had already begun to take shape: Researchers discussing early modern history, especially the history of the late 16th and the entire 17th Century became more and more dissatisfied with concepts like Counter-Reformation, Lutheran Orthodoxy etc. Discussing church history in general and confessionalization in special during the 2nd half of the 20th Century we have to keep in mind that there are three academic subjects in Germany with major interests in confessionalization: Protestant theology, Catholic theology and profane history. Furthermore there does in fact exist more subjects than this with a given interest in confessionalization as e.g. history of literature, economic history, sociology. Actually most academic subjects who deal with the history of early modern Europe have in one or another way contributed to discussions related to confessionalization as a heuristic category for the history of Europe. The term confessionalization has by the way its offspring in Ernst Troeltsch's article *Die Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die Entstehung der modernen Welt* which was published in 1906. Troeltsch introduced here "Konfessionelles Zeitalter" - "the confessional age" as a name for the historic period after the reformation.⁵ Albeit this offspring of the term confessionalization from protestant theology profane history has been for the last sixty years the driving power for that what should become the confessionalization-paradigm. Friedrich Hermann Schubert (1925-1973) pointed already in 1955 out that confessional matters were the driving force for the diplomacy of Joachim Camerarius (1573-1651).⁶ The historian Ernst Walter Zeeden (1916-2011), a convert from Protestantism to the Roman Catholic Church and a relative of Max Weber, who served as a professor in Tübingen and colleague of Heiko A Oberman, became then some years after the

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⁵ Ernst Troeltsch, "Die Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die Entstehung der modernen Welt", in: Trutz Rendtorff & Stefan Pautler (eds.), Ernst Troeltsch: Schriften zur Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die moderne Welt (1906-1913), s. 183-316.
publication of Schubert’s study the *spiritus rector* of all confessionalization research. Zeeden’s groundbreaking studies on late medieval and early modern history caused a broader understanding of the European history, especially a comparative discourse which includes the different early modern confessions and thus transgressed the confessional interests and ideological borders which still predominated research on religious matters after 1945.

Zeeden’s expression of "Konfessionsbildung"⁷ - the formation of early modern confessions - was developed further during the 1980ies by the historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling to the so called confessionalization paradigm.⁸ Confessionalization hence became the key to early modern history.

Thus the main impulse of confessionalization research did not come from Church historians but from profane historians like Zeeden, Reinhard and Schilling. From the beginnings, since Zeeden’s works published in the 1950ies and 1960ies, the discourse about early modern confessions has therefore been open to other than just dogmatic aspects or questions connected to systematic theology. Social and cultural history, postmodernism, structuralism, decomposition and gender research could thus easily enter the scene of the discourse about early modern history. Last but not least comparative aspects, both concerning different confessions and territories have been more and more discussed during the last three decades.

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Some interesting facts about confessionalization research should be named: Firstly that what already was mentioned above, that Zeeden and Oberman were colleagues in Tübingen. Oberman’s criticism towards reformation research corresponds with Zeedens ideas of Konfessionsbildung. Both forced the traditional historical narrative to reconsider their fundamental positions. Furthermore Zeeden and Oberman interacted not only as research fellows but also as leaders for the DFG-founded special research field Spätmittelalter und Reformation. Tübingen thus became a centre for research on late medieval and early modern history. Secondly researchers who are Catholics or at least interested in the history of the Catholic Church or Catholic territories were able to raise their voice in the historic discourse. Catholic theology has traditional been - and is still - mostly absent in the discussions concerning early modern history. The confessionalization as a scientific theory was able to give those researchers a shelter and a homeland in the historical discourse. Nowadays Anton Schindling holds the chair of late medieval and early modern history at the Faculty of Philosophy at Tübingen University. Schindling is not only a successor of Ernst Walter Zeeden on the Tübingen chair for Early Modern History. He is as well a disciple of Friedrich Herrmann Schubert. Schindling and his staff have tireless continued the work of Zeeden during the last decades.

Since the 1970ies plentiful studies were published which in one or another way discussed themes related to the confessional period. Not always the term "confessionalization" was used, but often instead concepts like "Sozialdisziplierung" - "social discipline" or "Staatenbildung(sprozess)" - "(process of) state building" which are a vital part of the so called confessionalization paradigm.

4) The struggle of profane history versus Church history

9 The reason for that may be found both in the 16th century and the self-understanding of Catholicism: Firstly the reformation argued from a historical point of view: Reformation of the church does not mean introducing something new but going back to the roots. Thus the historical question, the re-birth and re-form of the old - and right - religious dogmatic and ceremonies plays a pivotal role in reformation theology and self-fashioning. In this respect we may keep in mind that the historiography of humanism was incorporated into the canon of protestant theology by Philipp Melanchthons edition of Carion’s chronicles and David Chytraeus continuation of Albert Krantz’ pre-reformation historiographical works. The historiographical interest of the protestant theology reflects as well an apologetical aspect against the Roman church claiming to be the one and only true church, or in other words extra ecclesiam nulla salus. The self-understanding of the Roman church as the privileged and exclusive disposer of salvation is as well the reason why Catholic theology never has had the same interest in Church history as protestant theology.
The conferences on *Die lutherische Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland*\(^{10}\) in 1988 and *Die Katholische Konfessionalisierung*\(^{11}\) in 1993 with their respective conference publications marked already a kind of retrospective and perhaps a peak of confessionalization research. At least it could be said that after these publications confessionalization as a scientific concept did not longer need any promotion in German or English speaking countries. Furthermore the conferences held 1988 and 1993 show that confessionalization with its origin in profane history had become a natural issue for Church historians as well.

Thomas Kaufmann’s in 1997 published study on the history of the Rostock university\(^{12}\) is in this respect the landmark which reveals that confessionalization contributes both to the understanding of the early modern *res publica litteraria* and the entire field of Church history. Kaufmann’s introduction provides some interesting outlines: Firstly Kaufmann claims that "Konfessionsbildung" and "Konfessionalisierung" are interconnected to each other even though they emphasize slightly different aspects of the historical processes during the 16th Century.\(^{13}\) Secondly he connects the beginning of the era of confessionalization with the Peace of Augsburg 1555 and claims that the decades between ca 1517 and 1555 should not be disintegrated into a broader view of historical periods.\(^{14}\) Last but not least he points out that confessionalization always has to be understood in the light of the dogma of a certain early modern confession; thus a dissolution of confessional differences into a general picture of similarities of the different confessions is according to Kaufmann not feasible.\(^{15}\)

The introduction of Kaufmanns study is interesting in many respects, it does not only serve as a summary of some decades of debate on confessionalization, it shows as well between the lines the different camps of historical research connected to the history of the 16th Century. The introduction

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of Kaufmann’s study on Rostock university in the age of confessionalization has therefore to be understood in the light of the entire epoch discussions carried out since the 1970ies, including the Grane-Oberman debate. In this respect it should be mentioned as well that *Verein für Reformationsgeschichte* had arranged in 1996 a conference which discussed the early reformation as a change: Die frühe Reformation in Deutschland als Umbruch.\(^{16}\) The conference volume published two years later reveals that the discussions were extremely noisy - and that the discussion between Grane and Oberman in some respect lived on. Kaufmann’s introduction and the conference volume *Die frühe Reformation in Deutschland als Umbruch* provide us with interesting data. The main theses and different fractions could be described as follows:

1) Heinz Schilling claims that reformation should be discussed in a longue durée, as a temps des réformes that covers a period from ca. 1300 to 1600. In some respect Schilling’s thoughts are related to Oberman’s view of late medieval and early modern history. Schilling furthermore pointed out that reformation often is described as a myth - especially from Lutheran Church historians.\(^{17}\)

2) This view of history was harshly rejected at the conference 1996 by Thomas Kaufmann\(^{18}\) and in a more differentiated way in his study on Rostock university in the age of confessionalization 1997.\(^{19}\)

3) Bernd Hamm took a position somewhere in the middle, his theory of "Normative Zentrierung" claims that during the 15th century a process of social, political and last but not least theological and dogmatic centralization had started. This process reached according to Hamm his peak - and end - with the formulation of the early modern confessions around 1550. Hamm pointed out that reformation is both "Umbruch im Sinne von Traditionsabbruch und rapider Umwertung ebenso wie


\(^{19}\) Kaufmann, *Universität und lutherische Konfessionalisierung: die Rostocker Theologieprofessoren und ihr Beitrag zur theologischen Bildung und kirchlichen Gestaltung im Herzogtum Mecklenburg zwischen 1550 und 1675*, p. 23-25 et al.
Kontinuität im Sinne von Weiterführung und -entwicklung des Traditionellen”. This position was by the way criticized by Kaufmann in his study on Rostock university as insufficient especially as it is combined by profane historians with a tendency of a total inclusion of the reformation into the confessionalization which in the end would lead to a total extinction of the reformation as a period.

So, what had happened between 1977, the Grane-Oberman-discussion and 1997 when Thomas Kaufmann published his study on Universität und lutherische Konfessionalisierung? On the one hand confessionalization had become an issue, an extremely important theme for church history. Thomas Kaufmann who in 1997 was the rising star of German Church history placed the term confessionalization within the subject of Church history. On the other hand probably not so much had happened. Oberman claimed in 1977 that Grane´s view of history and the Church history research in the backwash of the Lutherrenaissance was anachronistic. Schilling in his turn accused reformation research for mythologization. Oberman with Zeeden´s Tübingen school in the background opposed 1977 against a Church history influenced by Lutheran systematic theology and the collective memory of Lutheranism. Circa twenty years later there still was an opposition between Church historians as Kaufmann claiming the importance of reformation - and confessionalization - as a period and the theological discourses attached to reformation history while profane historians tend to disintegrate reformation into either a quite coherent medieval and early modern temp des réformes or the confessional era.


That leads us to the inevitable question what might have happened the last twenty years. This question may be answered by reading the latest works by Heinz Schilling and Thomas Kaufmann who in the 1990ies could in some respect be described as antipodes. Heinz Schilling´s introductory remarks to his recently published Luther biography and Thomas Kaufmann´s discussion of the

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22 Heinz Schilling, Martin Luther: Rebell in einer Zeit des Umbruchs - Eine Biographie (München, 2012).
reformation as a period or epoch especially in his study on the beginning of reformation show that there seems to be not only a cease-fire but almost a consensus: Schilling points out quite shortly that Church history has opened itself during the last decades towards discourses of profane history.

Thomas Kaufmann in his turn develops in his book Der Anfang der Reformation what he calls for kontextuelle Reformation - contextual reformation. Here he relates his study to among others Heiko A Oberman´s, Thomas Brady´s, Bernd Moeller´s, Berndt Hamm´s works on the reformation. Thus Kaufmann anchors the reformation in preexistent, late-medieval presuppositions but shows that reformation as well lifted earlier religious imprints towards a new level. This level is marked by the theology of the reformation, especially the teaching of the claritas scripturae and the justification through faith alone. Kaufmann´s contextual reformation can be described as inclusive—he acknowledges the late-medieval bearing forces of the reformatio ecclesiae but sculptures as well the proprium of the reformation which can be found in the history of ideas and theology and thus shaped the worldly sphere as well.

Discussing research on reformation and confessionalization during the last generation we should pause for a moment and have a look on further works published by Thomas Kaufmann during the last one and a half decades. Kaufmann´s studies are in fact quite extraordinary not only in respect to theoretical questions connected to the periodization of history but also in respect to the plentifulness of sources. In his study Das Ende der Reformation - The End of the Reformation he shows that the discussions related to the Interim 1548, the printing press in Magdeburg and Matthias Flacius Illyricus´ theological positions connected to that in fact marked the turn from reformation towards confessionalization. Thus he completes the broader historical picture again with discourses from the history of ideas and theology: The end of the reformation is thus not only marked juridical and constitutional by the Peace of Augsburg, "der reichsrechtlichen Sanktionierung des lutherischen Bekenntnisses im Zuge des Augsburger Religionsfriedens" but also manifest in the discourse on

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24 "Auch die noch Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts beschworene Gefahr, `über die Beschäftigung mit Luthers Theologie den Menschen Luther zu verlieren`, ist durch die zwischentzeitig erfolgte Öffnung der theologischen Kirchen- zur Allgemeingeschichte weitgehend überwunden." Schilling, Martin Luther, s. 17.

25 Cf. as well Thomas Kaufmann, Geschichte der Reformation (Frankfurt am Main, 2009).


27 Kaufmann, Universität und lutherische Konfessionalisierung: die Rostocker Theologieprofessoren und ihr Beitrag zur theologischen Bildung und kirchlichen Gestaltung im Herzogtum Mecklenburg zwischen 1550 und 1675, p. 29.
Theology. Here Kaufmann’s work correspondent in a most interesting way the recently published works on the Peace of Augsburg by both profane historians and Church historians.\(^{28}\)

Kaufmann has not only underlined the importance of reformation theology and the proprium of the reformation. In different studies published after his habilitation on Rostock university he has as well discussed the confessional era. His work on the Thirty Years War and the Peace of Westphalia\(^{29}\) describes the end of the age of confessionalization, discusses the periodization of history and rejects "lutheran orthodoxy" and pietism as usable historical terms\(^{30}\). Last but not least Thomas Kaufmann introduced here the expression Konfessionskultur - confessional culture.\(^{31}\) The concept of confessional culture is developed further in his study Konfession und Kultur, published in 2006.\(^{32}\) Could be that Kaufmann has given the historic sciences dealing with the early modern period with this concept the most important impulse during the last decades.

Thomas Kaufmann and his German disciples as e.g. Andreas Waschbüsch\(^{33}\) or Anselm Schubert have during the last fifteen years dominated the discourse on reformation and confessionalization. They remember the historic sciences that theology, faith and spirituality should be taken seriously as significant actors in history, they have shaped our consciousness by claiming that theology and religion mattered, that confession is the key for any understanding of the early modern history. The idea of confessionalization as a heuristic key for early modern history has as well been broadened


\(^{29}\) Thomas Kaufmann, Dreißigjähriger Krieg und Westfälischer Friede: Kirchengeschichtliche Studien zur lutherischen Konfessionskultur (Tübingen, 1998).

\(^{30}\) Kaufmann, Dreißigjähriger Krieg und Westfälischer Friede, p. 146-150.

\(^{31}\) Kaufmann, Dreißigjähriger Krieg und Westfälischer Friede, p. 7-9 et al.


towards discourses as *interconfessionality*, *transconfessionality* and *innerconfessional pluralism*. The connection of confession and culture opens the confessionalization paradigm furthermore to cultural sciences and other historic disciplines.

Thomas Kaufmann and his school have during the last fifteen years not only provided a clear identity for Church history as an academic subject, they have as well dominated the discourse about reformation and confessionalization. A legitimate question will however be where to find criticism and opposition to this theory and research results presented by Kaufmann and others.

Firstly we should return to the Tübingen-school of Zeeden and Oberman I presented above. The profane historians at Tübingen university have continued the work of e.g. Schubert and Zeeden, they have extensively carried out research on confessional aspects in European history. Inter alia they have pointed out the religious and confessional aspects in warfare during the early modern period. Matthias Asche and Anton Schindling have furthermore arranged conferences and published numerous books on reformation and confessionalization outside the borders of the German Reich, e.g. Hungary, Scandinavia or the Baltic countries. Thus in some respect the Tübingen school completes Kaufmann´s and his school in regard to content. But there does in fact exist deeper differences. Since the late 1990ies Anton Schindling and Matthias Asche have criticized the confessionalization paradigm. To them confessionalization as a heuristic model is not able to analyze the entire history of the early modern time and cannot describe every social interaction during this period in an appropriate way. Schindling and Asche especially pointed out that the early modern res publica litteraria provided a superstructure which gave the educated elites

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a possibility to transgress confessional borders and interact freely with each other.\textsuperscript{39} Schindling’s and Asche’s criticism of the confessionalization-paradigm is however rejected by Anselm Schubert stating the following:

"Was im Rahmen der Konfessionalisierungsforschung höchst innovativ klingt, ist tatsächlich die Adaption einer Lieblingsthese der Respublica-Litteraria-Forschung."\textsuperscript{40} Schubert points toward the works of Hans Bots\textsuperscript{41} who already in the 1970ies claimed that the republic of letters was characterized by a tolerance beyond the religious borders. Schubert rejects this view of the republic of letters following up the research of Herbert Jaumann who seperates the rhetorical self-fashioning of the learned from the real existing circumstances.\textsuperscript{42}

The discussions between the Tübingen school, especially Schindling and Asche can be understood as a debate between Church history on the one hand and profane history on the other. Schindling and Asche clearly mark their discomfort with a theory that absolutizes the significance of confessional ideas and confessional culture. Thus I think the Tübingen school tried once again to act as a critical corrective in the tradition of Zeeden and Oberman. The debate between Tübingen and Göttingen on the confessional or non-confessional culture of the res publica litteraria which was conducted at the turn of the millenium is to me today merely outdated especially with regard to Heinz Schilling’s and Thomas Kaufmanns modified positions which I have described above.


Interestingly Thomas Kaufmann’s concept of confessionalization and confessional culture has not only been criticized by profane historians as Anton Schindling and Matthias Asche. The Church historian Markus Matthias criticized in his book *Theologie und Konfession*\(^3\) which deals with the theology of Ägidius Hunnius harshly Thomas Kaufmann’s and Heinz Schilling’s works on confessionalization and the concept of confessional culture. According to Matthias the confessionalization paradigm is solely interested in the functions of religion and not in religion itself. Matthias claims further that Church history is only able to contribute to questions concerning the formation of early modern confessions (*Konfessionsbildung*) but not to the confessionalization paradigm.\(^4\) Matthias accuses furthermore the concept of confessional culture for being reductionistic.\(^5\) I consent with Matthias that there is an obvious risk that confessionalization research tends to overemphasize social historic aspects. But that he addresses Thomas Kaufmann’s works as insufficient is in fact more than peculiar as Kaufmann has permanently pointed towards the significance of theology, dogma and confessions. Matthias ends up on the other hand of the scale: His study of Ägidius Hunnius theology decouples theology from spirituality and religious lifestyle. Matthias’ criticism seems in fact to be a regression to the position of the Luther renaissance and Leif Grane.

6) Summary

It is time to sum up the outlines of reformation and confessionalization research during the last decades in Germany: The main theme of the research that addresses late medieval and early modern developments has been the periodization of history:

1) The traditional picture of protestant Church History and Systematic Theology which in the backwash of the Lutherrenaissance claimed the uniqueness and significance of Martin Luther and the reformation has been questioned, criticized and modified. The first remarkable outbreak took place within the field of Church history with the Grane-Oberman-debate in 1977. But in the background of Oberman’s position we can observe profane historic research, especially Zeeden’s

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\(^4\) Matthias *Theologie und Konfession*, p. 17.

\(^5\) Matthias *Theologie und Konfession*, p. 21.
Tübingen-school which since the 1950ies had worked with the importance of confessional thoughts during the early modern period.

2) Zeedem’s and Oberman’s position influenced during the 1970ies, 1980ies and 1990ies the discourse of profane history which on the one hand became quite reluctant to describe reformation as a separated historical epoch an on the other hand developed the so called confessionalization-paradigm. Heinz Schilling’s works are in this respect seminal sources. Schilling criticizes Church history for a mythologization of Luther and the reformation and recommends to use the french annales-schools periodization which includes reformation into a _temps des réformes_. Furthermore Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard have developed the theory of confessionalization, i.e. the historic period between ca. 1550-1750 where confessional thinking and acting influenced institutions, social and political life, warfare a.s.o. in Western Europe.

3) Even Church history participated in the discussions on reformation and confessionalization. In this respect it is constructive to analyze Thomas Kaufmann’s studies on reformation and confessionalization. On the one hand Kaufmann marks his discomfort with a periodization which includes reformation into a broader periodization as the proprium of reformation theology and the social, political and religious effects of reformation will thus be eliminated from the discourse. On the other hand Kaufmann started in the 1990ies to use confessionalization in a very productive way as a heuristic key to early modern history. While e.g. Schilling wanted to avoid any mythologization of the reformation, Kaufmann is concerned that Schilling’s and others view of history may as well be anachronistic as they may neglect groundbreaking thoughts and developments connected to the reformation.

4) During the last years there might be some kind of consensus, especially between Schilling in Kaufmann, but probably as well between the majority of profane and Church historians: The medieval background of the reformation and its importance is acknowledged and used for a contextualization of the reformation and the following confessional age. Church historians do respect the importance of social history and other hermeneutical and heuristic approaches. Profane historians on the other hand respect the importance of theology and the history of ideas.
5) The consensus between the main actors of reformation and early modern historic research is
however not a complete one. As I pointed out the Tübingen-school of Anton Schindling has
criticized Kaufmann’s view of the confessional age as too far-going, as an absolutization of
confessional thinking. On the other hand e.g. Markus Matthias has claimed that confessionalization
research and especially Thomas Kaufmanns position neglects the real importance of theology and is
not sufficient for Church history as an academic subject.

6) Many other researchers an those I have discussed here have participated in the debate on
reformation and confessionalization. In addition to those I have examined more in extenso here we
could e.g. name Christoph Strohm in Heidelberg, Irene Dingel in Mainz, Johann Anselm Steiger in
Hamburg and many others. The highest theoretical reflection and the harshest debates may however
be found in the outlines I presented here.

7. And Scandinavia?

My task is not to provide an overview here in which respect the debate on reformation and
confessionalization has influenced researchers in Scandinavia. Some years ago I have pointed out in
an article that confessionalization or related terms as confessional epoch have already been used in
Scandinavia half a century ago. Even the newer confessionalization paradigm has after the turn of
the millennium had som effect on research in Scandinavia. The reception of the confessionalization
paradigm was however quite slow and happened only partly. Still some years ago my dear
colleague Anders Jarlert was unwilling to see that my dissertation which used the
confessionalization thesis as a theoretical approach in fact made use of a broad theoretical
framework. He called my study on David Chytraeus and the university of Rostock as "teorifattig" -
poor in respect to theoretical questions.

But the real problem in Scandinavia is to me not the reluctance to deal with the confessionalization
thesis. The true dilemma is that historians in Scandinavia, especially in Sweden and Finland, have
not participated in the discussions on the periodization of history, in particular the question of the
continuities between the late middle ages and the ages of reformation. The old mythologization of
the Lutherrenaissance has indeed even in Scandinavia been criticized and rejected - but just been
turned into its opposite. The old mythologization of history has turned into a new one: Now the
middle age is often described as the golden age, when the Western Church was unified and the state did not misuse religion. Thus research in Scandinavia has often ended up in the trap of mythologization which Kaspar Elm pointed out as an obvious risk at the conference dealing with Die frühe Reformations als Umbruch 1996:

Rasmus Dreyer and Carsten Selch Jensen

Report on Denmark

This rapport on the resent years of research into the long Reformation in Denmark offers some perspectives on the most dominant trends among historians, church historians, art historians and other scholars who have been researching the Reformation period within the Danish realms. The rapport however has no intention of being a full list of all research on the Reformation that has been carried out from roughly the mid 1980s until today. The focus is as mentioned on the dominant trends and some especially important studies. Firstly, the report bring a brief survey of the (long) Danish reformation history and secondly a contour of the historiography of the Danish reformation in church history (from the 16th century to the critical turn of the 19th century with an outline of main tracks in 20th century Danish church history), thirdly a description of the influence of source criticism and a survey of modern time introduction and studies on Danish reformation, consolidation and confessionalization from both church historian and historians.

I. The history of the Danish Reformation

The early reformation 1520-1536
In Danish historiography on the reformation, the Reformation of Denmark has been given several different starting years. The State Reformation was in 1536, but reforms of Danish society based on Renaissance humanist ideas, which quickly got ecclesiastical consequences already started during the reign of King Christian II (1513-1523). Around 1520 we have the earliest knowledge of Danish academic awareness of Luther and Melanchthon, and on the Diet of Worm later King Christian III (- ‘The Reformation King’- ) was on place. In the following year, Christian II also invited a number of theologians from Wittenberg (including Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt) to reside at the University of Copenhagen. The role which these theologians should fulfill is unclear; contemporary sources mention that Karlstadt might have been the king’s candidate to the Archbishopric See in Lund. Several factors even suggest that Christian II had planned some kind of reform of the Danish
church based on Lutheran or rather humanistic ideals. The Wittenberg-theologians visit to Copenhagen, however, was a failure.

In 1523 Christian II was dethroned. The deposing of the king was among other severe accusations justified in this fledgling reform process and the invitation of the Wittenberg’ers. The instalement of the Holstein Duke Frederik as King Frederik I (the former king’s uncle) led to a temporary hold to ecclesiastical reforms and Frederik’s coronation charter required interventions and precautions against the Lutherans. Though, at this time a Lutheran reformation was on its way in the Dutchies of Schleswig and Holstein, beginning in the market town Husum under the leadership of the Wittenberg-trained Hermann Tast (1490-1551). In the same years, we also know about Danish monks and youngsters studying in Wittenberg. In 1524 or 1525 one of these, the Hospitaller’s monk Hans Tausen (1494/98-1561) returned to Denmark from Wittenberg. While Tausen had been in Wittenberg the dismissed Christian II had taken his exile court to the Elbe city, and from Wittenberg Christian II issued political and evangelical propaganda, for instance the very first Danish translation of the New Testament in 1524. In 1525 or 1526 the Reformation also broke through in the Kingdom of Denmark, namely in the main city of Jutland, Viborg, when Hans Tausen and a couple of other evangelicals, among them Jørgen Jensen Sadolin (a. 1499-1559), arrived. Soon the new teaching was introduced in many other cities in Jutland and in Assens on Funen, where the Reformation was led by Christiern Skrok (d. 1558) and later Malmö-reformer Peder Laurentsen (a. 1485-1552). On Zealand and in Scania evangelical preaching came one or two years later. In Malmö Claus Mortensen (a. 1499-1575) took the word together with Hans Olufsen (d. 1571), and in the capital Copenhagen it broke through in 1529, when Hans Tausen arrived from Viborg. We note that it was the burghers, the citizens of the big market and trading towns, which as the first to put trust in the new teaching. During the reign of Christian II the Reformation and intended break with Rome and Roman jurisdiction was fostered from the top, though after the exile of Christian II, the ordinary burghers proponed the Reformation and knotted their hopes to the exiled king. The government under Frederik I could not be indifferent to this matter, and in an attempt to win an alliance with the burghers Frederik allowed the market towns and city councils to appoint their own evangelical preachers. This meant that the ecclesiastical jurisdiction temporarily was removed for the case of the preachers, who instead was under the protection of the city magistrates; a arrangement regulated through the so-called protective letters – not squinted to theological learning: e.g., such letter (temporarily) secured the radical lay preacher Melchior
Hoffman in Holstein Kiel. Frederik I furthermore made a number of (economic) encroachments against the church (the Diets of Odense in 1526 and 1527). At the Parliament, a Danish Diet of Copenhagen in 1530 both the established Roman church and the evangelical preachers envisaged a final decision on the religious matters; a solution for or against new or old doctrines. However, due to a renewed threat of invasion from the former King Christian II, status quo was maintained, de facto resulting in a double sided Danish church: A from Rome independent Roman church (!) led by the bishops and a free, evangelical church controlled by the city councils and under supreme protection from the king.

In Copenhagen, the evangelical preachers had wanted to present their 43 articles for disputation (The Confessio Hafniensis) but the debate never started. The articles however, is a valuable source with regards to the reformers’ theological opinions. These can best be characterized as Luther-inspired, yet by a closer scrutiny, more ‘humanistic’ in wording and theology. The early Danish reformers were inspired first and foremost by the South-German reformers, Zwingli, Bucer, Rhegius etc., and perhaps even Karlstadt. The leading Roman theologians of Denmark as well as two Germans doctors was planned to counter the preachers at the Copenhagen Diet in the summer of 1530. Leader of the Roman party was Poul Helgesen (or in Latin: Paulus Helie; 1485-?), a reformative Roman and former teacher of some of the reformers. Without reaching a result at the Diet and not even getting a disputation it subsequently sparked a violent reaction in Copenhagen ending with iconoclastic riots at Christmas time in 1530.

In the years before the Diet of 1530, a special case of reformation was the Reformation of Haderslev and Tørning, a junior duchy under the control of the oldest son of Frederik I, Christian. In Danish church history, this local reformation has usually been designated as an especially Lutheran reformation. This was due to its introduction by the Duke’s commandment (in the Haderslev-articles) and hence understood as an anticipation of the State Reformation in 1536/37 headed by the very same person. After the civil war, The Count's Feud 1534-36, Duke Christian won the Danish throne and hence the possibility of implementing a Wittenberg-like reformation of both state and church making the Saxonian-Lutheran theology the state religion and official evangelical interpretation.
The civil war from 1534-1536 was caused by the death of Frederik I in 1533. A Roman ecclesiastical reaction followed, when the conservative (= Catholic) majority of the council of the realm took power. At the Diet of Copenhagen in 1533 the election of a new king was postponed – the prime candidate, Duke Christian of Haderslev was too Lutheran, the younger brother, Hans – raised as a Catholic – too young. The conservative majority in the Council though wanted to state an example against the evangelical party and thus brought Copenhagen’s leading preacher, Hans Tausen, to trial for heresy and insubordination. The verdict against him is uncertain, yet his confession on the Lord’s Supper does not seem very ‘Lutheran’; nevertheless, he agreed to censure and return as preacher only a fortnight later. Moreover, the decision on the Diet meant oppression of the Evangelical preachers in particular the province of Scania. Thus Copenhagen and Malmö in Scania, the main cities of the country, allied themselves with the imprisoned Christian II (he had been imprisoned since 1522) and his confederate, Count Christoffer, and raised war against Duke Christian, whom the Council sought rescue by to secure own noble rights. This was The Count’s Feud; a war not only for power, but also about the proper kind of church reform. Was it to be a burgher’s reformation as that of the Danish preachers or was it to be a Lutheran top-down reformation headed by the king?

**The State Reformation 1536 – ca. 1560**

The introduction of the Reformation was no sliding movement, nor a divine necessity as the final step on the Dane’s participation in the Salvation History; a quite common way of describing the Danish Reformation, even up in the 19th century. The Danish State Reformation flowed upon the violent civil war and upon devastating sieges of both Copenhagen and Malmö. These principal cities had to be defeated. Thoughts on making the twin cities to a sort of free ‘Reichstädte’ in the Danish Realm or even as free Hansa cities in close connection to Lübeck was real possibilities, but Duke Christian (III)’s total victory shattered this idea. Christian’s takeover of both church and state in fall 1536 was well planned, what can be seen from the so-called commitment letter. In this, it was decided that the kingdom should be governed exclusively secular – neither archbishop nor other parts of the highest clergy should any longer take part in government power.

On an extended Diet in the defeated town of Copenhagen in October 1536 all estates was summoned to express their assent of the new government and of the new official religion, namely
the one being ‘in accordance with the Word of God’. The proposition from the meeting is preserved, and we thus know that the king and his new administration placed all responsibility for the rout and war of the country at the Roman bishops. Likewise, new guidelines for the church’s leadership was set out at this meeting. If reading a petition from the evangelical preachers, it becomes clear, that their wishes in many ways differed from what the government decided on this matter.

Instead of having the Danish reformers carrying out the full-scale reformation, Christian III’s government convened help from Wittenberg. Johannes Bugenhagen, as Phillip of Hesse had established contact with at Christian’s request. Bugenhagen came to Copenhagen soon after. He was joined another arriving from Wittenberg, the newly created doctor in theology, the Dane Peder Palladius (1503-1560). In 1537 the transitional regime ended and the reformation rule was symbolically confirmed: the royal couple was crowned by Bugenhagen in the main Copenhagen church, Our Lady and the University (i.e. of Copenhagen) was reformed and reopened, and lastly a number of new Lutheran superintendents was inaugurated. Several of these had only played a secondary (if none) role in the struggle for reformation in the earlier years: Peder Palladius (See of Zealand) had stayed in Wittenberg in several years, Jørgen Jensen Sadolin (Funen) had showed himself as more Lutheran than his fellow Danish reformers and had also worked for the new learning within the old system; Johann Wenth (Ribe) was a German and a leading figure from Christian III’s reformation in Haderslev, at the North Jutland See in Vendelbo Peder Thomsen, the personal chaplain of Mogens Gøye, the leading evangelical member of the council of the realm, became superintendent. Hans Tausen, Peder Laurentsen and other more radical types from the early years got less influential jobs and the administration placed them as lecturers and preachers.

In the commission for the preparation of the new legal structure of the church, *The Church Order*, modelled after Bugenhagen’s ordinances from different Northern German cities, both the early reformers, the superintendents and representatives of the chapters and monasteries took part. Though in the new ‘royal church’ the Zealand-superintendent Peder Palladius was the main character next Bugenhagen. *The Church Order* made the church the king’s responsibility and replaced the former bishops with new superintendents pied by the crown, though it did not place a general superintendent in the archdiocese in Lund as recommended in the Danish draft of the new legislation as in petitions of the Danish reformers. Furthermore *The Church Order* retained the
chapters, incorporating evangelical lecturers for the re-education of the priests; likewise it stated guidelines for pastors, services, rituals, poor relief and schools. The Danish Church should be Lutheran, with Wittenberg as the model and ideal – very likely a well-considered rejection of the Danish reformers’ more radical way. The pastors should own Luther’s *Postil* (regardless of the fact that it was not translated into Danish until decades later), Melanchthon’s *Apologia* (the *Confessio Augustana* was not mentioned), *Loci communes*, the *Small Catechism* of Luther and the *Instruction for the Visitors in Saxony*, which Bugenhagen translated into Latin for the benefit of Danish ministers. Together Luther, Melanchthon – and all things from Wittenberg – comprised a doctrinal unity and authority, in which theological differences were overlooked. But the top theologians, professors and superintendents, were not so easily harnessed: Radicalism, Lutheranism, Philippism and Calvinism mingled with and superseded each other in fluctuating motions.

The theology of the *summus theologus*, professor and superintendent Peder Palladius was in several ways in contrast to the preaching and teaching of his Danish forerunners. The king had handpicked Peder Palladius as to be the theological leader of the reformed church. As superintendent of Zealand, and with a new residence in Copenhagen (instead of Roskilde), he merged with the governmental church administration and with the Zealand see’s affiliated dioceses and deaneries in Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands he became the de facto general superintendent. He produced more than fifty works, many of them with catechetical purpose: most notable his translation of Luther’s *Small Catechism* (1537), which he, however, copied from the earlier Danish editions. He also produced pedagogic and liturgical manuals. If there is no doubt about his Lutheran intentions, yet his theology was strongly coloured by the concepts of Melanchthon.

The most renowned of his works was his *Book of Visitation*, Palladius tell the peasant or lay Christian in popular and straightforward manner about the Lutheran faith and its practical implications for every aspect of local church life. Presumably it was not intended for publication and might originally have been penned as guidance for a fellow superintendent and imparted as an ideal model for visitation.

**The ‘Confessionalization’ of church, state and society in Denmark 1560-1660**
The Reformation’s introduction in 1536 spurred the confessionalization of the Danish state as well as the church and with these society and culture. The efforts to confessionalize and consolidate the Wittenberg theology as the official, religious and cultural norm of was initiated by Christian III, however, first during the reign of his successors, Frederik II (1559-88) and Christian IV (1588-1648), the confessionalization made impact. In addition, important precondition for ‘confessionalization’ was the creation of a doctrinal norm, which Denmark did not have. The Confessio Augustana became by time the binding confession in Denmark (though not officially before well into the 17th century). As we have seen, the ecclesiastical legislation from the State Reformation, The Church Order of 1537/39 only mentioned Melanchthon’s Apologia and the Latin Postils of Luther, but not the confession of 1530. In fact Confessio Augustana throughout the 16th century only was known in an early Danish edition from 1533; a new and more official translation was first to come after year 1600, when the Lutheran Orthodoxy had gained a more secure foothold. Even up to then several of the superintendents were strongly influenced by Melanchthon and recommended both Melanchthon’s Corpus Doctrinæ and Calvin's Institute as necessary for the pastors. The official Danish policy was to hold stick to a unity of Luther and Melanchthon, but eventually King Frederik II could not keep either the Danish church or the Danish theologians outside the German disputes between Gnesio-Lutherans, Philippist and Calvinistis. Yet he could not agree with the Book of Concord from 1580, which attempted to end the schisms within the Lutheran church. Frederik II refused to join the Concord, and sought as long as possible to hold on to the Danish rejection of any kind of differences within the spectrum of Lutheran theology and keeping the Church to the Evangelical teachings such as was ‘in our father’s time’ (i.e. Christian III’s). We have to bear in mind that the Book of Concord came about on the initiative of the Gnesio-Lutheran Saxonian government and theologians, having in 1579 caused the embarrassing removal of Niels Hemmingsen from the University by dint of their (perfectly legitimate!) accusations of a Calvinistic stance in his Eucharistic viewpoint. The official Danish unity position was of course naïve, yet left room for an explicitly Philippistic theology, consequently rebuffing Crypto-Calvinism as well as the Gnesio-Lutheran position. Hence any possessor of the Opus Concordiae, which contained this doctrine “to us and our churches foreign and improper”, should be punished in the severest degree.¹ The king led by his own example, having received two wonderful copies from his sister the Electress Anna of Saxony, which he “alsobalden wir ihrer ansichtig worden, auf ein gut Schornsteinsfeuer gebracht und verbrandt [hatten]”. Later strict Lutheran theologians have made

¹ Royal decree July 24 1580, in: H.F. Rørdam (ed.), ”Danske Kirkelove”, vol. 1, (Copenhagen: Gad 1889), 322f.
efforts to explain away this auto-da-fé, despite the king’s own words, here quoted from a letter to Landgrave Wilhelm of Hesse.²

The appointment of Hans Poulsen Resen as superintendent (or bishop as it once again was called) of Zealand in 1615 was the end of this position. Theological and ecclesiastical the appointment of Resen resulted in definitive surmounting of Philippism and the Niels Hemmingsen-theology that had been characterizing the church mainly during Frederick II’s time in power.

Beyond these reformation schisms, the ‘confessionalization’ implied a closer union between state and church (which in fact was unified by the reformation acts making the state Christian and the Church evangelical with the King as its defender). The Reformation and the consolidation during confessionalization thus had decisive effect on (state) economic, administration and on ideological aspects of education. In a long historical perspective, the most important element might have been that the state got new powers of influence on society and culture, when it overtook old church domains as marriage, education and social welfare. The new strong state wanted to educate all the obedient subjects as good Lutheran Christians, and especially after the introduction of the Lutheran Orthodoxy, state and church walked hand in hand on disciplining society in a Christian manner. It began as part of preparations for the first Reformation Jubilee 1617 with the issuance of three regulations aimed at sorcery, against unnecessary luxury at weddings and funerals and against untenable, people, and in the so-called Great Recess (1643) of Christian IV many of the Orthodox key points of Lutheran discipline was made law; on church matters some of the legislation made way into the Danish Law of 1683, which for a few parts are still in use.

In 1625 Christian IV had intervened in the Thirty Years’ War as the leading Lutheran and as German Duke of Holstein. The result was catastrophic: he and his Saxon allies suffered a crushing defeat at Lutter am Barenberg the following year, and soon the imperial forces occupied the southern duchies and the whole of Jutland. Denmark pulled out of the war for the next 14 years, after negotiations in Lübeck in 1629. On that occasion Bishop Resen issued and authorized a special Church Prayer for Michaelmas, praising the Lord for his merciful salvation of the Christian Church in Denmark and Norway, “which has happened as if You had guaranteed us what the good Luther

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once predicted, that Your true congregation should remain in these northern countries”. Lutheran Orthodoxy thus became a quest for uniformity and the re-establishment/restoration of a wounded Lutheran mentality: only by re-christianization of church and society could the Gospel and the true church survive and achieve victory. Resen’s prayer remained in the official Danish altar book until 1901.

Hans Poulсен Resen sat his mark on church and society for generations, and he for instance anticipated the Great Recess, when he in 1629 together with his professorial colleagues agreed a ‘disciplina ecclesiastica’, which both confessed the sinful deviation of the Danish people from God and decreed local parish councils filled with a handful of the parish’s most God-fearing, venerable, Christian men, whom it obliged to promote better morals. In co-operation with the pastor they had to inform on their unchristian neighbors, and these councils were even allowed to interfere, if they observed such violations as absence from service and abuse of the Sunday and holy days; the latter referring to an edict of 1623, instigated by Resen, which laid down pecuniary penalties for sacrilege such as working or trading during the sermon and service. The gates of the market towns were indeed to be closed at the time too; neither were beer and other poisonous drinks to be brought to inns nor served out to the citizens during church service. Later this was put into statutory form as the legislation on closing hours, first definitively liberalized during last year (2013). So very strange it was to be able to go shopping on Good Friday this spring for, so to speak, the first time ever. I ask myself what Lutheran Orthodoxy would have said, or for that matter the reformers, to such bargaining on the day set aside for the death of Our merciful Lord?

The Lutheran Orthodox understanding of the sin of man and a life in penance put a strong stamp on the mentality and Danish culture that developed in the course of the 17th century. Especially the Lutheran Catechisms, which the population was examined in in both school, church and in the households, was part of the cause. The successor of Hans Poulсен Resen Jesper Brochmand had in this context a huge impact on the long-lasting Dano-Norwegian Lutheran culture, even influencing modern day culture of more remote parts of the old Realm. On the Faroe Islands, they for instance still have a saying, when anything gets a little too long and tedious (as this introduction perhaps!); they call it a “Brochmand-lestur”, ‘a Brochmand reading’, meaning as long as a sermon from the Lutheran Orthodox Brochmand postilla. This old book of sermons from 1635-38 was in the tongue

3 In H.P. Resen, ”Pro pace adeo insperata & tali tempore vere divina, Gratiarum Actio congratulatioque solennis ... Die 28. Septemb.”, (Copenhagen: H. Waldkirch 1629), C4.
of the ruling Danes, and was on the Faroes not replaced until the introduction of vernacular postils as late as the 1920s. In the remote settlements on the islands the sermon of the day was read aloud from the Brochmand postilla by the dean, since the pastor only officiated a few times in the year; and the custom survives to this day. No wonder if Faroese Lutheranism, even today, strongly emphasizes such Lutheran Orthodox virtues as loyalty to Scripture, penitence and high moral standards; what is to be expected after preaching the same dogma through three centuries?

Yet we do not need to make this North Atlantic detour to observe the high impact of Lutheran Orthodoxy on both church life and society. Brochmand’s systematic works were read by the most influential figures up to the transformative period of Danish theology and society in the mid-19th century, among others by N.F.S Grundtvig, the theologian most important for modern Danish Christianity. The postil itself continued to impress ordinary people’s minds, having its latest reprint in Denmark in 1852: and – although Brochmand did not formulate them himself – the old-fashioned introductory and concluding prayers, which he introduced in 1640 during his Zealand bishopric (1638-1652), are still in use in nearly every Danish church for Sunday service, recited by the dean or the sexton to the congregation, thus imitating their originally Orthodox purpose of individual prayer and devotion.

II. Historiography

Introduction

Celebrating the 500 year anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther in 1983 Professor Leif Grane published his book *Evangeliet for Folket: Drøm og virkelighed i Martin Luthers liv.* He was then as professor in Church History at the Faculty of Theology in Copenhagen and one of the leading experts in Denmark on the history of the Reformation – especially with regards to the theological writings of Martin Luther. A few years later this book became the offset for a prolonged discussion between Professor Grane and Associate Professor Alex Wittendorff, who was then a lecturer in medieval and early modern history at the History Department at the University of Copenhagen. Commenting on the publication of the book Wittendorff together with his co-writer Ingela Kyrre

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claimed in a review article in *Historisk Tidsskrift* [Journal of History] (Vol. 15,1, 1986) that Grane through and through was a scholar bound by his confessional (that’s is to say ‘Lutheran’) preferences which according to Wittendorff were quite manifest and obvious in this recent publication. Wittendorff also claimed that the approach by Professor Grane to the Reformation was distinctly ‘church historical’. By this he meant that Grane was paying too much attention to the ideas and the theology of one single individual – Martin Luther – thereby neglecting the fundamental socio-economic problems of that time. Thus without the needs of the people the theology of Martin Luther would have remained inside the walls of the universities according to Alex Wittendorff.

In his response to Wittendorff (and Kyrre), Professor Grane emphasized the importance for any historian and church historian to study the relevant source material very carefully before letting themselves being carried away by any ideological or methodological theories and trends – no historical study can be carried out without a profound knowledge of the relevant sources. Thus to Grane there was a very essential difference between reading Luther (his writings) or just reading ‘around’ Luther trying to try to grasp his ideas from some general perception of his time. Grane furthermore argued that no real understanding of the Reformation period would be obtained without a proper understanding of the religious world views of the people of that time that was also only accessibly through the sources themselves. This dispute is interesting because the recent years of renewed research among historians and church historians especially into the late medieval and early modern period have been less influenced by former scholarly dividing lines and more influenced by new methodologies and relevant research questions – not least methodologies and research question related to the religious ideas and world views of contemporary people. Only the more stubborn and old-fashioned scholars insist on upholding these old scholarly dividing lines.

*Church History: A contour of the historiography of the Danish reformation*

*From past to present*

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The review article and the following discussions between Grane and Wittendorff can be freely viewed following this link: [https://tidsskrift.dk/index.php/historisktidsskrift/article/view/33531/64790](https://tidsskrift.dk/index.php/historisktidsskrift/article/view/33531/64790) (see also the following issues of *Historisk Tidsskrift* for the final part of the debate).
Prelude. When began the study of modern Danish history? Moreover, how early did the historiography of the Danish reformation begin? The answer: It began already in the period itself; in the 16th century. In 1542, just six years after the official reformation of church and state in Denmark, Melanchthon recommended either the talented Hans Svanning (1503-1584) or King Frederik I’s former diplomat, the Pomeranian Peder Svave (1496-1552) to King Christian III as two men, who would be able to put the history of the Danish reformation to paper. Already in 1536 or 1537 we know about the first efforts to embody the Danish reformation history and someone intending to describe the spiritual encounter, the “spiritualis seditio”, in Denmark.6

The 16th century. Indeed, Melanchthon was very interested bringing the glorious Danish reformation and its history for light, ‘as it by the grace of God christianly and fortunately had succeeded’. In the very same letter in which he recommended Svanning og Svave he moreover told Christian III about the chronicles of the Hamburg humanist Albert Krantz (1445-1517) concerning the Nordic history, Krantz’s *Chronica regnorum aquilonarium Daniae, Sueciae, Norvagiae* and that a special volume dealing with the history of Denmark was soon to expect delivered from the printer. Melanchthon was referring to the *Demnärkische Chronick* (1545).7 Yet the Danish chronic was both flawed and outdated; Krantz had written it only using German sources which reflected unfavorably on the new Danish-Lutheran monarchy.

Hans Svanning had achieved the master’s degree in Wittenberg in 1533 and the positive judgment from Melanchthon and his loyal attitude towards the new Danish government were among the reasons for commissioning him as the first royal *historicus* in 1553. His task was to write the Danish history from the point Saxo Grammaticus ended in the 13th century and lead it up to his own present day, i.e. including the all ‘modern’ time, the reformation. Like many of the early Danish historians, he did not fulfill the goal. He only reached the reign of King Hans (reigning 1581-1513) and was substituted by his son-in-law Anders Sørensen Vedel (1542-1616), a friend of the Philippistic historian and theologian Casper Peucer in Wittenberg. Vedel busied with even greater plans for a Danish chronicle in 22 parts, and eventually he got access to parts of Svanning’s material, but was due to his lateness replaced in 1594 by Niels Krag (1550-1602), once more a

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7 Melanchthon to Christian III, February 8 1542, in: MBW Texte 11, no. 2885a, original at the Royal Library, Copenhagen.
learned Dane from Wittenberg. Krag had in 1589 been appointed the first professor in history at the University (though affiliated to theology), yet neither did he accomplish the task and died before anything was publicized. His contemporary history of Christian III was though printed in 1737, and even described the period of the events leading up to the reformation in 1536. Nevertheless, these parts was very much dependent on the Philippist historian chancellor Arild Huitfeldt’s writings. On his own initiative, Huitfeldt had written his own Danish chronicle parallel to the projects of Vedel and Krag. Huitfeldt (1546-1609) never became historicus regis, nevertheless, he was the first to complete a history of Denmark, Danmarks Rige Krønike. The first volume appeared in 1595 covering the reign of Christian III (Kaart Historiske Beskriffulselse paa hues merckeligt som sig Aarlige under Kong Christian III haffuer tildragit). In 1596 the second tome followed describing the period under the for-forerunner at throne, Christian II (Historiske Beskriffulselse om hues sig haffuer tildragit under Kong Christiern II) and their year following came the volume on Frederik I (Konning Frederich I’s Histori). Together these three volumes covered the complete period of the Reformation. Huitfeldt was talented. He used many sources and wrote a chronicle in the annalistic humanistic way of doing this. Although biased by his Philippism, it has been a valuable study up until modern times. Huitfeldt managed to use the royal archives and cited sources such as letters and tracts, often transcribing them directly into the text. However, it is still a chronicle not a modern historical study and hence it must always be ‘double-checked’ when used by modern time scholars being at the same time both a compilation of factual sources and a constructed narrative of the godly elected Danes and their kings. Huitfeldt history was a history of the nation (yet the last volume, Bispekrøniken, was a sort of church history with portraits of Danish bishops, including some of the reformers). Huitfeldt’s protégé, Hans Olufsen Slangerup (1546-1596), had previously written a church history. The very first Danish church history, the 1590 issued Oratio de initiis doctrinae religionis; as the title indicates, originally a lecture. Slangerup’s work did not describe the reformation in any kind of detail. Rather Slangerup depicted the early history of Christianity in Denmark than the Protestant reformation which thus was squeezed together to form a short appendix at the end of the work.

The 17th century. In 1617 time and theology was changing in favor of the Lutheran Orthodoxy. The leading bishop and Professor Hans Poulsen Resen (1561-1638) emphasized at the first Reformation Jubilee this year the true Lutheran doctrine, which had been lost during the sway of the Philippists and pupils of Niels Hemmingsen. He therefore distanced himself from the early Danish reformers,
i.a. Hans Tausen (1494/98-1561). So he did in his historical lectures on the Danish reformation from the 1617 Jubilee, published in the collections of Resen’s writings from the centennial entitled *Lutherus triumphans* (s.a.) The early Danish reformers, namely Hans Tausen, Resen revealed as more Zwinglian (read: Crypto-Calvinists to Resen) than Lutheran, ergo: irrelevant for the future history of Lutheranism.

The first Danish reformation history in print was also motivated by the anniversary in 1617. Resen had asked his Norwegian colleague professor Kurt (or: Cort) Aslaksen (1564-1624) to hold the opening lecture by the academic celebration. The result was the first reformation history of the Nordic countries at all: *Theologiske oc historiske beskriffuelse Om den Reformerede Religion*, in English: Theological and historical description of the reformed religion. The first printed edition (in Latin) reached the market in 1621, the following year a Danish version came out too. The first part of the book was Aslaksen’s reformation lecture from the Jubilee, the second part an added chronological table with a schematic overview of all historic details from Denmark and the world, respectively on church and politics, spiritual and secular. Aslaksen even mentioned astronomic events announcing the breakthrough of the Reformation or other religious events. Bear in mind that Aslaksen was a disciple of the Philippist astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546-1601). In opposition to Resen Aslaksen also had a special sympathy for not alone Melanchthon, but even Calvin as well. In Aslaksen’s history on the Reformation, we likewise detect a more positive view on the early Danish reformers; a bit surprising that Resen and his Lutheran censure did not spot that! However, Aslaksen’s reformation history in general represented the official view of the Lutheran Jubilee: Luther and the Reformation was the most obvious sign on the Gospel’s victory over Devil and darkness.

*The 18th century.* The German statesman and Lutheran Veit Ludwig von Seckendorff (1622-1692) used Aslaksen’s work in his own *Commentarius Historicus et apologeticus de Lutheranismo sive de Reformatione* (1692). Aslaksen and the Dano-Norwegian reformation history consequently became part of the controversy with the Jesuits. Also the Calvinists made use of Aslaksen’s book (yet also being the sole source for foreigners to the reformation of Denmark). The church historian Daniel Gerdes (1698-1765) made use of it in his third volume of his *Historia reformationis* from 1749.\(^8\)

With the use by Gerdes, Aslaksen’s survey on the reformation history became part of a reformed history.

\(^8\) Gerdes’ annoncer blev bragt i Hamburgisches Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen den 21/11 1747 og 26/3 1748, jf. Garstein 1953, 323.
conception of the reformation history, with Seckendorff part of a pietistic-Lutheran too. Seckendorff was not a convinced or ‘reborn’ pietist, but favored reforms inside Lutheranism. At home in Denmark and Norway Erik Pontoppidan (1698-1764), a pietist as well as a man of the Enlightenment; he was ornithologist, bishop, church historian and writer, benefited of Aslaksen’s study too. Pontoppidan once more used Aslaksen and Huitfeldt as primary sources when Pontoppidan in 1734 published the next Danish reformation history, *Kurtz gefaste Reformations-Historie der dänischen Kirche*. Obviously, the reformation was something Lutheran to Pontoppidan. The first of the book’s five parts treated the inevitability of the reformation; nothing new under the sun. Yet in the subsequent part, Pontoppidan in short portraits outlined the main reformers of the Danish reformation. The reformation history was a kind of model for Pontoppidan’s *s magnum opus* on Danish church history, the *Annales Ecclesiae Danicae* issued in 1741-1754. Pontoppidan was methodologically of course inspired by Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714) and his *Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Geschichte* (1699-1700); must obvious to the readers by Pontoppidan’s positive view on particularly the Danish reformers. For Resen and some other of the Orthodox theologians the Danish reformers had simply not been good enough, there were less Lutheran and more Zwinglian or *schwärmisch* than ‘allowed’ to, but to Pontoppidan i.a. Hans Tausen, the reformer of Viborg and Copenhagen, plainly was “der Dänische Luther”. We do remember Resen and the Orthodox excluding Tausen from the official history of the reformation being Zwinglian and thus heretic! Pontoppidan’ view almost made Hans Tausen’s name synonymous with the Danish reformation itself. Tausen was the outsider and pious man, nonetheless, Tausen found the forgotten light which had been darkened by the perverted papacy, and Tausen was the one preaching justification by faith alone for the first time in the history of Denmark and its church.

**Excursus: The pietistic historiography and its modern consequences**

This expressive designation of Hans Tausen as a Danish Luther and the analogous understanding of Tausen = the Danish-Lutheran reformation which derived from the pietistic historiography was further built up by the national-minded and romantic historians and church historians of the 19th century in a quest for an independent, or at least parallel and autonomous Danish history *vis-à-vis* Germany. The belief in a Lutheran Danish reformation was an approach, which due to a stimulus from the
Luther-renaissance even gained further strength in the first half of the 20th century. He is thus qualified in the single foreign-language biography – *Johann Tausen. Der dänische Luther* (1894) by Ludwig Schmitt, S.J. In fact, ‘The Danish Luther’ is even now a widespread designation of Hans Tausen and hence concluding the Danish reformation to have been as Lutheran too. Today the honorable designation foremost appears in English references, if natural still to Danish popular and national memory. However, we do find a single foreign-language exception – even quite old. E.H. Dunkley in 1948 described the Danish reformation by applying the approach of the renowned Danish 20th century church historian professor J. Oskar Andersen (1866-1959) – Andersen being one of the first Danish church historians influenced by modern critical methodology – thus Dunkley established: “To call Tausen (...) ‘the Danish Luther’ is a misnomer”. In other words, the ‘Danish Luther’ was a narrative without secure foundation in sources or (Tausen’s own) writings.

These foreign-language references also illustrate the two differing approaches taken by Danish church historians in their readings of and research into the reformation in primarily 20th century historiography. On the one hand, an almost defensive insistence on a genuinely ‘Lutheran’ reformation, in spite of the theology of the Danish reformation movement as a whole. On the other hand, an interpretation which understands i.a. Hans Tausen and the Danish reformation movement as a humanist type of reformer respectively reformation as well known in Germany as in Denmark. The ‘Lutheran’ approach is in many respects still predominant, for example in the work of Professor Martin Schwarz Lausten (b. 1938), still the leading historian of the Danish Reformation with his many contributions on reformation history, especially his study of Danish foreign politics during the reformation, Christian III and the church and biographies. Though, Schwarz Lausten still insists on a understanding of the Danish Reformation as genuine Lutheran in the meaning of reformatorisch og evangelic being the same as Lutheran; is – despite Schwarz Lausten’s tremendous contribution to Danish reformation history – in some way still ‘the winner’s story’; the Wittenberg kind of theology and reformation was the most consistent and thus destined to succeed. However, he is truly not a systematic theologian, he sticks to the sources – everything else being ‘Ætervaderi’, ‘starry-eyed-idealism’, as J. Oskar

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Andersen would have stated it. Nevertheless, Schwarz Lausten like another forerunner as professor in Danish church history, Niels Knud Andersen (1916-1987), characterizes the Danish Reformation by an internal dichotomy and thereby ‘saves’ the Lutheran continuity between the early reformation and the victorious Wittenberg Lutheranism of the state reformation. The West Danish reformation had a more Lutheran (i.e. Hans Tausen) tendency whereas the East Danish movement revealed a more humanist kind reformation (i.e. the other reformers, foremost in Malmö), even though a figure as Hans Tausen was a reformer of both West (Viborg) and East (Copenhagen – the wildest and most radical city reformation in Denmark).¹⁰

*The 18th century.* Though, let us turn back to the 18th century: Pontoppidan’s church history influenced Danish church historiography for a very long time. It was detailed and had a clear preference for the connection between Christianity and Danish mentality: Hans Tausen being the core example on a native, even peasant-born, Danish and Lutheran reformer. It was, however, one of Pontoppidan’s contemporaries, the early Enlightenment author, historian and play writer, Norwegian born, Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754) who wrote the handbook in church history for the new university subject of the 1730s – church history. In 1730 Holberg had been placed as professor in history after the publication of his major historical-topographical work *Dannemarks og Norges Beskrivelse,* i.e. The Description of Denmark and Norway, the year after followed by the *Dannemarks Riges Historie,* The History of the Kingdom of Denmark, in 1732-33. At that time King Christian VI personally advocated for pietism in both state and church – his reign is often characterized as the period of ‘state pietism’, and in a new charter for the University of Copenhagen, it was decreed that one of the four theological professors had to lecture on church history.

Holberg supported this novel branch of theology, and his *Almindelig Kirke-Historie,* General Church History, from 1738-40 became the obligate textbook in the new subject. Holberg began his book explaining what church history was supposed to be. Since “no study is less familiar to the common man than church history”, it was necessary, with a separate textbook in this unknown part of history, and additionally he criticized the hitherto uninteresting description of the previous works on church history: “Dry, poorly coherent and unpleasant Annales and registers, or rather,

longwinded rolls and records on church teachers and heretics, whereby the reading of church history hath been regarded as an unpleasant and infamously Studium”.  

Holberg described the church history in a sort of ‘objective’ way with eye for both the Roman and Lutheran side of, yet unarguable Christianity had been corrupted by the papacy, the Reformation hence a necessity. He therefore ended his Almindelig Kirke-Historie just by the beginning of the Reformation. The further history from that point of, the history of Protestant Christianity was all too doctrinaire to Holberg. Astonishingly, Holberg did not mentioned the Danish Reformation in his church history, although having dealt with it very carefully in his earlier Danish histories; but in general, Danish church history was all too boring! Holberg stated: ”The Northern kingdoms give little or none material to church history, as having had no heresies nor any kind of such movements within church nor state”.  

Nonetheless, a reformation history and Danish church history in Holberg-style was required. In Holstein-Danish Altona a professor translated Holberg into German and supplied it with a little bit on the reformation, yet another German-speaker, Johann Ludwig Köhler (1722-1788) chose to continue Holberg’s work up until present time of the author (published 1749-1777). These extra volumes was once more without the Danish reformation history, but in the same years Erik Pontoppidan presented his German-tongued Annales Ecclesiæ Danicæ, which somehow supplemented Holberg, though written from another position: Pietism. The use of the German language was very unpleasant in a time when Danish was sought restored as the prime langue of both aristocracy, court and academy. The very learned politician and intellectual, Count Otto Thott (1703-1785) – an admirer of Holberg and collector of Enlightenment literature – therefore planed a new Danish, both in subject and language, church history to follow Holberg’s. The plan was to use Pontoppidan’s work as model, yet playing the pietistic bias down. However, another pietist realized the plan, Andreas Rejersen (1716-1785), though he also was a skilled historian, being a student of the historian Hans Gram (1685-1748). Rejersen published the work at Holberg’s Royal Academy in Sorø as Herr Ludvig Baron af Holbergs almindelige Kirke-Historie fra Lutheri Reformation indtil det Attende Seculum … forøget med den Danske Kirke-Historie (1769), i.e. Mr. Ludvig Holberg’s general Church History from Luther’s Reformation until the 18th century … enlarged with the

12 Ibid., 9.
Danish Church History. Rejersen though failed to incorporate Pontoppidan’s Danish church history into his Holberg sequel. For the same reason the Danish events was introduced in two appendixes on the Reformation. Here Rejersen stated that the Reformation in Denmark was explained by the general decline of the medieval church: "The spirit of the times was in these kingdoms [Denmark-Norway] of the same nature, as in the other countries, so that most sighed under the yoke and wished that there had to be given an opportunity, that there could be a change". One of these agents of change was of course Hans Tausen, the reformation hero of Pontoppidan, who in accordance with Rejersen, “owned the special gifts of nature and a uncommon eloquence”.

Unlike Holberg Rejersen sought to make a history of the Reformation covering all of the United Danish monarchy, i.e. Holstein, Schleswig and Denmark(-Norway)’s reformers. Thus, the work mirrored the characteristic patriotism of the United Danish Monarchy, which increased from the second half of the 18th century up until the Danish defeat in Napoleonic wars in 1814. Holberg had in his Dannemarks og Norges Beskrivelse solely described the Danish religion and Reformation – in so far as he included the history of Christianity and the church in his work – though neither Holberg nor Rejersen doubted that the Reformation was something German which had made its way into Denmark. The Danes were a kind of ‘copy-cats’; first in the 19th century the Danes once again became understood as autonomous reformers; heroes of the nation. Though to Holberg, Rejersen and some of the scholars of the early 19th century, the Danish Reformation was in fact German having travelled from Wittenberg (Luther) to Holstein (Hermann Tast), and from Holstein to Jutland (Hans Tausen) and with him to the rest of Denmark.

The 19th century. The 19th century was only few years old, when the first reformation history landed. In Germany church history had grown up to be an autonomous and scientific branch of theology. It was no longer (just) another way of describing God’s history of salvation. This stood very clear in the publication of 1802 Den danske Reformationshistorie, that is The Danish Reformation History, by the skilled and highly learned, German born Friedrich Münter (1761-1830), from 1808 the bishop of Zealand. The work was written after the pragmatic-factual Göttingen-method of church history (cf. C.W.F. Walch, L.Th. Spittler), made possible because Münter believed that all sources to the Danish Reformation history now had been revealed. In this

way it did not bring anything new, but the way of doing church history was new. Münter found the Danish Reformation a bit too parochial, so to speak, in comparison with the German, and as a rationalist theologian Münter had his disclaims of the Danish reformers. He found them too medieval and mystical in their thoughts. None of the Danes had in same degree as Luther (Luther was in this sense reinterpreted beyond recognition) underlined reason as the principal fruit of the Reformation theology. In the spirit of the Prussian church union between Lutheran and Reformed, Münter by the 1817 Reformation Jubilee in a circular to the church emphasized the Christian unity. Quite telling, Münter’s circular did not mention any Danish reformers at all. The sole Danes mentioned was the Lutheran Orthodox Jesper Brochmand (1585-1652), though only mentioned in company with the contemporary Georg Calixt (1586-1656; as Münter a ‘German’ Dane), who as famous professor in Helmstadt had urged for the unity of the church by returning to the concord of the early church, the \textit{consensus qvinqvesaecularis}. Obviously, Calixt had made the Lutheran Orthodox furious. Nonetheless, now the same happened for Münter. The Reformation Jubilee of 1817, the celebration and its rationalist theology was attacked from different sides (i.a. the supranaturalistic mined pastor Claus Harms of Kiel and the later so very influential theologian, historian and poet N.F.S Grundtvig from Denmark; by the way: both Harms and Grundtvig was eager to be ‘Martin Luther(‘s) the Second!’). The critics of Münter was indeed right: The logical basis of history, or perhaps the moral of history, as Münter would have stated it, Münter revealed in his Dogmengeschichte from the very same year as the reformation history, \textit{Haandbog i den ældste Christelige Kirkes Dogmehistorie} (1801-02). History should always ”corroborate the lenient spirit of Christian tolerance against any deviant conception in the religion”, Münter said.14 Yet in dogmas, neither source studies nor findings from the archives, Münter contributed with something new or vital about the Danish Reformation. The rationalist and tolerant spirit ruled, and his – in comparison with both forerunners and successors – more moderate and considerate assessment of the reformation’s ‘other side’, Catholicism. This is exactly what confuse us believing that he had evolved a critical methodology in the style of von Ranke; “a real source-critical study”, as a later historian, Johannes Steenstrup, said it, Münter’s reformation history was not.15

15 Johannes Steenstrup, ”Historieskrivningen i Danmark i det 19de Aarhundrede (1801-1863)”, (Copenhagen: Den danske Historiske Forening 1889), 354.
By the Danish Reformation Jubilee in 1836, many things had changed. The Neo-Lutheranism had attracted both church and church historians, Romanticism and Nationalism had gained ground and Grundtvig (1783-1872) had formed a novel movement inside the Danish state church underlining the importance of the ‘living word’ (with inspiration from Luther), the people of the nation, and the confessing and faithful congregation as the true church. Hence, church history was the history of the creed, of the living word in the congregation through time. A core example on a both strikingly Danish minded and Grundtvig’ian inspired reformation history is Hans Christian Rørdam’s pamphlet *Den evangeliske Christendoms Indførelse i Danmark, historisk fremstillet*, occasioned by the 1836 celebration. The Danish reformers were true Lutherans, men of the people – and between the lines, it was clear that Rørdam understood Hans Tausen as a kind of forebear of N.F.S. Grundtvig, we could say – just in the way Lutherans have always appreciated Jan Hus as the predecessor of Luther. A much more thorough church history inspired by Grundtvig was *Den danske Kirkes Historie* (1850ff), put to pen by the church historian Ludvig Helveg (1818-1883). It was realized as a private project. The foundation in 1849 of the Association for the Church History of Denmark (Danish: Selskabet for Danmarks Kirkehistorie) had made this church history of Grundtvig’ian thoughts possible. Helveg judged the epochs of the church history on their degree of ‘spirit’, therefore history moved in fluctuating movements; the Middle Ages were a desert journey, whereas reformation time was a source for new life and a rediscovery of faith, sacraments and living Christianity, which though once more was substituted by the dead period of Orthodoxy and so on. The Association for the Church History of Denmark was besides their effort making Helveg’s church history possible, an attempt to establish an association for theologian and church historians parallel to the Association for History (Historisk Forening) which since 1840 had issued their annual *Historisk Tidsskrift*, that is: Journal of History based on a source critical approach to history. The church historians hence issued their own journal, *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger*, English: Collections of Church History from 1849. This journal soon initiated various new studies and edition of hitherto unknown sources from Danish church history, especially the reformation period. A leading force was the editor in chief from 1857-1913, pastor Holger Frederik Rørdam (1830-1913) – son of above-mentioned H.C. Rørdam. The younger Rørdam had a special interest in Danish reformation history and published among other important studies sources to Danish church legislation through time and new critical editions of the writings of the Danish reformers. Rørdam

16 The Grundtvig’ian historiography has been examined in ”Kirken af levende stene. Den grundtvigske tradition i dansk kirkehistorieskrivning”, Carsten Bach-Nielsen and Per Ingesman (ed.); for Helveg, Carsten Bach-Nielsen, ”’Aandens Strømning gennem Danmarks Kirkehistorie’. Ludvig Helveg”, in pass., 109-144.
knew of the method of source criticism which had been introduced among his contemporary Danish historians, yet ultimately for Rørdam it was not historicity itself being the most important. To Rørdam none really was allowed to call a nation’s great sons into question (implicit: this was what the historians did!). The reformers from whom the special, pragmatic Danish Lutheranism had evolved were the men who had freed the church and made the church Danish and Lutheran. Likewise, the Reformation had been historical inevitable, though not due to external conditions (politics, economy etc.), but initially due to the man Luther (and henceforth by Danes such as Hans Tausen). Luther and his judgment of his time, of its cardinals, bishops and church princes had made it possible; or as Rørdam stated it in his last years: “‘[S]ie sind nicht Gottes, sondern des Teufels Apostel und Bischofe’. This was Luther’s judgement, and that’s why he became a reformer, and because many judged like him, it inevitably had to come to an incurable break“. Luther “was the scourge which the Lord used to drive out the money changers and hucksters of the temple”, Rørdam explained in a lecture in 1895 for theology students. The lecture discussed the historical legitimacy of the Reformation, and Rørdam explained that it once had been “good Protestantism” to regard Pope and Catholics as the Antichrist and Babel, though, Rørdam mentioned, this hardly had anymore, “at least not in Lutheran circles”. However, in the very same lecture Rørdam reviled himself to be one of the few remaining old Lutheran devotees – after all, the accusations against Catholicism had been declared true by the historical sources (= his own studies of Danish reformation history). Just as well as the historians by profession, Rørdam could align to Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) and the methodology of source criticism, yet in a way, we often tend to forget. Von Ranke had at the German celebration of the Reformation Jubilee in 1817 been evoked to a study of Luther and was lifelong a devoted Lutheran and as Hegel von Ranke pointed out Lutheranism retaining a higher historical and spiritual level than Catholicism. The same did Rørdam, motivated of the family and his father’s Lutheran revival, by Neo-Lutheranism, Danish Romanticism and the aroused 19th century interest in a particular Danish history of the Reformation.

II. Source criticism: History and Church history in Denmark as academic disciplines

Historical research established itself as a modern academic discipline in Denmark in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century inspired as it was by the German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) who is often acclaimed as one who turned historical studies into a scientific work equaling other scholarly disciplines at the universities. Source criticism became of paramount importance to Ranke, his students and academic heirs developing new methodological approaches to the study of the past.

In the late nineteenth century these new ideas were introduced among Danish historians and the first half of the nineteenth century was to become dominated by historians like Kristian Erslev and Erik Arup – both were fundamentally influenced by this new methodology in historical research. Furthermore these leading historians in Denmark took their political stand within the ranks of the political social liberals dominating much of the national politics at the time due to the political and military crises following the events in 1848-50 and 1864 as well as the renewed crises in 1914-18.

Denmark’s new role as small and less powerful state in Europe not only changed the political milieu, the intellectual trends also changed. Historians like Erslev and Arup wanted to challenge central national historical narratives of the past. These established national narratives became modified and were often brushed aside through a new historical research guided by a rigorously and (to their minds) strictly scientific approach towards any type of source material urging them to rewrite the history of the Danish realms – especially with regards to the Middle Ages. This meticulously attention to the methodology of modern historical research within this generation of historians paved the way modern historical studies at our modern-day universities influencing both historians and church historians in generations to come. Historians like Erslev and Arup did however have very narrow scopes of interests through their distinctly positivistic approaches towards the source material. The primary interest was centered on economic structures in societies with an almost inane orientation towards the materialistic aspects of life. Religious phenomenon’s were mostly ignored – or more correctly interpreted in purely secular and/or economical terms within a general notion of the power structures in society. The medieval church for example was considered an exploiter of the ordinary people striving only for wealth and political power rather than a religious institution. This approach did not leave much room for the study of religious and/or theological ideas, leaving such interest to the theologically trained church historians.
The new methodological trends among leading Danish historians also came to influence the church historian at the Faculty of Theology in Copenhagen in the early decades of the twenties century, even if they seem to have been rather reluctant to embrace these new ideas fearing that a rigid source critique would undermine their more conservative approaches towards the history of the Christian church. Some of the church historians however were ready to embrace the new critical methodology such as J. Oskar Andersen (1866-1959) who became professor in church history at the Faculty of Theology in 1920. The politically conservative Andersen did not share the viewpoints of the social liberals but was still highly influenced by the methodology pioneered here in Denmark by Erslev. Thus Andersen introduced to his students the critical approach to the historical research and its sources. Rather practical and down-to-earth in his historical research Andersen could occasionally be rather harsh to his colleagues from the Department of Systematic Theology dismissing their work as too pompous – he referred to this type of research as “ætervaderi”, arguing instead for the validity of a well-founded historical research. Later he was followed by professors like Hal Koch (1904-63) and Torben Christensen (1921-83) who were to continue this new trend without losing a genuine theological approach to the study of church history – thus today church history encompass both the study of the history of Christianity as well as the history of its theology and doctrines.¹⁹

Today’s institutional foundation of the two disciplines – History and Church History – is primarily associated with the Danish Universities. The study of church history as an academic discipline is today found at the Theological Faculty at the University of Copenhagen and in The Faculty of Arts at the University of Aarhus. Historical Departments on the other hand is found at the Universities of Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense, Roskilde (RUC) and Aalborg, and thus represents a rather extensive research milieu compared to the theological faculties and departments. Apart from the universities historical research is also carried out at the major libraries in Copenhagen (Det Kongelige Bibliotek) and Aarhus (Statsbiblioteket) as well as at the most important archives (Rigsarkivet, Landsarkiverne) and some independent research centers.

**Late medieval background to the Reformation**

¹⁹ Mogens Müller, *Det Teologiske Fakultet i det 20. århundrede – en skitse*, s. 6, 12-13; Tine Reeh, *Hal Koch*
Paradigmatic shifts among leading Danish medievalist within the last couple of generations have not only altered the general approach towards the study of the Middle Ages in a Danish and Scandinavian context. They have also influenced the scholarly approached towards the Reformation period in Denmark. Danish medievalists have been greatly inspired by new trends in historical research within the last decades that have evolved in a highly dynamic and interdisciplinary international research milieu. Through these channels well-founded new methodologies and theoretical approached have emerged towards the not-so-materialistic aspect of human life throughout history. Especially the history of mentalities and the study of religious ideas has greatly influenced the more recent generations of historians and church historians alike encouraging them to ask new question and seeking out new types of source material with regards to both the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period.

A scholarly network among Danish medievalists that came into being in 1995-98 have been one of the important steps in this new paradigmatic approach towards the study of the Late Medieval period in Denmark, not only as a period in itself, but rather as a highly dynamic époque that can only be understood in connection with the general Europeans trends and developments of that time. Scholars that became part of that network did devoted much of their research time to such topics as the history of mentalities, the study of religious ideas and practices etc. These research topics were carried forth in the network bringing much new research into the fore as an adjustment of previous historical trends. It is also noteworthy that the late medieval period among these scholars was viewed as the absolute prerequisite for the Reformation period emphasizing the so-called ‘la longue durée’ rather than the exclusiveness of single events, periods and regions – thus also with regards to the study of the religious life and ideas of the people of late medieval and early modern Denmark, that have come to the forefront in much of the recent historical research.

**20th century reformation studies**

As a theological field, the 20th century study of Danish church history and the study of the Danish Reformation have been characterized by two tracks.

1) A theological or systematical, which with impetus from the German Luther renaissance rediscovered – or rather wanted to re-find – genuine Lutheranism in both the early Danish
reformation and the later reformation theology (post 1536/37). Likewise Luther studies have been a main interest for Danish church historians (i.a. Leif Grane; 1928-2000), and still are.

2) A source-critical approach which has highlighted the humanistic influence (and non-Luther specific) influence on the Danish reformation, at least in its early phases.

Some main titles from 20th century research are Peder Severinsen (1869-1939), *Hvordan Reformationen indførtes i Danmark*, i.e. How the Reformation was introduces in Denmark, from the Danish Reformation centennial in 1936. Severinsen – a bit astonishing – pointed out 1537 as the real reformation year of Denmark (the year of the coronation of Christian III and reopening of the University). Furthermore Severinsen considered it as a possibility that the sources from the Diet in 1536 had been open for choosing another way of reformation (and theology, that is: the early Danish reformation theology) than the one chosen – the Wittenberg Lutheranism and the royal church rule. Occasioned by the Jubilee in 1936 too, the pastor L.P. Fabricius (1891-1974) published a more traditional review of the Danish reformation history in *Vor Kirkes Reformation*, The Reformation of our Church.

In the 1950s leading church historians around Professor Hal Koch (1904-1963) at the University of Copenhagen started publishing *Den danske Kirkes Historie* (1950-1966), The History of the Danish Church, in eight volumes, volume three bringing a detailed (though unfortunately without any notes!) assessment of the Danish reformation with an introduction to the medieval piety as historical background. The authors were P.G. Lindhardt (1910-1988), professor in church history at the University of Aarhus – who moreover authored the first Nordic church history, *Den nordiske Kirkes Historie* in 1945 (from the 4th edition 1979 together with Jakob Balling) – and Niels Knud Andersen, professor in Copenhagen. In volume four the theological doctor and archivist Bjørn Kornerup (1896-1957) delivered in volume four an eloquent overview of the period of Philippism and Lutheran Orthodoxy; a period which he also described in his dissertation on Hans Poulsen Resen (1928, vol. 1; vol. 2 posthumous 1968). Niels Knud Andersen’s dissertation from 1954, *Confessio Hafniensis*, was an examination of the theology of the early Danish reformers and their articles from the Diet of Copenhagen 1530. Andersen pointed out the influence of humanistic ideas (as a continuation of the studies of J. Oskar Andersen) on the Danish reformation. He likewise draw
attention to the South-German inspiration for the Danish reformers. Altogether, this was a provocative thesis, which some scholars made opposition to in the 1960s. For instance in a co-study of Hal Koch students on the postil and theology of Hans Tausen, (in: *Tro og Tale*, 1963).

Martin Schwarz Lausten gave out his first major study on Danish reformation theology in 1968, a biography on the Philippist theologian and superintendent Niels Palladius (*Biskop Niels Palladius*). Later on Schwarz Lausten has published a large number of studies in Danish reformation history, i.a. his splendid books on Christian III (*Christian den 3. og kirken, 1537-1559*) and Peder Palladius (*Biskop Peder Palladius og kirken, 1537-1560*) from 1993, studies of the Danish views on Jews and Turks, as well as more popular biographies on Johann Bugenhagen, Phillip Melanchthon and latest Niels Hemmingsen. Schwarz Lausten is also the author of the latest Danish reformation history, *Reformationen i Danmark*, issued in three different version from 1987-2012 and published in both Italian, English and German translations. This work clearly represents the typically modern Danish view on the reformation held by church historians: a religious revolution of the Danish church and society, though still a theological event originating in Luther’s discovery of the merciful God. Schwarz Lausten’s dissertation from 1977, *Religion og politik*, was a study of the foreign and religious policies of Christian III. The religious politics of his predecessor has been examined by Thorkild C. Lyby (b. 1930) in the dissertation *Vi evangeliske*, meaning ‘We, the evangelical’, from 1993, in which he also tried to moderate the use of the term ‘Lutheran’ as to the Danish reformation, theology and politics. The pastor and church historian Jørgen Ertner (b. 1930) showed in his dissertation from 1988 on the theology of Peder Palladius (*Peder Palladius’ lutherske teologi*) that Peder Palladius more likely was influenced by Melanchthon rather than Luther; something, which might have been general for other of the early Wittenberg educated reformers.20

In recent years studies we observe an increased interest for the study of the reformation and the arts as for instance in the works of Carsten Bach-Nielsen (b. 1955) or an interest getting behind the traditional patterns of Danish reformation historiography. These studies addresses myths, reception and historiography (i.a. Rasmus H.C. Dreyer’s (b. 1985) articles on the Hans Tausen-reception, *Hans Tausen: Kampen for en dansk Luther. En historiografisk undersøgelse af Hans Tausen-receptionen i det 20. århundrede*, article 2011, Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift or his *An Apologia for Luther: The myth of the Danish Luther… in the Myth of the Reformation*, Peter Obitz (ed.) 2013).

20 Rasmus H.C. Dreyer has in the article “Hans Tausen og Melanchthon. Om øvrighed og ugdeliges borttragelse”, in: *Fønix* 3 (2013) tried to examine this for the case of Tausen and his view on the secular arm of power.
Parts of this report is also derived from Dreyer’s forthcoming (2014/2015) dissertation on the reception of the Danish reformation in Danish church history, theology and culture looked through the example of Hans Tausen as the kaleidoscopic key figure.

By the approaching 2017 Jubilee two major studies in the Reformation will appear. Leading researchers from a wide range of study fields will write both. University of Aarhus stands behind Reformationen. 1500-tallets kulturrevolution, The Reformation. The 16th century cultural revolution (working title), Per Ingesman and Ole Høiris (eds.). This work plans to devote volume two to articles on different cultural and religious matters. The Danish Reformation is herein understood from the paradigm of confessionalization and as a long process of reformation (1520-1650). The Danish Lutheran Church finances their own contribution. The three volumes of Reformationen som kulturelt og religiøst program (working title), i.e. The Reformation as a cultural and religious programme, Carsten Bach-Nielsen and Niels Henrik Gregersen (eds.), in which researchers from both theology, law, history and cultural studies approach the Reformation from different angels and examines its legacy in Danish theology and culture through 500 years.

General introductions. General introductions to the Reformation in Denmark published by historians are found in a number of publications. An obvious choice would be the Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie, vol. 7, first published in 1989 and reprinted in the 1992. This particular volume is written by aforementioned Associate Professor Alex Wittendorff and offers an inspiring and also very typical introduction to the Danish Reformation. Wittendorff was as previously mentioned very much inspired by the methodologies associated with the history of mentalities. In the volume we therefore not only get an introduction to the overall political history of the period, but also chapters on the dominating world views and mentalities of the period. The entire Danmarkshistorie was not published with an academic audience in mind. Rather it was meant to be a new account of the Danish history intended to replace the older Politikens Danmarkshistorie, republished last time in 1985. Other introductions to the Reformation is found in publications such as Ole Peter Grell (Ed.), The Scandinavian Reformation. From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform, Cambridge University Press 1994; Mikulas Teich and Bob Schribner

21 The volume on the Reformation – Reformation og renæssance 1533-1596 – was written by the historian Svend Cedergreen Bech. It is quite obvious that the Reformation in this publication is considered an important landmark and dividing line between the medieval and early modern period. See also Mogens Christensen, Kirke og statsdannelse 1536-1660, Den jyske historiker, Nr. 116 (2007)
More recent and detailed studies of the initial phase of the reformation in various Danish provinces and cities are found in the works of Ole Peter Grell, noteworthy his article “From Popular, Evangelical Movement to Lutheran Reformation in Denmark. A Case of Two Reformations”. In this article Grell addresses the question of the nature of the Reformation in Denmark. He argues that there were in fact two different movements in Denmark leading to the definitive Lutheran Church Order. Initial there were a popular evangelical movement that according to Grell made its earliest and most significant impact in Jutland – especially in Viborg as early as 1526 followed by similar popular movements in Malmø in 1527 and later also in Copenhagen whereas the island and diocese of Fuen seem to have been a catholic bastion for much of the period. This early popular evangelical movement was however mistrusted by the King who wanted the Reformation to be strictly Lutheran, preferably with trustworthy apprentices from Wittenberg as its leaders. A second a full Lutheran (and princely) Reformation was therefore only introduced in Denmark in 1536/37 following a three year civil war referred to as “Grevens Fejde”. Similar detailed study of the Reformation in Malmø and Copenhagen has also been carried out by Grell in his articles “The City of Malmø and the Danish Reformation” from 1988, and in “The Emergence of two Cities: The

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Reformation of Malmø and Copenhagen” from 1990.²⁴ Important is also the article by Kaare Rübner Jørgensen on the riots surrounding the reformation events in Copenhagen in 1530 that represents important chapter in the civic reformation.²⁵ Another perspective on the history of the Reformation in specific towns and cities are found in such publications as the recent *Ribe Bys Historie 2, 1520-1850* edited by Søren Bitsch Christensen. In this volume the history of the Reformation is addresses as an epoch in the overall history of this particular city of Ribe in the southwestern part of Jutland. The Reformation is primarily discussed in the main chapters on the relationship between the King, the town official and the local churches and in a further main chapter on the life and culture of the townspeople in this period.²⁶ In these chapter such topics as the history of the cathedral chapter, the poor relief, school and education and the religious life in the town during the Reformation period is described.

In relation to the specific studies of various towns and cities important research has also been carried out with regards to other important groups of people in the Danish society during the Reformation period.²⁷ An example is the studies of the Danish nobility in the early sixteenth century in relation to Reformation movement. A number of important articles related to this particular topic were published in 2001 by Per Ingesman and Jens Villiam Jensen (eds.), *Riget, magten og Æren. Den danske adel 1350-1660*.²⁸ In this volume Associate Professor Lars Bisgaard investigate wills among Danish noblemen from during the late medieval and early modern period 1559 thus covering the early Reformation period in his article “Det adelige testament 1340-1559”. In the same volume Ole Bay offers a more close study of the Danish noble families and their relation to the church following the Reformation in the article “Den danske Adel og kirken efter Reformationen”, whereas the art historian Eva Louise Lillie present a study on the Danish nobility and their funding for

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Apart from Alex Wittendorff’s abovementioned attempts to characterize the religious life of the reformation period for a broader audience a more detailed and in-depth study was presented by Associated Professor Tore Nyberg in 2003 as part of the above-mentioned book by Asche and Schindling (eds.) on Dänemark, Norwegen und Schweden im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung, Nordische Königreiche und Konfession 1500 bis 1660. Apart from being a very important contribution not only to the main events of the Reformation period in the Nordic countries, this volume also offers a highly important perspective on the catholic responses to the evangelical movements in the early part of the Reformation in Denmark as we will return to shortly. As said the religious life in the age of Reformation and confessionalism is discussed in detail by Nyberg thus covering a wide range of topics such as the Danish bishoprics and their influence (or lack thereof) on the religious life before and during the Reformation, the ideas pilgrimages and saints life in the Nordic countries during the same period, the fate of the monasteries and the secular priests as well as the religious life during the new confessional order with fading catholic traditions. In this way Nybergs chapter should be seen as a very important and much needed renewal of the otherwise important chapter in Den Danske Kirkes Historie, vol 3 by Professor P.G. Lindhardt on the religious life in the Danish late medieval period.

As said the entire volume by Asche and Schindling offers a very important insight into the catholic opponents of the early evangelical movement in Denmark. Especially the professors Matthias Asche and Jens E. Olesen offers very helpful introductions to this particular topic of the Reformation period in Denmark together with the other Nordic countries as well as a detailed presentation of the age of confessionalism that followed the initial phase. The role of the catholic bishops during the Reformation period is also researched by Associate Professor Ole Peter Grell in

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29 See also Eva Louise Lillie, "Kirkeudsmykninger efter reformation og Tridenterkoncil“, Kirkehistoriske samtlinger, 1996. Several other articles in this particular volume as well as other studies of the Danish Nobel families is of relevance when studying the Danish Reformation.

his article “De katolske biskopper og reformationen i Danmark” published very recently in 2012.\textsuperscript{31} Another view on the catholic party in Denmark is offered by Kaare Rübner Jørgen in his article “Tabernes historie”.\textsuperscript{32} Apart from this particular article Rübner Jørgensen is also known for his extensive publications on the history of Poul Helgesen. A well educated Carmelite friar Poul Helgesen is probably the most important catholic scholar during the crucial years of the Danish Reformation thus essential to the understanding of some of the main events.\textsuperscript{33}

One can argue that the religious life during the initial phase of the Reformation period is to some extent also covered by those studies by historians who have been focusing on the topic of popular beliefs and witchcraft. Even if much of Jens Chr. Johansens research is focusing on a later period – notably his important book \textit{Da djævelen var ude... Trolldom i det 17. århundredes Danmark} – some of his recent research has been dealing with the Reformation period like the article “Faith, superstition and witchcraft in Reformation Scandinavia”.\textsuperscript{34} Similar studies into early modern witchcraft during the Reformation period but with a more comparative approach has been published by Associate Professor Louise Kallestrup in her book \textit{I tagt med djævelen: Trolddomsforfølgelser og trollddomsforstillinger i Danmark og Italien i den post-reformatoriske periode}, Anis 2009. Apart from this book Kallestrup has published a number of articles on witchcraft in Denmark during the Reformation period.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{31} The article was published in \textit{Kirkehistoriske Samlinger} 2012.
\textsuperscript{32} The article was published in \textit{Kirkehistoriske Samlinger} 2002.
In the aforementioned article “From Popular, Evangelical Movement to Lutheran Reformation in Denmark. A Case of Two Reformations”, Grell touches upon the well-known incidents when civic authorities and town’s people on their own decided to expel mendicant friars from their religious houses. These incidents are also addressed by Nyberg in his detailed account of the religious life in the Nordic countries during the Reformation period – not exclusively as a consequence of the upcoming Lutheranism but rather as the culmination of decades of conflicts between the mendicants, the secular priests and the civic authorities. Nyberg also touches upon the fate of the monasteries outside the Nordic towns and cities, especially the Benedictines, the Cistercians and the Birgittine. A detailed study of one specific monastery – the Cistercian monastery of Øm in central Jutland – is presented in the article by Bo Gregersen, “Storheden før faldet – Øm Kloster på reformationstiden”. The article describes the fate of the monastery and its monks from the first Lutheran ideas made themselves felt until the final dissolution of the monastery as late as 1560. Thus for well over a generation the monks continued their daily routines at the monastery until the last abbot was ordered to give up his abbacy an instead become a Lutheran minister at the church of Rosmus on Bjurland. Probably the fate of Øm Abbey was not that different from other similar institutions in Denmark in the sixteenth century.

Another aspect of the monastic life during the Reformation period is presented by Martin W. Jürgensen in his article on ”Karikerede klosterfolk og reformationens træsnit” – namely the representation of monks and nuns in the woodcuts of the period.

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Martin Wangsgaard Jürgensen, ”Karikerede klosterfolk og reformationens træsnit”, Anno domini, Arg. 10 (2004).
Studies on the consolidation of the Reformation/The period of Lutheran orthodoxy/The process of confessionalism, second half of the 20th century

Obviously the consolidation of the Reformation in the Danish realms in the second part of the sixteenth as well as the period of orthodoxy in the early seventeenth centuries has also had the interest of Danish historians. Expectantly one finds scholarly discussions of these particular periods of consolidation in the previously mentioned general publications on the history of Denmark. We have mentioned the volume by Wittendorff (Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie, vol. 7). Here the reader are offered a comprehensive if not in any way exhaustive account of the new evangelical church in Denmark from the 1530s and onwards. Wittendorff describes the second half of the sixteenth century through some thematic chapters on the organisation of the Danish society following the new Lutheran Church Order. He also describes the civil society with its important commercial centers that had played an important part in the initial phases of the reformation when the new evangelical movements often gained their primary foothold in these very same cities and commercial centers. He then describes the grander political scheme among the Scandinavian powers as well as the royal politics throughout the century. True to his perception of history and clearly inspired by the history of mentalities Wittendorff also describes the everyday life of the common people (including also the poor and needy in society) that had to adapt to new religious ideas and practices.39 The narrative of Danish history is then continued in the following volume of Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie, vol. 8, covering the period 1600-1700. The volume is written by Associate Professor Benito Scocozza and offers only a rather limited discussion of the ecclesiastical and religious aspect of society in this otherwise important period.40

More specialized studies of this particular period of consolidation have been published by other Danish historians – some of them are mentioned above; notably Grell, The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical movement to Institutionalisation of Reform.41 In this volume Grell offers a selection of articles written by both historians and church historians on the various aspects of the consolidation and institutionalization of the Lutheran Reformation in Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries, emphasizing the changes of the formal and institutional structures in the

national churches in the second half of the sixteenth century. A few years later Grell together with Andrew Cunningham published the book *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Religion, War, Famine and Death in Reformation Europe*. The book had a strong if not exclusive focus on Denmark and the neighboring kingdoms of northern Europe offering an interesting an innovative approach towards the age of Reformation, consolidation and confessionalisation from the second part of the sixteenth century until the first half of the seventeenth century. In the book Cunningham and Grell approaches their topics from four different angles (the four riders of the Apocalypse!) describing the Reformation period firstly from a religious and theological perspective (with a strong focus on the Apocalypse and the radical chiliasm of the period), secondly from the perspective of war, weapons and religion, thirdly through the description of foot, famine and religion and fourthly from the perspective of disease, disaster, death and religion. Thus religion in a Reformation era is described within a distinctly social context more or less perfecting the new methodological approaches among modern historians towards the history of the long Reformation, taking into account not only economy, politic and power structures, but also the dominant mentalities of the time encroached as they were in the dominant religious and theological ideas.

In a way the front runners of the consolidation period of the Reformation were the Lutheran ministers who were challenged with the task of communicating the new theological ideas and religious practices to their congregations. They were supposed to educate the common people as best they could. Some of the first ministers were simply the former catholic priests striving to fulfill their obligations within a new theological and religious framework. The following generations of ministers were however educated at the reopened Theological Faculty at the university in Copenhagen. In a recent study the two Danish historians, Charlotte Appel and Morten Fink-Jensen have investigated the new roles ascribed to these men following the first turbulent years of the Reformation. In the book *Når det regner på præsten: en kulturhistorie om sognepræster og sognefolk 1550-1750* we are presented with several highly interesting ‘biographies’ and narratives of the everyday life of a number of Danish ministers from the mid-sixteenth century until the mid eighteen century. Their experiences as students, as spiritual guardians of their flock, as preachers,

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42 For similar perspective, see also Ingmar Brohed, *Reformationens konsolidering i de nordiska länderna 1540-1610*, 1990.
44 Charlotte Appel and Morten Fink-Jensen, *Når det regner på præsten: en kulturhistorie om sognepræster og sognefolk 1550-1750*
as servants to the king and the government, and as men combating the devil among their parishioners are all presented in this socio-historical study.\textsuperscript{45}

The religious reading in Denmark following the Reformation is another important topic strongly related to the every-day life of the ministers and has also been researched by Appel and Fink-Jensen. In the anthology \textit{Religious Reading in the Lutheran North: Studies in Early modern Scandinavian Book Culture} this important chapter of the Reformation period is examined through a number of articles dealing specifically with the general trends of religious readings in this important period, the relationship between printed books and the preaching of the ministers, and also the printing of catechisms.\textsuperscript{46}

Following the outline of Cunningham and Grell one might wonder why so few Danish historians have researched the relationship between religion and warfare in the Reformation period compared to a much more thriving international research tradition within this particular topic.\textsuperscript{47} One of the few exceptions is the Danish historian Janus Møller Jensen who has carried out an extensive research into the crusading movement in Denmark from around 1400 until 1650, investigating both the political and national settings for the late medieval and early modern crusades in Denmark as well as the religious and theological settings. His book is titles \textit{Denmark and the Crusades 1400-1650} and was published by Brill 2007. As can be seen from the title Møller Jensen covers not only the late medieval period and the early Reformation period. He also investigates the years of political and religiously consolidation and confessionalisation until the conclusion of the reign of King Christian IV in the mid seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{48} Not only has the study of the medieval crusades in a Scandinavian context gained considerable momentum during the last couple of decades, Møller Jensen has also pointed the research into a new direction by extending his studies into the period of the Danish Reformation underlining the continuing importance of religion and warfare not just on a

\textsuperscript{45} Another study by Alex Wittendorff fits into the category; \textit{Peder Palladius: En visitatsbog}, published online by \url{www.historie-nu.dk}.


\textsuperscript{47} One could mention the English medievalist Norman Housley. Apart from being one of the world’s leading experts in the late medieval and early modern crusades, he has also published extensively on the topic of warfare and religion in the Reformation period, see for example \textit{Religious Warfare in Europe 1400-1536}, Oxford University Press 2002; \textit{The Later Crusades From Lyons to Alcazar 1274-1580}, Oxford University Press 1992. Cunningham and Grell may also be considered a part of this particular field of research.

confessional level but also among participating individuals during this specific anti-catholic and Lutheran era.\(^{49}\)

Another topic emphasized by Grell and Cunningham was the importance of disease and religion. This is off cause to some extent covered by the general publications on the period but also in a number of more specialized publications. The historian Morten Fink-Jensen has been dealing especially with this topic from the perspective natural philosophy in his book *Fornuften under troens lydighed. Naturfilosofi, medicin og teologi i Danmark 1536-1636*, Museum Tusculanum 2004.\(^{50}\) At the core of this book is the relationship between religion and science during the Lutheran orthodoxy as the prerequisite for the modern divide between these two world views.

Another important aspect of the consolidation of the Reformation in Denmark was the legal and religious ideas with regards to poor relief and health care. There are several different opinions among scholars with regards to the impact of Reformation onto the ideas of health care and poor relief in the early modern societies: Either the welfare ideas of the reformation period represents a significantly break with regards to the ideas of the late medieval (catholic) societies in Europe, or there were really no significant changes in the fundamental ideas of poor relief and health care from the late medieval period into the early modern period. Among those who argue that significant changes happened during the early decades of the sixteenth century some even claims that the changes only occurred because of some distinct socio-economic factors of society, whereas other scholars claims that the religious ideas of the Reformation period were the main agents of these changes.\(^{51}\) The opinion that there were no substantial breaks from the late medieval period to the end of the sixteenth century is represented by Associate Professor Carsten Selch Jensen in various articles on the topic of health care and poor relief.\(^{52}\) It is his argument that the fundamental

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\(^{49}\) Obviously more detailed studies of the military and the Danish society has been carried out by various Danish historians, notably Professor Gunner Lind with a number of important publications, for example *Hæren og Magten I Danmark 1614-1662*, Odense University Press 1994 and most recently as the editor, *Civilians at War: From the Fifteenth Century to the present*, Museum Tusculanum Press 2014. These research however has no distinct focus on the religious aspect of the army life.

\(^{50}\) The topic has also been covered by Grell and Cunningham in another publication, *Medicine and the Reformation*, (1993).


perceptions of worthy and unworthy poor and needy people stayed the same throughout the period. The important changes in the legislation concerning the poor and needy people in the Reformation period thus had to do with the idea that a proper health care and poor relief had to be seen as the sign of a truly Christian society regardless if the legislator was a catholic, a lutheran or a reformed official or cleric. Thus the laws associated with health care and especially poor relief became the confessional hallmark of a true Godly society.

Equally important to the understanding of the impact of the early Reformation in Denmark and the years of consolidation and orthodoxy are the hymnological and art historical studies that have been published within the recent years. The study of hymns during the Reformation period in the Nordic countries has recently been the topic of a very comprehensive volume that marks the state of the art with regard to this particular and important research field: Svein-Åke Selander and Karl-Johan Hansson (eds.), Martin Luthers psalmer i de nordiska folkens liv. In this volume the reader is presented with a number of detailed studies on the use of psalms in Denmark and the other Nordic countries during the initial phase of the reformation as well as during the time of consolidation. In that respect this particular volume presents the essence of the newest research that has been going on for the past generation or so with regards to the hymnology of the Reformation and its roots in the late medieval period.

As to the art historical and archaeological perspective several interesting studies have been published for the past twenty-five years or so. In 1987 Hans Jørgen Frederiksen published an article on the topic of “Reformationens betydning for den kirkelige kunst i Danmark”. Within the same chronological outline Axel Bolvig published his book some years later titled Reformationens rindalister. Om kunst og arkitektur i 1500-tallets Danmark. A slightly later period is analyzed in an article by Eva de la Fuente Pedersen on donations to the churches from the Danish nobility in the
second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries. Special publication on mural paintings are found in Ulla Hastrup, Robert Egevang and Eva Louise Lillie (eds.), Danske kalkmalerier, vol. 1-8, published by the National museum 1985-92.

The most important publication within the last years of research into the Reformation period is without doubt the study by Martin Wangsgaard Jürgensen on the Changing Interiors: Danish village churches c. 1450 to 1600. In this comprehensive and pioneering study Jürgensen present a detailed analysis of church interiors of the late medieval and reformation period with a special focus on the church as a (changing) religious and liturgical space. The different elements of the church interior is analyzed within their distinct and ever changing religious settings from the late medieval period, through the first Lutheran church arrangements right through to the post-Reformation church room. As a study that draws on both archaeology, church history, history and art history the study of Martin Wangsgaard Jürgensen represents a truly synthesis on the study of the Reformation period, combining several important research areas into one study.

Conclusion

In this national rapport on the study of the Long Reformation in Denmark we have pointed out different trends and ground-breaking publications. As mentioned in the beginning, this is in no way a full account of research relevant to this particular topic. There are several older publications (pre-1980s) that is still highly valuable in the current research. Furthermore there will be relevant publications not mentioned in this rapport that might be of interest to a scholar of the Danish Reformations and its consolidation.

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Appendix: Bibliographies

Paavo Alaja and Raisa Maria Toivo

Report on Finland

1. Introduction

Since Finland was a part of the Realm of Sweden, the Reformation in Finland went along the same major lines as it went in Sweden, following the same diet decisions and royal ordinances. The reformers were Bishops Martin Skytte and Mikael Agricola, who both studied in Wittenberg. The early Reformation period is characterised by confiscations of church property and the appearance of the vernacular printed literature by Agricola. The extent to which religious life changed has been debated: official liturgical development was slow and conservative, but inventories in various parish archives have revealed that handwritten manuscripts of vernacular services were available before the printed official ones. Unlike in Sweden, no obvious rebellion or rioting either for or against the Reformation took place, or at least such cannot be found from the fragmentary source material. The later period of the Reformation was a more clearly wavering: King John’s Red Liturgy and some popular support for Catholicism in the south-western parts of the country were suppressed on only at the Uppsala convention 1593 and finally the Club War 1596-7.

The history of the Reformation in Finland has been researched and written by both historians and church historians. Until the 1980’s there has been a strong nationalistic interpretation both in terms of writing a Finland as separate from Sweden into the past and in taking ”Lutheranism” as the first ingredient of Finnish folk character or Finnishness. Other themes in the presentations have included administrative history, economic history, institutional history, language, literary and book history, social history, cultural history and history of society.

This article will present 1.) the general background of church history and history and their interest in the history of Religion and the Reformation (by Alaja & Toivo) 2.) contributions of church history into the study of the late medieval background of the Reformation, the introduction of the Reformation and the ”Long Reformation” (Alaja); 3.) the contributions of history to the study of the late medieval background to the Reformation (Krötzl 3.1) and the contributions of history to the
study introduction of the Reformation and the Long Reformations (Toivo 3.2-3.3). At the very end we attempt 4.) some common conclusions.

1.1. The development of church history as an academic discipline (Paavo Alaja)

In Finland, the first professorship of church history was founded in 1828 in Faculty of Theology at University of Helsinki. Thus, the focus of the church history was in New Testament studies. The first lecturers of church history started in 1840 by Professor B. O. Lille. According to Professor Kauko Pirinen, the role of the church history among the disciplines of theology was still to be “an assisting discipline” of Systematic Theology.¹

During Jaakko Gummerus’s professorship (1900–1920) the historico-critical research method, influenced by Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889), was adopted to the Finnish church history. Professor Gummerus’ influence to the modern church history has seen remarkable. The Reformation and the Lutheran Orthodoxy periods were one of his many research interests.²

The studies in Faculty of Theology were more or less religious until the latter half of the 20th century. Professor Aarno Maliniemi (appointed in 1945) was the first medievalist, not theologian, who was giving lectures in church history. His successor, Professor Kauko Pirinen (1915–1999), had the greatest role to make church history one of the modern history disciplines. Professor Pirinen was a medievalist, and his professorship lasted years 1961–1980. His disciples have had a leading role in present church history studies.³

The development of church history has generally followed the development of Science of History.


³ Heininen 2010, 86; Heininen 2011, 11–12.
Today the methods of Church History and Science of History are equivalent. The main differences between Church History and “other” History are the topics; Church History has always something to do with Christianity, Church or Religion. Church history has its position in Faculty of Theology because it has been explained that the (church)historians need the studies of theology to understand the religious side of history.\(^4\)

1.2. The establishment of history as a modern academic discipline (Toivo)

The interest in church history and the history of the reformation began in Finland with the Swedish Gothic or Götic history movement during the time of the great power. Clergy was asked to collect, produce and report memorabilia of the great country’s history, its traditions and ancient past.

A singular feature in the Finnish historiography is the amount and high quality of works with in the tradition of “local histories”. These are works are a kind of public histories, commissioned and paid for by different communities, communes, towns and parishes, sometimes whole provinces usually conducted by university-trained academics. Almost every commune, town or province has such a history made of itself. They include chapters of historical structures, population, settlement, government and administration, economy and culture, usually looked at from both the authorities’ and the from below-angle. These often include considerable chapters on the history of the church and the congregation, and their quality and trends reflect those of the bulk of history writing in general, save one quality: these are more detailed and more locally oriented. A good deal of scholarly work done on religious history, especially on the history of religious communities, lay religious experience or the practical work of the clergy is therefore published outside the traditional academic publication forums.

1.3 The institutional foundation of church history (Alaja)

Church history can be studied at three universities in Finland: University of Helsinki, Åbo Akademi (Turku), and University of Eastern Finland (Joensuu). The Faculty of Theology of Åbo Akademi was founded in 1924, and the School of Theology of University of Eastern Finland in 2002.

\(^4\) Talonen 2006, 188–192.
The studies of the long reformation period have been mostly done in University of Helsinki. Today the Faculty of Theology at University of Helsinki has three permanent professorships of Church History, one of them emphasized to “the studies of older church history”, encompassing the long reformation period. In Åbo Akademi and in Joensuu the themes for research of church history are focused on period from 18th century to present, as well as the most of the studies in Helsinki also.

Finnish church historians have their own society, Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura (Finska kyrkohistoriska samfundet), established in 1891. Today it publishes the studies of Finnish church history in book series, Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran toimituksia (Finska kyrkohistoriska samfundets publikationer), and in an annual, Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran vuosikirja (Finska kyrkohistoriska samfundets årsskrift). The studies of Reformation have been one of the themes in these publications from beginning. Otherwise, the articles of the studies of church history have been specifically published in the publications of Suomen teologinen kirjallisuusseura (‘Literature society of theology’; established in 1891), in a scholarly journal of Finnish theologians, Teologinen aikakauskirja (Teologisk Tidskrift, Finnish Journal of Theology), and in the publications of History.

1.4 The institutional Foundation of history in Finland (Toivo)

History is currently taught at 7 universities, in faculties ranging from arts and humanities to political science and social Sciences. The major society connecting historians from all fields is Historiallinen Seura (Societas Historicae Finlandiae) which has in the past published several publication series, but has currently reduced them into 3 series which it published together with the Finnish Literature Scoety (one for edited collections, one for monographs in Finnish and one for publications in English, all peer reviewed) and strong co-operation with Historiallinen aikakauskirja, the major peer reviewed journal of history in Finland. Historiallinen aikakauskirja has a sister in Swedesh, Historiska Tidskrift för Finland. It has been not uncommon that works of serious history have been published by major non-academic publishers, but this is getting more and more difficult in the current economic situation. Currently a large part of research done by Finns, even concerning Finns

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is being published outside Finland by international publishing houses and journals. The field is thus fragmented.

1.5 General research interests within church history (Alaja)

The church history was focused on “national” history writing and emphasized the Lutheranism in the first half of the 20th century. It can be related that the Finnish church history was the history of the Lutheran Church of Finland. Reading the history was nationalistic and the Lutheranism was elevated.

One of the favourite topics has been the research of Pietism and the revivalist movements throughout the times. In this, the viewpoint has been for long in the individuals, the leading men of the revivalists. During the latest decades there have been found new perspectives to the revivalist movements, and them have been seen for example more as a part of the folklore.7

Otherwise the topics of church history have varied. Basically, the studies of church history are presently in line with the other history studies. In the studies of Reformation history it is notable that only a few of the Finnish church historians are studying the period from the 15th century to the end of the 17th century. Their research interests are individual. The way of the Reformation church history has been from the nationalistic view to more international aspects in a long run. This might create new approaches. One of the changes could be that the history of Reformation will be written to the global audience. For now it has been mostly written to the Finnish people.

1.6 General Interest within the discipline of history in religion in general, and in national church history in special (Toivo)

There has been an interest in the “national” church history from the beginning of the history writing in Finland, first in the 17th and 18th centuries because many of the history Professors and students cherished ambitions within clerical careers as well, and later on in the 19th and early 20th centuries, because church history and religions were seen as important parts of the culture and national

7 Heininen 2010, 92–94, 98.
character of the newly forming nation. Nevertheless, as theology and history had by the 19th century been separated as disciplines and as academic paths, historians could nevertheless have strong anti-clerical feelings. Especially during the late 18th century Enlightenment this was visible in Finland, although not as much as in European history elsewhere. Especially during the nation-forming era of the 19th century, historians and history writers who were religiously inclined, had their backgrounds within the revivalist movements. Consequently they were able and willing to continue the critique that these movements had always posed against earlier centuries’ religious conventions. The results were sometimes strong anti-clericalist features in the descriptions of the religious life of the 16th and 17th centuries.

20th century history writing in Finland has followed the European trends which criticized the political top-down history with a culturally interested “social history” writing since the early twentieth century, turned that into a semi-Marxist, strongly statistical history of the masses by the 1970’s, a trend slowed down by another trend of strong political history so that although statistically inclined social history came into Finland be the 1970’s, its strongest moments were in the early 1990’s at the same time as it came into its conclusion, and moved on to a culturally or anthropologically oriented history of mentalities or micro history trend by the late 1980’s. Religion has been an important topics in the early social history and the 1980’s history of mentality trend, but, since the covert Marxism’s within these trends, religious and religious views have mostly not been to focus of study but formed a backgrounds context to the studied phenomena. The adopted anthropological approaches (Mauss, Turner, etc. via Ginzburg and Davis) have also meant that religion, if it is studies, has often been studies in a functionalist sense. This trend has been especially prevalent among Jyväskylä and Helsinki researchers, although these two have approached it from rather different angles. A new generation on graduate students is currently including in this trend a more pronounced study of religion. A ‘return of religion’ can only be seen within the last 10 years of research, and then first among medievalists, only then among early modernists, (perhaps especially in Tampere). This may be connected to the religious tensions

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8 Suolahti, Voionmaa.
10 trend began by Heikkinen 1988, and, to an extent, Sulkunen 1999; see later similar approaches e.g. be Eilola 2003 or Mattikainen 2002; likewise biography like that by Lappalainen 2005 or Lagerstam 2007.
11 Mia Kuhu, Emmi Lahti in their forthcoming dissertations.
12 Sari katajala-Pellomaa (e.g. 2009), Susanna Niiranen and Marko Lamberg (e.g. their jointly edited book Keskiajan Rajoilla 2002; Meri Heinonen 2007.
13 Raisa Maria Toivo, Tiina Miettinen, Ulla Koskinen, Ella Viitaniemi, Maija Ojala.
between Islam and Christianity, or indeed among Lutherans in Finland – questions about women taking the holy orders, same-sex marriages and, lately, corruption among and the general position of fundamentalist revival movements - but early modernists have rarely professed their positions towards these questions. Rather it may be that this return of religion within history research is the effect of general rise in religiosity or spirituality within the society, beginning in the late 20th century with new age and neo-eastern and then neo-pagan movements, currently turning into conversions from one of the big religions to another.

With the cultural trend, historians have become more and more willing to co-operate with church historians from theology, since the cultural approach has made the questions of the correctness of belief or the standard of the clergy less prevalent for both historians and church historians and therefore reduced the conflict between confessing Lutheranism and anticlericalism. From a historians’ perspective, this seems to apply to the study of most periods of history.

2. Contributions from church history (Paavo Alaja)

2.1 Contributions from church history to the study of late-medieval background to the reformation (Alaja)

It is hard to see great borderlines between church history and the other history disciplines in the studies of Middle Age in Finland. From the view of the church history, the history of the Middle Age is always also the Church History.¹⁴

In Faculty of Theology at University of Helsinki the studies of the Middle Ages emphasized during Professor Kauko Pirinen’s professorship. He actually brought the modern research of the Middle Age to the discipline of Church History. According to Professor Simo Heininen, Pirinen reformed the impressions of the history of the late Middle Age and the Reformation era in Finland. Pirinen’s strength was that he understood the canon law and could read the noteworthy sources, particularly the account books. More closely his main topic was the history of the administration of the Chapter of Turku from the Late Medieval era to the Reformation era. Pirinen’s expertise is represented for example in a first volume of the History of the Finnish Church -book series (1991), which content

¹⁴ Heininen 2010, 89.
covers the periods of the Middle Age and the Reformation. It is the first modern and still the latest
general overview of the church history of Finland from that era.\textsuperscript{15}

After Pirinen, the studies of the Late Medieval history have been in minority among the theologians
until the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Before that, Professor of Practical Theology, Jyrki Knuutila, has been the only
theologian who has studied Middle Age church history. His main topics have been the cult of St.
Olaf in Finland from the Middle Ages to the Reformation era, and different kind of liturgical
researches.\textsuperscript{16}

Otherwise, the theologians have researched the medieval topics mostly in the discipline of
Systematic Theology. There can be seen some overlap between Church History and Systematic
Theology, although the perspectives of these disciplines are different.\textsuperscript{17}

One of the most significance studies in late medieval history, in relation to the church history, has
been Professor Markus Hiekkanen’s studies of the Finnish church buildings. Professor Hiekkanen is
a scholar of Art History, History and Archeology, and Theology. In his dissertation (1994),
Hiekkanen reassessed the age of the Finnish stone churches in Turku (Åbo) Diocese. In the 19\textsuperscript{th}
century ideology of national romanticism it was desirably that the age of the churches could
evaluate as old as possible. Before Hiekkanen’s studies it was supposed that many of the Finnish
stone churches were built in the 12\textsuperscript{th} and 13\textsuperscript{th} centuries. Hiekkanen’s conclusion is that only a few of
the churches in Åland (Ahvenanmaa) have built during the period 1270–1400, and in other parts of
Finland the building of the old stone churches have started from the beginning of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{18}

In the 21\textsuperscript{st} century there have been more medievalists\textsuperscript{19} studying and giving lecturers in Faculty of
Theology at University of Helsinki. Perhaps in future there are more theologians among the
medievalists, even though it has no great sense if the Finnish medievalists are theologians or not.

\textsuperscript{15} Pirinen 1991; Heininen 2012 (2001). The literature Pirinen (1991, 393–[396]) has employed shows clearly that there
was a need of the reform of the research of this period.

\textsuperscript{16} Knuutila, Kyrki: Soturi, kuningas, pyhimys. Pyhän Olavin kultti osana kristillistyminstä Suomessa 1200-luvun

\textsuperscript{17} e. g. Mäkinen, Virpi: ”Oikeus, kohtuus ja oikeudenmukaisuus – Vähäosaiset kanonisen oikeuden näkökulmasta.” p.
Kustannus, 2002.; Mäkinen, Virpi: ”Jatkuvuutta ja muutoksia: Köyhät ja köyhänhoito katolisessa reformissa


\textsuperscript{19} e. g. Maiju Lehmisjoki-Gadner, Tuomas Heikkilä.
2.2 Contribution of Church History to the study of the introduction of the reformation (Alaja)

Among the theologians, the Reformation has seen previously in more religious context than today. The history of the Reformation has been evaluated from the Lutheran view, and it has been a religious part of the nationalistic history. Currently, most of the church historians still live in a Protestant culture, and it affects to their research interests, but not as ideologically than before – at last as straight than before.

Current picture of the introduction of the Reformation is that the Reformation was firstly part of King Gustaf Vasa’s politics. The first effects of Lutheran confession were adopted in Sweden and its eastern part Finland in the 16th century, but the greater ecclesiastical changes took place in Finland in the 17th century.20

In Finland there has not seen any marks of the conflicts between the church and the theologians. Lutheran studies gained on the scholars of the main cities Turku (Åbo) and Viipuri (Wiborg) already in 1520s, and scholars started to read Humanistic and Lutheran literature. The church was lost its power under the rule of Gustav Vasa, and there was no other possibilities than adjust to the circumstances. There were no theologians in Finland with the needs or possibilities to fight against the Lutheranism.21

The dominant research views to the introduction of the Reformation in modern Finnish church history have been in the history of church administration22, in the history of the life of the individuals, in the liturgy and ceremonies, and in the literature.

Studies of Luther and Lutheranism. Professor Kaarlo Arffman is the leading Luther-specialist among Finnish church historians. He has researched Martin Luther’s and early Lutheran ideas from different kind of views and his studies have an international perspective. Professor Arffman has researched in three publications the attitudes towards early Reformation ideas at the Protestant and Catholic universities in Europe; he has been interested in historical arguments of Luther and the other Reformators, and he has studied the ideas of Lutheran welfare. The most read of his studies has the title Mitä oli luterilaisuus? (‘What was Lutheranism?’). It is the first Finnish written modern research about ‘the Lutheranism as a historic phenomenon’. In it Professor Arffman for example emphasizes that Martin Luther’s thoughts were motivated by the apocalypse belief. He also points out the differences of the Reformers ideas in the 16th century and the modern Finnish Lutheranism, arguing that there is not anymore Lutheranism as a doctrinal ensemble or as a construction of Christianity. Formerly in Finnish church history, it was important to emphasize the continuity and the conformity of Martin Luther ideas and the dogmas of The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

Among the theologians, Professor Arffman’s Luther-studies have challenged the views of Systematic Theology, when he has connected the context of history to the interpretations of the Lutheran (or Luther’s) theology. Generally, the studies of Reformation have been one of the most popular topics in the division of subjects in Finnish Theology. Martin Luther’s theology has been studied extensive particularly in Systematic Theology.

Studies of intellectual history (“lärdomshistoria”). Another most important church historian in the field of the Reformation studies is Emeritus Professor Simo Heininen. His main topics have been the life and writings of the Finnish ‘leading Reformer’ Mikael Agricola (c. 1510–1557). Today the biography of Agricola is pretty much thorough, and he is the best known Finnish churchman of the 16th century.

26 The roots of these interests are in early 20th century, when Finnish theologians were influenced by Swedish Anders Nygren’s (1890–1978) studies.
Long term Agricola-research is an example of the research of the history of the individuals, which have been popular among Finnish church historians. Several Finnish churchmen of the 16th century have been researched as individuals.\textsuperscript{27}

The history of the individuals has categorized as a part of the intellectual history, \textit{lärdomshistoria}. There has been a project of \textit{lärdomshistoria} among Finnish church historians in 1980s and 1990s, which studied the period of ‘long Reformation’.\textsuperscript{28} The studies of intellectual history have been done especially over the professorships of Pentti Laasonen (1980–1992) and Simo Heininen (1983–2009).

One of the main researches under the topic \textit{lärdomshistoria} is Jussi Nuorteva’s dissertation “Finnish Study Abroad before the Foundation of the Royal Academy of Turku in 1640”. It is an elementary study of the earliest Finnish intellectual history.\textsuperscript{29} Another noteworthy study is Professor Laasonen’s research about the Lutheranism between Rome and Geneva in the end of the 16th century (1998). Its view point is in the History of ideas.\textsuperscript{30}

\textit{Literature and Book History}. For instance, amongst Agricola-research part of the interests of the studies has been the literature. Mikael Agricola has seen as the first author of the Finnish printed books, and he has the reputation as ‘a father of the Finnish standard language’. The texts of Agricola have been one topic among theologians as well as linguistics. In church history the interests to the literature have been a frame to the bloom of Book history, which has become one of the main new subjects in a church history. The book historians are interest in many periods of history. Connected to the early Reformation era (c. 16th century), the main achievements of the Finnish Book history are the studies like Finnish national biography and the handbook to the eldest Finnish literature.\textsuperscript{31}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{27} Heininen 1974 (Marcus Henrici Helsingius); Heininen 2007 (Bishop Mikael Agricola); Heininen 2012 (Bishop Paulus Juusten). Agricola and Juusten have seen to be the main leaders of the Finnish Ddioceses in the 16th century. See e.g. Pirinen 1991, 287–318.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Nuorteva 1997.
\end{itemize}
Other research of church history. The local histories, histories of communities, are one important group of history writing in Finland. The local histories are a traditional way of history writing in Finland, still continuing. They often include chapters of the ecclesiastical life in parishes or the communities they are telling about. The quality of the works varies, but they are many times useful especially when scholars start to study their topics and find the first information on it. The local histories give information about the everyday life in parishes, also from the early Reformation period.  

An example of the new perspectives to the 16th century studies are PhD Päivi Räisänen-Schröder’s works. She has studied in Göttingen, now in Helsinki, and her interests have been in the Anabaptists from the views of social history, like as a people in a margin. This is an example that the views of the social history are rising in a research of the early Reformation. It also shows that present-day Finnish church historians are not only interested in Lutheranism and Finland, but the scale is getting larger, and the views of the other religious groups than just Lutherans and the research of the other regions than just Finland, have become more popular.

Other interests of Finnish theologians. One research interest in the Faculty of Theology at Helsinki University has been the history of services. It has been mostly studied under the subject of Practical Theology – the subject is also using the methods of history. The history of the services, e.g. liturgy, homiletics and sources of them, was influenced by Professor Martti Parvio (1918–1993). His scholar, Professor Jyrki Knuutila, has continued these studies. The scholars of these subjects are usually handling the 16th and the 17th century studies in the same breath. This is because the level of the ecclesiastical sources touching Finland increase in the 17th century and it is hard to get an overall or larger picture of issues using only sources created before that.

As already mentioned, the Reformation from different kind of views has been one topic in Systematic Theology. Thus, there has been some co-operating between the church historians and

the systematic theologians in some books of articles, under the topics like ‘Reformation in Finland’ and ‘Church and the poor relief’.  

2.3 Contributions from church history Consolidation of the reformation/The period of Lutheran orthodoxy/The process of confessionalization (Alaja)

Concepts of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Previous generations have made the elementary research of the period of Lutheran Orthodoxy in Finnish church history, mainly with the researches of administration, church orders, clergy and local parishes. The last decades of the 20th century were time of the intellectual history (lärdomshistoria). After that the direction has been to find new perspectives to the research and follow the general development of science of history. This has connected for example the views of social history to the current research of church history.

From the view of the church history the idiom of the 17th century ecclesiastical life is ‘the period of Lutheran orthodoxy’. Before the present generation word ‘orthodoxy’ was translated in Finnish ‘puhdasopisuus’, but today church historians find it more relevant to use the Finnish word ‘ortodoksia’. Word ‘puhdasopisuus’ emphasis that the religion has ‘cleaned from something’, and the word has seen in a close relationship to the nationalistic interpretations of Finnish church history.

Previously ‘the Reformation’ was translated in Finnish ‘uskonpuhdistus’, which means ‘the cleaning of faith’, but today the church historians suggest the word ‘reformaatio’. Thus, ‘puhdasopisuus’ and ‘uskonpuhdistus’ are generally used in Finnish language.

Emeritus Professor Pentti Laasonen has been a forerunner in a last generations research of the 17th century church history35, and he has divided Lutheran Orthodoxy in Finland to three periods: early

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orthodoxy (c. 1600–1640), full orthodoxy (1640–1680), and late orthodoxy (1680–c. 1721). This can be seen as a standard among the church historians.

The use of terms is one example that the academic research has taken few steps beyond from the nationalistic Lutheranism. Use of terms also shows that the Reformation has been understood strongly to cover the 16th century, but not anymore the 17th century. This expresses the traditional comprehensions of church history, which emphasized the changes in administration and, on the whole, the easily discovered changes, like new orders. The studies of last generation have slowly helped to understand that the Reformation changes took their time and did not happen in a century – they took more like the centuries. This can be discovered when the studies of Reformation have focused on the social life and the everyday life of the parishes.

The source material have naturally affected to what kind of research could be done. Church historians have been first interested in ecclesiastical sources, like the church archives and the documents of church administration. These sources are one explanation to the interests of Finnish church historians to study the history of the parishes and the history of the administration. Other approaches have been are greater challenge because of the sources.

*Picture of Lutheran Orthodox era.* After the Reformation century ecclesiastical life in Finland needed to organize again and improve in every section. It has seen distinctive to the 17th century development in Finland; the Lutheran confession was started to entrench in a poor circumstances, but the century was the period when Lutheran confession was generally adopted and the ecclesiastical development proceeded.

A few things can be seen emphasised in this in Finnish church history: moral supervision of the people as a part of the Lutheran confession and the education of the people authored by the Church, especially in the latter half of the 17th century.

The relation between the State and the Church has seen twofold. On the other hand, the State and the Church were interwoven ideologically. The domestic policy of Sweden grounded to the

36 Laasonen 1991, 7–9. The next period after Lutheran Orthodoxy is usually divided to begin after the Great Northern War (1700–1721), which ended in Finland to the Russian invasion and the occupation of Finland 1713–1721 (*The Greater Wrath, Stora ofreden*).
connection of the politics and the religion. It has been described with the words like “conformity” (yhdennukaisuus) and “unity” (yksimielisyys) – which terms can also give a distorted picture about the life on 17th century, and are therefore debatable terms. On the other hand, the State and the Church were struggling whole 17th century about the power of church administration. It became visible in practical level, when the nobles and the clergy had disagreements, and when the individuals of these estates tried to elevated themselves. These relations have been represented in many Finnish studies of church history, especially in those which emphases the views of church administration, individual churchmen, and local church history.  

Otherwise than in many European areas, in Finland the extensive revolts of peasantry against the secular rulers or against the church administration were unusual. Conflicts between common people, clergy and civil servants were mainly local. Hence, discords were solved amongst the local people, mainly on the parishes, and with or without state court. This emphasizes the significant of the communities, especially parishes, which had the great autonomy to affect what will happen in their community. To get more information about the life in parishes is one direction in the current studies of Lutheran Orthodoxy era, and it comes close to the views of social history.

Today the church historians see that the religiousness of ‘Finnish’ people in the 17th century was a mix of folklore, Catholic tradition and new Lutheran thoughts. This is perhaps one possible course to study church history in future, because as told before, the Lutheranism has overplayed in the general perceptions of the 17th century religiousness of Finnish people. One point is that Finnish theologians are familiar to understand dogmas and customs of Lutheran confession, but studying issues from the view of Catholic dogmas and customs could show us more profusely the religious continuity after the ideas of Reformation were brought to the Finnish parishes. The same could be done from the view of folklore. There has been some activity between church historians and folklorists in Helsinki, but nothing realized linked up to Lutheran Orthodox era. Thus, the studies of social life in parishes are demanding because the sources are invariably produced by the viewpoint of the secular or church administration.

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37 e.g. Laasonen 1991.
39 e. g. Alaja 2013.
One characterizing view in history of Finland is the interaction between Lutheranism and Orthodox, Swedish and Russian regions, in Karelia. History of Finland in the 17th century has been primarily written from the western view, and the eastern culture and connections over the boundaries of Treaty of Stolbovo (Freden i Stolbova) have left minority. There is plenty of unexplored subjects and only a few researches done.\footnote{One of a few studies of church history about this topic published in last decades is Prof. Laasonen’s research about Orthodox removal in the Province of Kexholm. Laasonen 2005.}

Historian Päiviö Tommila has defined that Finnish church history has been lively from the 1960s, and characterizes it as an elementary research, which made it possible to write new overall presentations of the history of the Finnish church in the late 1980s.\footnote{Tommila, Päiviö: Suomen historiankirjoitus. Tutkimuksen historia. Helsinki: WSOY, 1989, 276–276.} Tommila refers here to the four volumes of Finnish church history (Suomen kirkon historia 1–4), published in 1991–1995. The second volume of this handles the period of Lutheran Orthodoxy and is authored by Professor Pentti Laasonen.\footnote{Laasonen 1991.}

**Main research.** Professor Mikko Juvas dissertation about the parish life in Western Finland, 1600–1808, published in 1955, has been the signpost for the later research of the parish histories.\footnote{Juva 1955. Professor Pentti Laasonen’s dissertation handled same kind of things in Northern Karelia. Laasonen, Pentti: Pohjois-Karjalan luterilainen kirkollinen kansankulttuuri Ruotsin vallan aikana. SKHST 72. Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura, 1967.}

As mentioned above, the local histories have been characteristic in Finnish historiography, and notable also among the studies of Lutheran Orthodox era.\footnote{e. g. Laine, Esko M.: ”Salo-Uskelan seurakunta yhteisöön”, p. 591–644. In Joki yhdisti ihmiset – Salon ja Uskelan historia n. 1150–1868. Salon kaupunki, 2006.}

One often used viewpoint in a 17th century research is the individuals; their life and career. Many bishops of Finnish dioceses have been objects of this kind of research, as well as other clergy.\footnote{e. g. Salminen 1978 & 1985 (Enevaldus Svenonius); Laasonen 1977 (Johannes Gezelius); Laasonen 2009 (Johannes Gezelius yr).}

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scholars did not use this term). The ideal in the project was Professor Sven Lindroths *Svensk lärdomshistoria*.46

The trend of the last generation is that the studies of the history of individuals are not only biographies but have some special views which have observed through individuals. The examples in this are two researches of Professor Laasonen. In his study of bishop Johannes Gezelius, Laasonen observes bishops life and works, not forgetting the theological and cultural policy context; in a study of foregoing’s son, bishop Johannes Gezelius the younger, the frame is the cultural (international) influences that Gezelius adopted. Both of these researches can be defined part of the intellectual history.47

There has also been a long lasted project “the register of clergy in Turku diocese”, *Turun hiippakunnan paimenmuisto 1554–1721*, which was released in the beginning of 2011. It was completed by Th.D. Kyösti Väänänen. This project began in 1955, and today the register can be found on Internet.48 Biographical information about the church men of Finland, authored by church historians and other historians, can also be found from the National Biography of Finland. This book series was published in ten volumes 2003–2007 and on Internet.49

The objects of the church history of individual are always leading churchmen, and the studies connected to them are also a part of the history of administration. Other views to the church administration are histories of dioceses, deaneries and parishes, and convocations. One noteworthy research is Professor Pentti Lempiäinen’s research about the Bishop and Dean visitations in Finnish Dioceses.50 Administration history has been popular in Finnish church history, and today the picture of church administration seems to be wholly clear, and the interests to it have been decreasing over the last decades.

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50 Lempiäinen 1967.
History of services has been part of the research interests in Practical Theology as well as in Church History. Vivid years of this kind of church history have passed by, but there has been a wide range of subjects that has been researched in the second half of the 20th century: burials, marriage, liturgy, homily, sermons, confession/confirmation, christening, hymns. Part of the research of the history of services has been the facsimiles and reissues of some 17th century books. Some notable works of these are Hymnal of Jacobus Finno (c. 1583), the Church Code (Kyrkolag) 1686 in Finnish, and the only Finnish book of homilies in the 17th century, Bishop Ericus Ericis Postilla.\footnote{Finno s.a. (1988); Church Code 1686 (1986); Postilla 1621 (1988) & 1625 (1990).}

Currently, book history is very vital section in Finnish church history. One significant mark in this is that there was established a terminable professorship (2012–2016) of book history at University of Helsinki. It was placed to the Faculty of Theology, department of Church History, and Tuija Laine has managed this professorship.


Book history has taken its shape as a part of the intellectual history (lärdomshistoria). According to Tuija Laine, lively research of book history started in Finland in 1980s.\footnote{Laine T 1996, 26, 33.} Book history is one view point to the research of the period of the Lutheran Orthodoxy, but the studies of book history handle also other periods. Today it seems that church historians are focusing especially to the 18th century Finnish literature. It is reasonable because there are more sources to research for. Presumably book history will be in future one aspect to the studies of 17th century Finnish church history.
Otherwise it is hard to find a common denominator to the currently done researches about the first Lutheran centuries in Finland. One view point to the recently done studies is, that from the year 1990 to 2013 there has been published in Finland about ten dissertations in a discipline of church history covering period of ‘the Long Reformation’. About half of them are handling more or less the church history of Finland. This indicates from one point of view that there are only a few church historians studying the topics of ‘the long reformation’.

What kind of studies there will be done in future, and who are the scholars doing them, is currently a relevant question in Reformation church history in Finland. These questions have been topical whole 21st century. The studies of 17th century have been vital among historians, but it is a challenge for the discipline of church history to adopt the latest methods of science of history and acquire the new insights. Overall, the course in a discipline of church history in Finland is that the methods of general history have been and will be adopted more strongly.55

Today the studies of Lutheran Orthodox era have tendencies to social history, history of everyday life and history from below. Especially, one of the experts of the Finnish church history of the 17th century, Docent Esko M. Laine has taken notice to these tendencies.56 However, there are not yet many publications representing these tendencies. Thus, an example of new studies with the emphasis of micro history and social history is Th.D. Paavo Alaja’s study about the poor relief in the land parishes in Finland in the Lutheran Orthodox era.57

There is also took notice to the other topical views of history among the church historians, like history of women and sexuality, but not yet many publications on these topics.

57 Alaja 2013.
3. The Contributions of History

3.1 The contribution of History to the study of the Late Medieval Background of the Reformation (Krötzl)

[To be inserted]

3.2 Contribution from history to the study of the introduction of the reformation (Toivo)

The Reformation in Finland as such has been fairly little studied among the historians – this has been largely due to the lack of surviving source material. The material of the Reformation in Finland is sparse and survives only fragmentarily. Most of it concern church administration, taxation, confiscations of the church property and the early samples of vernacular religious literature. Material in Finland is more ample during the next century, when relatively uninterrupted series of (secular) court records and more fragmented series of church court records, church records, account books etc. begin. This has led to a situation where most of the actual research concerning church history or religious history in the Reformation period (as in early 16th century) has been conducted by church historians, but historians have willingly used and reinterpreted that research in various generalizing synthesis presentations. I will therefore use these synthesis to illustrate the trends history writing concerning the early Reformation period. Due to the nature of these synthesis as popularizations, too, some of them

Historiography on the introduction of the Reformation in Finland can be presented in three phases. The first of them was characterised by the nationalistic needs of the emerging nation of the late 19th century and newly independent state of the early 20th century. The second phase was the influence of Marxist social history after the 2nd world war and the from-below-type of anthropological history since the late 1980s’. The third phase is emerging, with more a cultural approach, consequently more willing to take religion and faith as worthy objects of study in themselves.

The Special Position of Finland in Sweden. In the nationalist interpretations of history during the early 20th century, considerable emphasis was placed on making Finland appear an entity of its

58 I will not do the same concerning the 17th century, because there is much more original work to be discussed.
own, coherent but separate from Sweden (and Russia). The history of religion was treated in the same framework. The role of the medieval church in Finland was ambiguous. From one point, it was of, course, something non-Finnish, as the Finnish folk nature was considered deeply Lutheran. Therefore e.g. Suomen Historia Aikakausittain (ed. Gunnar Suolahti), takes the “easy speed of the Reformation in Finland” as a proof that the people was not attached to the Catholic Faith. On the other hand, historians also wanted to emphasize social organization in early Finland before Sweden. This idea was especially emphasized right after World War II, by pointing out how social organization was strengthened by a supranational Roman Catholic Church, gathering Finland under the umbrella of the archbishopric of Turku. It can be said that the Post WW2 attitudes towards medieval Catholicism if Finland were rather positive. The same historiography also emphasized Roman Catholic vs. Eastern Orthodox religious prejudices as an inherent part of political and cultural attitudes of the medieval Finns towards “the east”. Religion was, therefore made an inherent part of the interpretation of medieval and early modern Finland as a specific political entity, a separate part of the Swedish realm in the uncomfortable arms of the greater eastern neighbours. Finland was presented as the easternmost corner of the west, but definitely as a part of the western, European culture. It may be symptomatic that recently the Europeanist interpretations by Matti Klinge have also picked the very same supranational character of the Catholic Church to point out, not Finland’s difference from Sweden, but Finland’s belonging to a pan-European cultural sphere through pilgrimage and peregrination.

This emphasis on the special position of Finland continued after WWII at least in the generalizing presentations of history. In this framework, political historians after the second world war concluded that whereas the separations of Sweden and Finland from the Kalmar union was one produced by common efforts of the people, the Reformation was a movement imposed from above, in Sweden with little and in Finland completely without any initiative or interest of the people. A common idea was that the crown did not understand or care for the obligations that it should have undertaken as it took over the church’s funding: education and poor relief. Even more so, the crown, it was said, was proved wanting in the most central issue of the Reformation, the spiritual

59 See also Critique by Jussi Hanska 2005.
60 A.A.A. Laitinen, Uskonpuhdistuksen aika Suossa. (Kyläläisten kirjasia). In: Gunnar Suolahti (ed.) Suomen historia aikakausittain. WSOY 1906
63 Renvall 1949, 287.
and theological side. Consequently, the actual spread of the Reformation varied according to the enthusiasm of the clergy in each part of the realm. This came to form the major way of turning the individual-oriented approach of Finnish church history into a way of consolidating the special character of Finland in history: Renvall, on the basis of church historians, concluded that Finland had no enthusiastic Wittemberg students like Olaus Petri. The first Reformation bishop Martti Skytte was a rather moderate reformer, and consequently the religious development in Finland was more gradual and more peaceful than in Sweden. Mikael Agricola was characterized, like his predecessor, as a man “better equipped for success than his Swedish colleagues”: as a priest already before his studies, he had a realistic grasp of the religious life in Finland, and when he studied in Germany, the Reformation had already lost some of its revolutionary character there. In Finland, Renvall says, Agricola had to exert his self-control as he had to take part in Gustav Vasa’s kyrkoreduktion. In spite of his own positivist approach and his take emphasis on Gustav Vasa’s Reformation as Economic first and foremost, Renvall thus managed to define the roots of a modern sombre and calm, rational, spirituality in the moderation of Agricola and Skytte – and to present them as Finnish instead of Swedish.

Whereas a strong desire to distinguish Finland from Sweden can be seen in the early nineteenth century presentation, by the 1980’s time it was equally clear that the Reformation also meant the disintegration of the supranational church into national ones, and that although the national church could be given some Finnishness by speaking of language, the dioceses east of the Gulf of Bothnia must still be part of the Swedish Church until 1809. This followed the trend in more academic history writing both in Finland and is Sweden: it became more common the emphasise Finland’s position as an integral (as opposed to occupied or newly gained) part of early modern Sweden, but, at the same time, to discuss some characteristics which made Finland special within that context. This was, during the 1980’s a reaction against the long period of eastern political influence and it grew stronger in the post-Soviet 1990’s. Today, even opposite views can be seen, but usually not among academic historians.

Although nationalistic approaches are now considered somewhat passé in Finland, the idea of the Finnish Church (sic) or at least the dioceses of Turku and Viipuri as something separate from either

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64 Renvall 1949, 290.
the Catholic church or from the Swedish Lutheran church have had progeny at least in until the
1990’s through the generalizing works of grand old men like Kauko Pirinen and Simo Heininen.
and perhaps even later as they have still set the background context of works on e.g. late medieval
and Reformation Bishops. Likewise, the question of language has always been one to separate
Finland from Sweden, even as an argument for differences in the development of areas like
liturgical life, church administration and folk beliefs.

*The Economic Reformation.* The power politics and the competition of the Catholic Church with lay
authorities was a recognized background for the Reformation, but the main need for the
Reformation in Sweden was concluded to be Gustav Vasa’s desperate need of money and a hope to
gain it by seizing the well managed property of the church. After WW2, the Reformation was
usually seen as an economic affair first and foremost. The economic aspect of the Reformation
continued to be emphasized in the 1980-s set of generalizing presentations of the history of Finland,
although with the corrective note that the Catholic Church in Finland was not particularly wealthy
to begin with.

The economic emphasis of the generalizations owed to the specialization of both history and church
history in economic affairs in post-WWII Finland of was indemnity bills, rationing and trade
control and, with all this, an enormous economic growth. As the time went on, the Renvallian
intense and rationalist but definitely non-leftist importance of economics gradually made way to
more leftist interpretations of history. In this framework, the important parts of the Reformation
were its economic backgrounds and consequences, political competition and power struggles came
in as a good second. Culture as such could be noteworthy as long as it left tangible remains in the
form of books, but the spiritual side of religion or faith were not interesting. This atmosphere can

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68 Heininen & Heikkila, Suomen kirkkohistoria. 1996.
69 Heininen’s work on Agricola. Palola 1997 on Maunu Tavast and Olavi Maununpoika, etc.
70 Knuttila 1987, 28-29, 37, passim.
71 Renvall 1949, 287; Jutikkala & Pirinen 1989, 75 notes that as the Swedish church was wealthier, it cauht the attention
of the crown and drew with it to the ruin the church in Finland; Likewise, the destruvtion of the Episcopal castle in
Kuusisto is taken as an economic measure rather than political or military. Keränen, 1987, 131.
72 e.g. Kauko Pirinen, *Kirkkoreduktio Varsinais-Suomessa ja sen seuraukset,* Vol. 5:3, *Varsinais-Suomen Historia,* ed.
Einar V. Juva et al (Turku: Varsinais-suomen historiantutkimusyhdistys, 1955); but see also later works such as Suomen
taloushistoria I or Aare Läntinen, *Kuninkaan ”Perintöä Ja omaa” (arv och eget): Kameralihistoriallinen tutkimus
Kustaa Vaasan maataloudessa Suomessa vuosina 1531-1560* (Jyväskylä: Jyväskyläns yliopisto, 1981) or even
73 Karonen 1997, 72ff.
even be seen in the works of church historians. In the generalizing presentations of the history of Finland, one can see the lack of interest in the span of pages and the choice of authors.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{Language, education and the Finnish culture}. The development of Language is frequently given a chapter of its own, marking its importance - although in some of the generalizations the quality of the chapter does not match.\textsuperscript{75} The longstanding character of importance of studies on language, Agricola and, to a lesser extent other Reformation Authors (Paulus Juusteen, Ericus Erici Sorolainen) have also been presented as the trailblazers of Finnish education, learning and schooling. At first schooling was thought of as a tool for religious understanding, but, by the 1980’s a trend began to see reading also as an aim in itself already during the Reformation period or at least the period of consolidating the Reformation. Thereby there is a certain idealization of the Reformation period also as the beginnings of at least in some sense equal folk education.\textsuperscript{76} Despite the fact that rather little of the Reformations writers’ work was ever accessible to the wider populace, at least until the 1980’s there was a strong emphasis on the ambitions of Protestant clergy on folk teaching. Schooling has always been a part of Finnish national pride. It remains to be seen, whether the international fame of Finnish schooling, currently growing to mythological extents and Book history trend reaching in Finland will cause an interest in what the early modern Finns did learn instead of what they did not, or whether these factors will cause a backlash.

\textbf{3.3 Contribution from history to the study of the Consolidation of the reformation/The period of Lutheran orthodoxy/The process of confessionalization (Toivo)}

The research of the early Reformation period in Finland has been largely conducted by church historians and language historians and only generalized by traditional historians, the last decades of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century and especially the 17\textsuperscript{th} century have attracted more social and political historians. This is largely due to the available amplitude and usability of source material for younger time period. Therefore, there is much more to say about the mainstream political or social history.

\textsuperscript{74} It seems to me that the authors of the generalizing presentations were chosen on the basis of their level of establishmentnand expertise on either political history or economic history, which then lead them to copy previous authors indiscriminately when it came to writing the chapter on religion. E.g. Keränen 1987, 169-170, cites Renvall 1949, 300-305 partly verbatim – without noting it, though.

\textsuperscript{75} E.g. Keränen 133 actually claims the vernacular sermon was a Reformation novelty.

\textsuperscript{76} E.g. Kiusasmaa 1985, 169-75
research for the period of consolidating the reformation or the period of confessionalization than there is for the period of the early Reformation.

Whereas research in Finland has always admitted that the “progress” of the Reformation in Finland was gradual, to use the optimistic terms, the “long reformation” as a term, or the “second” and “third reformations” discussed in other countries, have not been much used about the reformation period(s) in Finland. The term for the period of consolidating the Lutheran faith still in use in Finnish social and political history for this period in “puhdasoppisuus” literally translated as “clean dogma”, which has meant both a dogmatic orthodoxy and a state confessionalization and policies of conformity and control in terms of not only religion and denomination as such but also in what Peter Burke called the Reformation of Manners. “Puhdasoppisuus”, as a term used by historians thus evades firstly, the discussion between theological orthodoxy and state confessionalization; it is a term that encompasses both. Mixing theological and political historian’s concepts and approaches, the term also mixes the traditional lines of periodization: whereas church history regarding other parts of the Baltic area often place the high point of confessionalisation and orthodoxy somewhere between 1570’s and 1620’s, at least in Finland even theological Orthodoxy as a policy cannot be really relevant before the abolition of the Red liturgy in the Uppsala convention in 1593, and social historians’ will place the high point of practical “puhdasoppisuus” even later, somewhere around the publication of the first cheap catechisms in 1666, stretching the continuum until the cultural breakdown of the Great Northern War. It may be illustrative about the atmosphere among historians that this periodization conforms to the periodization of political history and the period of Sweden as a great power rather than the various cultural culmination points in the internal events of the country (e.g. the foundation of the University at Turku or the high point of witch hunts or the emergence of the first Pietist radicals) although all of these are duly noted as significant markers of cultural developments and trends.

The end of the Special position – or Finland as an integral part of Sweden? The post WW2 theme of discussing the differences between Finland and Sweden has continued in the research of the following period. In terms of historians of administration and governance, this was the period of the abolition the Special Position of Finland through policies of conformity and assimilation. Administrational historians have pointed out that all the Bishops of Turku from Rothovius (in office

77 Possible exception by Kouri 1995, but that is actually not history of Finland, if such was the point of this article? 78 of the periodization e.g. Karonen 1997 243ff..
1627-1652) came from Sweden Proper until Gezelius the Younger took office 1690. Both Rothovius and Gezelius the Elder are presented as organizers and assimilators. Nevertheless the same characters church policy of spreading Lutheranism in Finnish speaking areas and Finnish language in the Ingrian areas have received a regular note, but the connections and conflicts between religion, ethnicity and language to each other, or to the broadly understood concept of nationality or belonging to a certain realm, are yet to be explored.

Despite a certain lack of interest in the 16th century affairs, some special emphasis has been placed on the influence of Duke John’s period in Finland and King John the III’d Red Liturgy. This has partly been because Duke John and the “Three Catherins” in the castle of Turku have long held some romantic popularity as the only royalty to have ever resided in Finland. Nevertheless, relatively little interest has been paid to the fact that there were strong Catholic tendencies and even support in the 16th century Finland. Church historians have noted that as opposition to the Reformation itself had not been as strong in Finland as it had been in Sweden, the “opposition against the red liturgy was also not as strong” (note however, as Hanska 2005 points out, the phrasing as “not strong opposition” instead of some support). The conclusion has been that, whereas In Sweden, that very opposition cemented the success of the reformation, in Finland many of the bishops received the liturgy enthusiastically, and this made the Reformation at least slower or perhaps even interrupted it. Finland had a distinctive period of Catholic Reformation, which is usually, however, passed over with a half-sentence-long note, in order to conclude that the opposition between Catholicism and Lutheranism did not, church historians have claimed, carry the same political importance as it did in Sweden proper. Political and social historians have accordingly steered clear of it. Even in the research of the Club War, which, with the ascension of Charles IX to the Throne, meant the effective political and social end of the Catholic reformation period in Finland, political and social historians have left the religious part of the events aside. The war has been thought of as part of a conflict between internal and eastbound power struggles, as a result of economic deprivation, as a class struggle and as a part of the European trend of changing understanding of feudal relationships, but not, in any serious sense, as a war of religion.

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79 e.g. Halila 1949, 421, 463.
80 the best efforts are made by Katajala 2005 and Laasonen 2005.
81 Catherine Jagellonica, Marin Månsdotter and Karin Hansdotter.
82 Knuttila 1987, 28-29; Pirinen & Jutikkala 1989, 90.
83 Lappalainen 2009 has been advertised as placing the Club War in the European context. In her book, this context is one of eastern European –French politics however, not the wars of religion.
Cultural Stagnation and Popular Religion. From the very beginning of historical writing in Finland, the period of the 17th century has been presented as one of cultural stability and stagnation. The newly created University rector’s admonishment to his staff “to avoid presenting anything new so that they would to seem to be doing anything more or better than the others or to cause irritation and disagreement”84, has been a popular quote. 17th century religious life is presented as one of error and fault, with the clergy not averse to drink and brawl and the populace not attending and still, with the vernacular service, unable and unwilling to understand the service or the teaching. The church’s duties and cares are presented as governmental and disciplinary.85 This attitude in the 1980’s and 90’s works in not surprising, if one looks at the key words indexed into the TUOKKO catalogue of court records concerning church and religion. This in turn reflects even older trends among early nationalist writers who often had their background and identity in the 19th century revival movements, which considered their version of Pietism as the right and correct heir of the Lutheran Reformation, from which the 17th century clergy had slipped. Since the 1990’s there has been a return of methodological question of whether the amplitude of complaints against both the clergy’s and the congregation’s defective religious understanding actually reflects a defective religious understanding, a tightening control of religious understanding, a changing religious understanding, a plurality of understandings or just plain rhetorical means for attaining various other ends in local courts of law or in foreign, cultural and financial politics.

A paradoxical result of this that at the same time as it has been evident for everyone that the Reformation in Finland was slow and gradual in character, social and political historians refer with the term “puhasoppisuus” to a period of cultural stagnation compared to what Protestant church historians described as vigorous and lively development in the early Reformation. During the whole of the post WWII period, and growing towards the 1980’s, however, there has simultaneously been a strong emphasis on how poorly the populace had learned the rudiments of their Christianity; how the congregation brawled and drank in church, how animistic and pagan they were and how poorly the Protestant clergy was able to attain the ambitious goals. The division of work has allowed the inherent anticlerical views to be left silent.

84 Karonen 1997, 286.
85 Mäntylä 1987, 242; Karonen
Another characteristic of the term *puudasoppisuus* at least for historians is that as it is not a term for studying theology (many theologians refuse to use it). It largely evades the discussions that have been relevant to theology and church historians in German speaking areas. This is rather ironic since German was nevertheless the main foreign language of the generation of historians who coined the term. This has led the Finnish discussion to follow either the nationalistic line until the 1980’s and thereafter the Anglophone social history discussions, in the lines of Burke, Duffy, Hutton and Scribner. The main focus of the research since the 1980’s has thus been on the “popular religion” or even on the “popular culture”. State formation and the related control of religious and daily culture have part of the interpretational framework of all social (and political) history studies of the period, but not expressly using the terminology of confessionalization. Most of the social history studies from the 1980’s to the early twenty-first century have also an inbuilt semi-Marxist understanding of religion: it is the background, for an abundant number social history studies on witchcraft trials, on sexual relationships in the early modern world or on family, honour or violence, but it is not the real focus of study. Moreover, it is a superstructure, imposed on the people from outside and from above, for a more or less cynical cause – not a real driving force in itself.86

In many other parts of Europe, the Scribnerian discussion of the traditional religion and penetrative power of the Reformation belongs to the research of the 16th century In Finland it is often brought to the fore concerning the later 17th century. The situation is somewhat similar in Sweden. This is partly due to the historical facts: Especially Finland plausibly was a periphery, where many, but not all things happened about a hundred years later than in more central areas of the world. Moreover, since there is a limited amount of source material available on people’s religion in the 16th century, one must use the 17th century materials. Since there are rather a lot of studies conducted on the early modern popular culture, it is relevant to ask why we have wanted to pay so much attention to the popular culture and people’s religion, instead of to some other questions, like the institutions emphasized in the German style confessionalization studies. Part of the answer may lay in simple disciplinary boundaries between church historians and social historians. A greater part, however, probably lays the nationalistic pride and general atmosphere in both Sweden and in Finland as strongly equalistic welfare societies: There is a tendency to see the study of the populace as democratic and the grassroots level as more real than the institutional level. This trend has been the stronger the more threatened our societal structure has become. In Finland an additional lucrative

86 This is behind much of the social and ”mental” history research and from Antero Heikkinen 1987 to Aalto (1996), Nenonen (1992), Vilkuna (1996), Matikainen 2002) Eilola (2003) and currently Keskisarja e.g. 2011.
point is that whereas the institutions of the 17th century state and church must be considered essentially Swedish, the populace can be thought of as Finnish.

Currently new trends are emerging, which selectively take influences from several current international trends. The first of these is a post-linguistic turn return to tangible evidence and interest in material and bodily cultures. With these interests, human centred concepts like emotion and experience are gaining force instead of the rather vaguely floating ones of mentalities or world views. Another trend is the emergence of works that aim at breaking the traditional boundaries of periodization as well as geography or disciplinary affiliation, thereby placing the Reformation in a continuum of not only similar critical movements in time but also of the intersectionality of economics, politics, and culture – in short, of life and society, without nevertheless reducing religion of faith into background context. It may not be surprising, that these studies have first emerged where social history trend has most strongly turned into a “history of society” –trend. The spreading of these trends in as great variation as possible is certainly very desirable, and there are similarities to the German style “confessional culture” approach that we have been instructed to consider. Whether we want to give them a special term or just call them intersectionality may be a matter of style, benchmarking and perhaps, audience.

There have been studies concerning the 17th century history in art history and archaeology on the church architecture, church interiors and mural paintings as well as in the study of church music. Both are rising trends and go well with the rising trend in history of material culture and bodily approaches. While these certainly offer an “alternative cultural approach”, a discussion with these findings is already included in the history of society approach.

4. Conclusion

There has been a strong nationalistic tendency of interpretation, the effects of which have not disappeared although nationalistic interpretations as such have become unfashionable in Finnish historiography. The position of Finland and the Finnish Church within or by the side Sweden and the Swedish church and in Europe or the European Christianity/Lutheranism has been interesting to both Finnish church historians and historians. In fact, this article reproduces the same framework,

87 I’d like to present Katajala-Peltomaa & Toivo 2009 as such an approach.
trying to seek out the characteristics of Finnish historiography on the Reformation vis-à-vis a “Scandinavian” context, although from a completely non-nationalistic standpoint. Another emphasis shared by both historians and church historians has been that laid on language and literature, which is currently shaping a distinct field, if not a discipline, of its own. Church historians have always been interested in what Lutheranism is; historians on the other hand have seen the Reformation either as an economic and administrational/political phenomenon, or as the history of popular culture in ”New Social History” –type of research in the 1990’s.

The last basic or fundamental studies have been finished by the early 1990’s both in church history and history. There is currently a strong need for a set of both basic research on special subjects and synthesising works the church religion and faith in the long Reformation period. New trends have reached Finland since the 1990’s. In addition to book history, e.g. the histories of experience or materiality and gaining ground. With the gradual turn from leftist social history to more cultural or societal history, church history and history have also been more and more willing to take influences from each other, as well as from theology or religious studies in general. The volume of specialized work with the newer approaches is reaching the level, where a synthesising overall-take is possible.
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Hjalti Hugason

Report on Iceland – (1) Church History

Introduction

The Goal of this report is to survey and evaluate historical research on the Reformation in Iceland, in the field of church history. This will mainly be done in accordance with the guidelines drafted for the reports of the members of The Nordic Reformation History Working Group for the 28th Congress of Nordic Historians. Ordering and subjects will be changed to account for conditions in Iceland.

As will be pointed out the church history research community in Iceland is very limited as there is only one official research post in the subject and few have specialized in it. Because of that academic research in the field of church history in the period specified by the working group is very limited and even more limited in regards to research on the Reformation period. Because of this it will not be possible to cover all the themes the guidelines assume in this period of church history. These conditions also necessitate the covering of subjects not found in the guidelines. As will duly be covered in the report on historical research on the Reformation the newest research effort in the field has come from historians. Innovation in the field is therefore to be found among them. My basic viewpoint is that Reformation research has been neglected by theologians and the few people in Iceland that can be called church historians in the formal academic meaning. However it seems to me that an interesting development has taken place in the last decades whereby general historians have begun to appreciate the Church’s influence on the history of the nation in a completely new way and have for example begun to engage the Reformation as an important part of the nation’s history. This may lead to interesting and fruitful conditions in the future. It should be noted that because of the upcoming 500 year anniversary of the Reformation the Theological institution of the University of Iceland started an interdisciplinary research project on the effect of the Reformation on Icelandic Christianity, society and culture both historical and modern. The project reached out to a large group of people in the Schools of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences as well as theologians, which form a minority of researchers. It is hoped that the project will inject new life
into research in this field. A huge church history publication effort is not a part of the project. It should be mentioned that in the turn-of-the-century-year of 2000 there was published a four volume work on the nation’s Christian history where the focus was on the cohabitation of Christianity and the nation in the 1000 years that have passed from Christianization.\(^1\) The volumes dealing with the middle ages and reformation were written by historians and will be covered in the historical section of this article.

At first an account of the development of church history as an academic discipline will be made to explain the research environment and its institutional bordering. By getting acquainted with these circumstances first the reader may better understand the following article especially the great gaps in the research.

Following that will be a short presentation of the history of the Reformation in Iceland. The purpose of this account is to shortly present conditions in Iceland during the reformation era to foreign readers. It will show that the course of events during the Reformation was largely spurred on by pressure from Denmark and that no real reform movement had emerged in the country. This account will draw from summary sources and be brief. Its goal is mainly to draw up the background of events and create a premise for some proposals and perspectives for future research.

Next there will be a chapter on the beginning of historical writing on the reformation era in Iceland but interestingly Icelandic writing on the subject began very early. It should be noted that the beginning of this writing can be traced to two opposite interest groups. The kinsfolk of Jón Arason (1484-1550, bishop from 1524) the last Roman Catholic bishop in Iceland and the Nordic countries and the Evangelic Church itself. During the term of the fourth evangelic bishop in Skálholt, Oddur Einarsson (1559-1630, bishop from 1589) two great works on the Reformation were written. Remarkably one of those works is a bishops annals detailing the main events in the lives of the bishops of Skálholt from the beginning and until the reign of Gísli Jónsson (1515-1587, bishop from 1558) the predecessor of bishop Oddur. This meant that the evangelic bishops and their works were written as a part of the continuous history of the Icelandic Church giving them a stronger cultural position. This writing can be compared to the beginning of Icelandic historical writing when Ari fróði (the wise) Porgilsson (1067-1148) wrote Íslendingabók (Book of Icelanders) in the

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years 1122-1133 and there created a central position for Christianization and the Church in the
history of the nation for the book covers the time period from the settlement of Iceland to the time
of writing. This aggregated the pre-Christian and Christian periods of the nation’s history like the
pre-Lutheran and Lutheran periods are aggregated in the *Biskupa-annálar* (bishop’s annals).

There follows a comparable chapter about the main research and writing in the field of church
history from its modern beginning in Iceland a full century before the period to be covered
according to the guidelines. This is unavoidable because of how little research has been done in the
field. The report will finish with a few proposals and perspectives for future research.

The report is generally based on the writer’s own observations where older historical research
summaries are not available. The author also draws from his previously published Icelandic
historical summary of the main points of teaching and study of church history in the theological
department of the University of Iceland, focusing on the previous 50 years.²

The development of church history as an academic discipline

Until 1847 the only academic obligation for Icelandic priests was a degree from a Latin school or its
equivalent although a few received a university education. After the Reformation Icelanders only
studied abroad in Copenhagen and only a few of each generation. In 1847 a Priests school was
founded in Reykjavík with a curriculum spanning two years. Among the subjects taught was church
history. This brought teaching in this and other subjects of the seminary to a collegiate level
although they could hardly be called academic in a modern sense. With the founding of the
University of Iceland in 1911 the Priests school became one of its four faculties, the others where
dep. of law, philosophy and medicine. This step will here be considered to have made church
history an academic subject of teaching and study in Iceland.

Church History is now only taught as an independent subject in the theology faculty of the
University which has the double role of being an academic theology faculty and supplying future
priests and deacons with professional education though not with professional training. Church

History is a mandatory part of the professional education which has little room for student choice apart from BA and mag.theol papers which can be written on Church History as well as the faculties other subjects. The theology faculty also offers an MA program for religious studies as well as theology and this allows more specialization. There are now 2-3 active students that have chosen Church History. The faculty also offers a doctorate program and one student in the program now researches a subject of Church History.

Teaching and study in the faculty are not defined by religious confession despite offering professional education as the National Church handles the practical aspects of vocational training. Despite this there are close ties between the faculty and the Church. Teachers educated as theologians can sit in the National Church’s convocations, have the right to vote in bishop elections and the department has a representative in the Church assembly with speaking and proposal rights but not voting rights. The author does not think that the connection to the National Church has any noteworthy effect the methods and basic views behind the teaching and studying of Church History in the faculty. On the other hand it is clear that the choice of projects of the two teachers leading the subject since the 1970s have been influenced by the contemporary situation of the Icelandic National Church.

At any one time there has been one teacher in the theology faculty responsible for Church History and has therefore had a lot of influence on the subject. The writings of the first two teachers which worked for a total of about 40 years focused on the writing of historical summaries. Both wrote works on general church history spanning from ancient history to modern time. The first one also wrote a work on Icelandic church history from settlement until modern times (publ. 1925-1927). He also wrote the biographies of a few leaders of the Icelandic Church after Reformation. The last 50 years can be divided into three periods with different emphasis in study and research of church history.

The third teacher of the subject (employed 1947-1968) put emphasis on church history as one of the many branches of history in general and ended his career as a professor of history. His research focused on academic primary research and the publication of primary texts. He was one of the biggest contributors on Icelandic subjects in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder* and this defined his style and selection of subjects. His work was influenced by socio-historical
approaches. The reformation era was not a priority in his research although he did write a few short articles about the Reformation in Germany and Iceland.

The subsequent professor (1971-1991) emphasized Church History as historical theology whose purpose was to explain the circumstances in which the doctrine of the Church had been formed. He also felt that there was some difference between church history and history as history based its explanations mostly on political and social factors but church history put more emphasis on Christian and Church related factors in explaining history. Finally he emphasized the subject’s role in making it easier for students to understand the status and operation of the modern Church in relations to its previous development but for that he believed it was necessary to use accepted scientific methods of source criticism and historical criticism. His fields of expertise in Icelandic church history were mainly: The christianization era with a focus on Irish and Scottish influence in Iceland, the reformation era and church history in the 20th century. He did not manage to complete any large works on the Reformation for publishing but did leave behind some articles and provisional teaching materials.

In the time of the current professor the trend has been to regard church history and history as related subject with unclear boundaries as regards methods and academic standards although there is a division between the subjects they deal with. The reformation era has not been a specialization of his.

The church history professors choice of subjects have always been defined by the fact that he is a single worker because the same individual leads the entire field, often for decades and teaches both general church history and Icelandic church history and is meant to know the history of the Church from beginning to modernity. This has had the effect that the professors often become polymath rather than specializing in specific periods. Their research subjects have often been influenced by practical circumstances and demand rather than their own academic interest.

In Iceland interest in historical matters has long been widespread, there has been a good market for historical writing and many have attended to general historical and church historical matters although few have specialized in the field of church history. In the 20th century there six doctorate theses with connections to church history were written by theologians. In 1939 there was a
doctorate degree (theology) disputation in the University of Iceland about the 19th century theologian Magnús Eiríksson (1806-1881); in 1983 there was a thesis (church history) disputation in Uppsala Universitet about the education of Icelandic priests 1805-1846 and another thesis (sociology) in Lunds universitet about the secularization of Iceland 1830-1930; in 1990 a thesis (missiology and ecumenism) about the Pentecostal mission in Iceland and the Faroe Islands was disputed in the same university. Finally in 1991 there was thesis (Religious Rites) disputation in the University of Iceland. That thesis will be mentioned more later. One doctorate thesis on the arrangement and influence of the communion in Iceland 1570-1720 is pending. One doctorate thesis (dialectical theology) about the theology of Martin Luther in view of his interpretation of the Gospel of John was disputed in 2002. It could not be called church historical

In the last decades an interesting development has taken place as Icelandic historians have increasingly dealt with subjects that fall directly or indirectly in the field of church history but had previously been mostly shunned by them. Some of these projects are directly or indirectly connected to the Reformation as will be pointed out in the historical section of this report. Some theologians, most of them priests, have been active in writing about and researching church history lately. One of them has recently published a summary of Icelandic Church History.\(^3\) The National Church has sometimes supported such research but has not formally commissioned it. No church history organ, journal or magazine exists in Iceland but there are still many options for publishing articles on the subject in historical, theological or journals in humaniora. It is much harder to finance the publication of church history monographs.

A short presentation of the history of the Reformation in Iceland

**Background**

A Reformation in a religious-political meaning took place in Iceland in 1541 and 1551 when the church ordinance of Christian III of Denmark was formally accepted, first in the diocese of Skálholt which covered most of Iceland and later in the diocese of Hólar which covered the northern part of the country.

In the latter part of the 13th century Iceland became part of the Norwegian King’s dominion after having been within Norway’s sphere of influence since settlement. Later in the time of the Kalmar Union the country became part of the realm of the Danish King (royal union since 1383) until the founding of the republic in 1944. Until the 17th century Danish control of Iceland was limited. Because of the bountiful fishing-grounds around the country the English and later the Germans sought to gain influence in the country and their trade and commerce with the Icelandic grew steadily. Because of this most of the 15th century has been called the English Century in Icelandic history and the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th the German Century. When the Reformation drew near Iceland was not isolated despite its geographical location but was greatly involved in the competition of the aforementioned nations in the north. This facilitated diverse cultural communication.

The domestic situation in Iceland means that it must be considered to have been peripheral in comparison to the densely populated areas in Europe. Compared to Denmark (43.094km²) Iceland is a large country (103.000 km²). In the latter part of the 16th century the population of Iceland is estimated to have been around 55-60.000 in total but when the first census was made in the country the population was about 50.358. Large parts of the country have always been uninhabitable but despite that the country was mostly thinly populated until the 20th century. Farming was the country’s only trade until the 19th century. Because farming was based on livestock people lived on separated farms but not in villages like those that formed in agricultural areas. Towns did not form by the sea-shore as fishing was only a seasonal sideline to farming but not an independent trade. No market towns developed either as trading took place during summer in traditional trading posts by the sea, were landing conditions were good. Thus there were many social and economic conditions hindering growth in population density. Growth was also kept down by public policies for by the end of the 15th century laws were passed banning foreign nationals, English and German from wintering in Iceland and mandating that all Icelanders not owning a minimum amount of land and livestock should winter with a landowning farmer. This was to stop the development of towns by the shore. The country’s government was a simple one. The country was divided into districts (hreppar) that handled sheep driving in common pasture land and the little poor relief that was to be

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4 [http://is.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%8Dsland](http://is.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%8Dsland)  [http://www.visindavefur.is/svar.php?id=1447](http://www.visindavefur.is/svar.php?id=1447)
had. There were also larger political entities, the counties (sýslur), which were law enforcement and tax collection jurisdictions. The highest ranking royal official, the governor, later captain or sheriff, oversaw these services on a national level as well as regulating trading and handling the king’s interests in all matters. The country was also separated into two legal jurisdictions overseeing judgments and legal proceedings in the Althing which in the period of 1271-1663 was a general assembly which operated for a few days in June-July. It had legislative power like the king and was the domestic supreme court (the districts being lower courts).

In these conditions the Church was the backbone of society’s infrastructure. It was a major economic power in the country for it is estimated that in the middle of the 15th century the Church and its institutions owned around 45% of the countries farmland based on land value. The Church also had a key part in the field of education and social control as well as its religious role. As has been previously mentioned it was divided (from the beginning of the 12th century) into two differently sized dioceses. The bishop’s seats were in Skálholt and Hólar. The episcopal seats were the main centers of the community and the largest population centers apart from Althing when it was in session. This applied especially to Skálholt. The bishops had special confidants, officialis, in the dioceses. Deans also operated as their agents but they were mostly laymen and a stable system of deaneries had not been established in the 16th century. Priests and churches (parishes) were relatively numerous compared to the size of the population. This was caused by low population density and rudimentary communications but also because of little centralization and organization in parish matters. Priests were educated in cathedral schools in both of the episcopal seats, privately by certain priests or in monasteries. Few students also sailed abroad and a few of them to Germany.

Thirteen monasteries are known to have existed in Iceland but at most there were nine monasteries in the country at any one time and all of them small. One nunnery operated in each diocese. They were Benedictine while Augustinians dominated the monasteries. As well as their religious role the monasteries had an important role in taking care of the sick and the poor. They were also centers of culture and learning. Not much is known about public education by the end of the middle ages but it will have taken the form of household upbringing and education.

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Following Christianization a close bond was formed between the most powerful chiefs of the land and the Church. This lead to a cultural synthesis causing the Church to take on worldly aspects and become dependent on the chiefs. This synthesis is probably the explanation for the quick development of a powerful vernacular literary culture which shaped the medieval culture of the country.\textsuperscript{7} In the latter part of the 12\textsuperscript{th} and 13\textsuperscript{th} century there was a noticeable independence movement within the Church in the Gregorian spirit and in the latter part of the 14\textsuperscript{th} century papal influence increased and the pope started to commission foreigners as bishops in Iceland. In the beginning of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century there was increasing resentment towards the Church from worldly leaders, especially in the north and west, as they felt the Church was exerting increased dominance in matters that fell under the rule of Church courts.\textsuperscript{8} This showed an increasing tension between the Church and the country’s chiefs and this may have decreased the Churches influence on the public.

\textbf{Reformation}

What has been said earlier is meant to explain the many demographic and social conditions resulting in that church-criticizing and later reformation movements had limited premises to spread among the population. In modern research the Reformation has been described as a “revolution from above” \textsuperscript{9} In the days of nationalistic history writing practiced in Iceland in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and until the middle of the 20\textsuperscript{th} the Reformation was considered to have been a major cause of the end of Icelandic national independence during the middle ages. This view did not take into account the complex relationship between the Reformation and the development of royal absolutism, centralization of power and increasing government involvement in public affairs in the states of Europe.

German merchants built a Church in Hafnafjörður which was the center for their trade from 1530.\textsuperscript{10} It is possible that some Icelanders encountered evangelical ceremonies there. Some Icelanders also got acquainted with the reformation movement while abroad as will be discussed later. Stories of

\textsuperscript{8} Einar Laxness, \textit{“Leiðarhólmsskrá”}, \textit{Íslandssaga II}, Reykjavík, Vaka-Helgafell: 128–129.
\textsuperscript{10} Helgi Þorláksson, \textit{„Frá kirkjuvaldi til ríkisvalds”}, \textit{Saga Íslands VI}, Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, Sögufélagið, 2003: 34
the first evangelical preaching in the country are vague and will be covered in the account of modern research later.

Christian III was nevertheless the main perpetrator in the Reformation in Iceland. In that regard it is important that the last bishop in Skálholt, Ógmundur Pálsson (d. 1541, bishop 1521-1540), was because of his great age and blindness poorly capable of handling his office. He chose a successor and had him ordained but the successor died shortly after his ordination. Bishop Ógmundur then chose his client, Gissur Einarsson (1520-1548), for the role but he had studied in Hamburg around 1530 and there been influenced by Luther’s teachings. During Gissur’s stay in Skálholt in the years before 1540 there had formed a group of young men some of which had ties abroad and had similarly been influenced and had among other things started to translate the New Testament into Icelandic. The only indication of an evangelic revival in the country developed in the episcopal seat. The king confirmed Gissur’s nomination 1540 but he was not ordained bishop until 1542 when Peder Palladius ordained him according to Lutheran rites. The reason for the delay seems to have been attempts to bring about a peaceful Reformation in the diocese for in 1541 some of the dioceses priests gathered in Althing’s convocation committed to follow Christian III church ordinance.

The decade 1541-1551 was a time of unrest in Reformation history. Jón Arason, which has been previously mentioned wanted to bring about a restoration of Catholicism in the neighboring diocese, he rode about with a band of armed men and even captured his evangelic counterpart, Bishop Marteinn Einarsson (bishop 1549-1556). The conflict ended when bishop Jón was captured along with two of his sons, a priest and a former civil officer, in the fall of 1550. A civil court ruled that they should be held safe for trial in the next summer. Lutherans and the king’s agents argued over who should hold the prisoners and many were fearful that the northerners coming south for fishing in the winter might attempt to free them. In the end the prisoners were executed without a trial. The next summer the king sent warship to Iceland forcing the representatives of the clergy in the diocese of Hólar to accept the new church ordinance.

The Reformation in Iceland was thus mostly a religious and political shift without religious or theological premises in the country itself. The 1540s can be considered to have been a transition era when a new church order was established. This lead to a long consolidation era when religious life in the country was transformed to an evangelical manner and the public behavior and world view
shaped by evangelical theology and ideology. This period of change has been considered to have lasted for three centuries.\textsuperscript{11} A significant transition can be considered to have taken place with the first generational change since the Reformation itself which took place at about the time of the ordination of the forth evangelical bishop in Skálholt, Oddur Einarsson, which has been previously mentioned and the second evangelical bishop in Hólar, Guðbrandur Þorláksson (bishop 1571-1627).

Sources report that the first evangelical bishops had popular relics removed especially from the cathedral in Skálholt. Nothing indicates radical iconoclasm taking place and many saints relics were preserved even until the 18\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{12} The fact that the last generation of catholic priests did mostly not withdraw from the Church also decreased the speed of the change and meant that there was continuity between the medieval and the evangelical Church. According to narrative sources from the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} century some things did collapse following the Reformation. Apparently the public did among other things refuse to pay traditional fees to churches and priests when it was denied ceremonial services previously provided by the Roman Church. There may also have been a shortage of priest when the previously catholic priests died out. Patents (fathers!) were apparently reluctant to send their sons to the ministry because of the uncertain status of evangelical priests and many evangelic priests are said to have been from the lower classes and many of those ordained apparently had insufficient education. It is also said that many Icelanders questioned the right of the king to interfere in religious matters and it can be assumed that there was a lot of uncertainty and even anguish about the change in religious practices being proclaimed.

\textit{Consolidation}

An important part of the continuing evolution of the Evangelical Church in Iceland was the publication of the books most required by priest in worship, ceremonies and education in their parishes.

The New Testament was published in Icelandic in 1540 and was printed in Roskilde. The translation was done by Oddur Gottskálksson (1514/5–1556) a civil officer and son of the

penultimate catholic bishop in Hólar. His father was Norwegian and the son was partly raised in Norway but in 1540 he was as previously mentioned part of the evangelical group in Skálholt.

The second evangelical bishop in Skálholt Marteinn Einarsson which had partly been raised in England was also a member of this group and contributed by publishing a handbook — *Ein Kristilig handbog Jislenskud af Herra Marteine Einar syne fyrer kennimenn i Islandi* (A Christian Handbook Translated by Mr. Marteine son of Einar for Priests in Iceland) — printed in Copenhagen 1555.13

The biggest contribution to publishing was made by Guðbrandur Þorláksson bishop of Hólar. He published the Bible in Icelandic in 1584 which was a remarkable achievement considering the printing facilities available. Ten Years later he published the handbook *Graduale; Ein almenneleg Messusöngs* (Graduale: A General Handbook for Mass). It was used for singing the Mass with some modification until 1801. Guðbrandur published a lot of books both large and small most of which were used for worship in Church and at home. His publication effort can be considered to be the greatest effort made by any individual to consolidate the new church order. In the of his episcopate he also held convocations where official orders for reformation efforts, made in Denmark and based on conditions there, were modified for Icelandic conditions. It should be mentioned that because of population scarcity in Iceland the home was an important center for religious worship along with the parish church until the 20th century. This meant that religious practice at private homes was very stable and church service was at a disadvantage when the religious practice in the households dissolved in the first decades of the 20th century.

**A Second Reformation? – Orthodoxy**

With the Reformation the Church lost much of its former jurisdiction for example in marital affairs. According to older historians this lead to a dissolution and disintegration in sexual matters. Apparently the king appealed to the bishops to create a new legislation for this category but they refused due to their weak position in society. Poul Stigsen captain and governor (1554-1566) took the initiative in this matter and had the legislation *Stóridómur* passed in 1565. According to the legislation sexual crimes, incest, adultery and childbirth out of wedlock were categorized and

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penalties for them were established. The penalties ranged from small fines to loss of property, harsh physical punishments, banishment from the quarter of the country or the country itself and even execution. Fines were now paid to the king. Harsh punishments in Stóridómur lead to an increase in secret childbirths until the sanctions were relaxed though formally the legislation was in force until 1869. It is considered the most important law initiated by the King in Iceland following the Reformation and increased the social control of the secular authorities.\textsuperscript{14}

Stigsen issued several important directives in his time pertaining to the Church that he made in collaboration with the bishops. In the middle of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century royal power was very active in shaping the Church. It seems important to examine to what extent this period fits with what has in modern research been called “The Second Reformation”. When the 1500s drew to a close the bishops became more proactive.

In the 17\textsuperscript{th} century the rule of the Danish King was strengthened in Iceland and stronger bonds were forged between the country and the Danish state. Christian V’s legislation on ecclesial matters was not ratified in Iceland and the Church continued to work along the lines laid out early in the reformation era. The Norwegian Church Order of 1607 was ratified in Iceland in 1622. In the 17\textsuperscript{th} century the Church was greatly strengthened as a communal institution and it had a vital role in consolidating the ideological foundation of the Monarchy. In this time the bishops became royal officials and the extended arm of royal authority. Lutheran orthodoxy gained a strong position in the country in the latter part of the century and laid a foundation for religious unity in society which lasted long into the 19\textsuperscript{th} century when in 1874 religious freedom was introduced in a new constitution.

Pre-modern writing of the history of Reformation in Iceland

As mentioned in the introduction writing on the reformation period started soon after its end. The first to write of these events was Magnús Björnsson (1541-1615), grandson of Jón Arason, whose father had been executed during the Reformation along with his father and brother. Magnús was a

layman farmer but was involved in the work of Althing and thus a leader in his province.\textsuperscript{15} His story describes the viewpoint of his grandfather and put emphasis on his cause. According to Magnúss his grandfather sent one of his sons, one of the leading priests in the diocese, to meet the King shortly after the Reformation started to seek his permission to keep religion unchanged in the diocese during bishops Jón’s lifetime. Magnúss states that the King granted this causing the bishop to keep his friendship with the King and his agents in Iceland. Magnúss also claimed to have known little of the conflict between his grandfather and the second evangelical bishop in Skálholt but according to other sources bishop Jón had taken him prisoner as has previously been mentioned.\textsuperscript{16} Otherwise he described the struggles of bishop Jón in 1540-1550 as peaceful operations to maintain order and guard the interest of the diocese.\textsuperscript{17} He also said that a court had decided after the bishop’s capture that he and his sons should be kept safe until the King could pass judgment in their cases.\textsuperscript{18} His most detailed narrative is of the last days in the lives of the bishop and his sons, their execution and the transportation of their remains to Hólar.\textsuperscript{19} His is thus a narrow family perspective on events.

The largest contribution to early historical writing about the Reformation was made in the time of Oddur Einarsson the third evangelical bishop in Skálholt for it fell to him to start rebuilding the Church after the Reformation. He is also considered to have been among the most learned bishops in a long while.\textsuperscript{20} There exists a narrative about Jón bishop of Hólar commissioned by Oddur. It is based on the aforementioned story of Magnúss Björnsson though it makes certain reservations about the relationship between bishop Jón and the King.\textsuperscript{21} Oddur also wrote an account of the bishops of Skálholt during and after the Reformation or from the reign of Stefán Jónsson (bishop 1491-1518) to Marteinn Einarsson. This account also covers Jón Arason and his end.\textsuperscript{22} This account forms an important draft for the Biskupa-annálar (Bishop’s Annals) of Jón Egilssson (1548-1636?) and there are many literary connections between the texts.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{15} He was a lögréttumaður, a position mostly held by well off farmers nominated to take part in Althing’s legal proceedings.


\textsuperscript{17} „Frásagnir Magnússar bónda Björnssonar“; 321–3

\textsuperscript{18} „Frásagnir Magnússar bónda Björnssonar“; 323

\textsuperscript{19} „Frásagnir Magnússar bónda Björnssonar“;323–325.

\textsuperscript{20} Loftur Guttormsson, Kristni á Islandi III: 63, 81–2, 126, 128, 268–270.


\textsuperscript{22} „Sögubáttur um Skáholts biskupa fyrir og um síðaskipti“, Biskupa sögur II, København: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1878: 235–262.

\textsuperscript{23} Viðborg Auður Ísleifsdóttir, Byltingin að ofan: 17.
The most important literature of this period of early historical writing about the Reformation is undoubtedly *Biskupa-annálar* by Jón Egilsson of Hrepphólar, the historian of Oddur Einarsson bishop of Skálholt. These annals are one of the main narrative sources written about the history of the nation in the 15th and 16th century and are written in Skálholt in the first decade of the 17th century. Various dates in the annals seem dubious but they shaped a lot of later writing about the events and give us an insight into the mentality of 17th century Icelanders and their interpretation of earlier events. They give us an insight into the threat the general public felt from the Reformation when it was denied many of the services it had previously been thought were a channel for the grace and presence of God in their lives and many of the most popular doctrines of the Church were condemned like everything connected to the saints. The annals also report many uncanny, supernatural events following many of the disasters of the reformation era and the fate of many of the key players whose fates were felt to be divine punishment although they had sided with the Reformation. For example there are various descriptions of the enemies of Jón Árason suffering from horrible diseases.

From about the same time is a writing that has been attributed to Jón Gissurarson (1590-1648). He was a layman but was among those chosen to serve in the althing. He was a kinsman of Gissur Einarsson the first evangelical bishop in Skálholt and many of the others active during the Reformation and had traveled to Germany (to train as a goldsmith). His work is somewhat based on the writings of Oddur Einarsson, is inaccurate in dates and does not add a lot to what had already been written.

The next period of writing on the Reformation appears in *Biskupa sögur* (Biographies of the bishops) by Jón Halldórsson (1665-1736) priest and officialis who can be called the father of Icelandic church history. He had studied theology in university Copenhagen and had been a teacher in the Cathedral School in Skálholt before he received one of the richest parishes in the country. He wrote detailed accounts of the bishops of Skálholt and Hólar, corrected many errors (for example dates) in older sources, but there is a clear anti-Catholic attitude in his assessment where the

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Reformation is likened to a true enlightenment but the medieval Church is seen as vile and uncivilized heresy. In *Biskupa sögur* there emerged a more realist approach to historical writing than had been apparent in *Biskupa-annálar* by Jón Egilsson a century before but there is also a much more confessional historical interpretation.

In addition to the writings that have been named mention should be made of the four volume church history of bishop Finnur Jónsson (1704-1789) and his son Hannes Finnsson (1739-1796), *Historia ecclesiastica Islandiae* published in Copenhagen 1772-1778. They were the son and grandson of Jón Halldórsson. This work was based on the dominant attitudes of academic history writing in the period. The same can be said of its indirect sequel the church history of Bishop Pétur Pétursson (1808–1891), but he was the fourth bishop of the united diocese of Iceland (since about 1800).

**Modern writing of the history of Reformation in Iceland**

The modern period of historical writing on the Reformation began late in the 19th century this period also saw the beginning of modern church historical research on the era. Aside from summary writings research has mainly been focused on the beginning of the Reformation. Research has been somewhat one-sided and hereafter distinction will be made between research presented in summary works, monographs, including a doctorate theses and articles. This distinction will be dropped when the same author has published both summaries and a more detailed texts or when there is a direct thematic link between publications.

**Summaries**

The period has seen the publication of three summary works of Icelandic Church History. One was published in the third decade of the 20th century and another in 2012. A four volume work on the cohabitation of Church and nation for the last 1000 years — *Kristni á Íslandi* — (Christianity in Iceland) was published on the occasion of the Christianization celebration in the millennial year of 2000. The main author of the 2nd and 3rd volumes covering the middle ages and the reformation era are historians and therefore are not discussed here.

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The latter volume in the church history summary of Jón Helgason (1866-1942) professor of theology and later bishop (1917) was published in 1927 but earlier he had published such a summary in Danish. Jón Helgason was one of the main pioneers of liberal theology in Iceland.

Jón Helgason distinguished between Political Reformation in an external or political meaning involving the implementation of a new church order and Theological Reformation in an internal, personal meaning involving a theological change and review. He believed Iceland had lacked the conditions for a Theological Reformation. He believed the ignorance of the clergy meant that it had been unable to recognize the need for church reform. However he thought secular leaders had supported the change because they saw a chance for personal gain thinking that a successful reform would grant them more freedom in their private affairs. Lutheranism in Iceland had thus in his opinion been realized by the fiat of a foreign lordship. It is worth noting that a similar interpretation had been advanced ten years earlier by the theologian Tryggvi Þórhallsson (1889-1935) (see monographs).

Jón Helgason’s approach was characterized by the fact he was writing a summary. He mostly traced events in a chronological order and split his discussion on the Reformation until 1630 into two periods before and after 1550 the year of the execution of the last catholic bishop in Iceland. He can thus be considered to have differentiated between the establishment and consolidation of Lutheran church order. It is clear that Jón Helason’s summary is greatly influenced by the work of the historian Páll Eggert Ólason (1883-1947) Menn og menntir síðskiptaaldarinna á Íslandi published 1919-1926 though the authors disagreed on the interpretation of a few points.

Two years later (1929) Jón Helgason published an article meant for Icelanders in America where he asserted that the first period of the Reformation (before 1550) had been negative in nature, that is to say its main focus had been tearing down the previous establishment. This view which emphasises a period of dissolution and degradation before the development of an evangelical Church began does not seem to have been given much attention.

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28 Jón Helgason, Kristnisaga Íslands II: 5.
29 Jón Helgason, Kristnisaga Íslands II: 5.
30 Jón Helgason, Kristnisaga Íslands II: VI.
31 Jón Helgason, „Síðaskiptin á Íslandi“, Tímarit Þjóðræknisfélagi Íslandina 11(1), 1929: 99
Almost nine decades after the publication of Jón Helgason’s summary (2012) theologian Torfi K. Stefnansson Hjaltalin (b. 1953) published a one volume summary of Icelandic church history. In the book’s introduction the author takes the view that church history should deal with the history of institutions and ideology. He is inclined to use a culture-historical method that in his opinion deals with the influence of the Church on Icelandic culture as well as historical-economic material.  

Like Jón Helgason before him Torfi Hjaltalin considers the reformation era to have ended in 1630 but splits the era into two periods the second one beginning in 1570 at the start of the long reign of the second evangelical bishop in Holar while Jón Helgason considered the second period to have started with the end of his long reign. According to Torfi Hjaltalin it is important to consider that from 1550-1570 the Church was on the defensive towards the King and domestic chiefs but had begun a counter-attack in 1570 which lasted until 1590. Due to geographical reasons the Icelandic Church was in some ways unique during the Reformation as it became a sort of national church and not a state church until much later. Torfi Hjaltalin seems less intent on evaluating the political impact of the Reformation than previous writers such as Jón Helgason. This may be because some time had passed since the end of the nationalistic history writing prevailing in Iceland until the middle of the 20th century. However he does cover the economic aspects of the Reformation and criticises the theory of Vilborg Audur Isleifsdottir that the situation of the poor worsened after the Reformation.

Monographs

The monograph of Pastor Thorkell Bjarnason (1839-1902) Um siðbótina á Íslandi (On the Reformation in Iceland) published in 1878 has many modern characteristics and is here considered the beginning of modern church history research in Iceland. It referred to sources much more accurately that was usual for Icelandic academic works until well into the 20th century. It was also

32 Torfi K. Hjaltalin Stefansson, Íslensk Kirkjusaga: 11.
33 On this subject T. K. H. Stefnansson criticizes Kristni á Íslandi III but there the consolidation of the Reformation is considered to have lasted until the middle of the 18th century. Torfi K. Hjaltalin Stefansson, Íslensk kirkjusaga: 140. Jfr. Jón Helgason, Kristnisaga Islands II: 382–383.
34 Torfi K. Hjaltalin Stefansson, Íslensk Kirkjusaga: 149–150
35 Torfi K. Hjaltalin Stefansson, Íslensk Kirkjusaga: 139–140.
peer-reviewed prior to publication though that very term hardly existed.\textsuperscript{36} It also views events in Iceland in view of Danish church history as is appropriate. Despite this the book is typical of its time regarding nationalistic interpretation of historical events and characters.\textsuperscript{37}

One of the teaching positions in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Iceland opened up in 1917 and it was decided to hold a thesis competition between the three applicants the topic being: The Prelude and beginning of the Reformation in Iceland, bishop Gissur Einarson’s view of the Catholic bishops Ögmundur and Jón and toward the King’s authority and the development of the new religion in the days of bishop Gissur.\textsuperscript{38}

Tryggvi Þórhallsson (see earlier) was one of the applicants and his thesis was published in 1989 to commemorate the 100\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of his birth. Although the thesis was not published earlier it influenced the writings of Jón Helgason who was familiar with it. Tryggvi Þórhallsson argued that the decay and corruption of the Church and therefore its need for Reformation was not less here than elsewhere where the Reformation took place. However he maintained that church criticism was not present in the country due to the population’s lack of education.\textsuperscript{39} For this reason he believed that the Reformation in Iceland was the work of a foreign power and at least in the short term part of political development.\textsuperscript{40}

In Tryggvi Þórhallsson’s view the Reformation in Germany brought about a new awareness among the population but in Iceland it caused severe economic and political losses. He believed many Icelanders became pawns of a foreign power helping it to strip the country of wealth and freedom and enriching themselves in the process.\textsuperscript{41} Despite this he believed that during the period there was a sense of patriotism and will to defend the country. In this Icelanders were guided by a man „who understood that loyalty to the Reformation had to go together with the defence of the country’s wealth and rights“.\textsuperscript{42} This referred to Gissur Einarsson the first evangelical bishop in Skálholt.\textsuperscript{43} Jón Arason the last Catholic bishop Tryggvi Þórhallsson described as being first among patriots willing

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\textsuperscript{36} Þorkell Bjarnason, \textit{Um síðbótina á Íslandi}, Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1878: 6(a).
\textsuperscript{37} Þorkell Bjarnason, \textit{Um síðbótina á Íslandi}: 5(a), 6.
\textsuperscript{38} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}, Reykjavík: Afkomentur, 1989: V–VI.
\textsuperscript{39} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}: 2–4.
\textsuperscript{40} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}: 4.
\textsuperscript{41} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}: 4.
\textsuperscript{42} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}: 4.
\textsuperscript{43} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}: 179–200.
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to defend the freedom of the country and the old Religion. But his faction lost the fight for both.\textsuperscript{44} Tryggi Þórhallsson therefore mainly saw the Reformation as a political event.

Since this has been the dominant theme in interpreting the Icelandic Reformation it should be mentioned that in an article from 1967 Jónas Gíslason (1926-1998), who later became a professor of church history, attempted to demonstrate that Icelandic reformers were driven by evangelical conviction and did not work toward strengthening foreign influence in the country.\textsuperscript{45}

In other regards the subjects and priorities of Tryggvi Þórhallsson are drawn from the thesis material laid down in advertisement for the position and tell us more about what was regarded as important focus for research in his day rather than his personal assessment of the subject.

Arngrímur Jónsson (1923-2014) defended his doctorate thesis on the first handbooks for priests after Reformation in the period of 1555 to 1594 but in the latter year \textit{Gradule} a manual for Mass in the Icelandic Church was published. That manual laid the foundation for evangelical Mass that lasted in the most part until the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Arngrímur Jónsson’s research showed that the main substance of Icelandic manuals in the first phase of the Evangelical Church was imported from Germany, though part of the material was based on Danish sources and some of the old medieval content that did not contradict Lutheranism was kept. This meant that liturgical development in Iceland did not mirror the one in Denmark. The author speculates that the foundation for this development was laid during the reign of the first evangelical bishop in Skálholt (before 1548).\textsuperscript{46}

Somewhat earlier (1988) Sigurjón Einarsson (b. 1928) had written a journal article examining the development of burial rituals in Icelandic Lutheranism and shown that it was based on the burial sermons of Peder Palladius (1503-1560) bishop of Zealand (Denmark).\textsuperscript{47} Professor Magnús Már Lárusson (1917-2006) had a few decades earlier (1952) studied the influence of Palladius and his successors in Iceland. His conclusion was that though they had no legal authority in Iceland their influence was such that they might be called archbishops. He considered the ties between the

\textsuperscript{44} Tryggvi Þórhallsson, \textit{Gissur biskup Einarsson og síðaskiptin}; 4.
\textsuperscript{46} Arngrímur Jónsson, \textit{Fyrstu handbækur presta}; 475–476.
Icelandic and Danish churches to have been much closer than had normally been considered in historical abstracts.  

**Articles**

Several theologians have covered the Reformation in separate articles. Interestingly most of them deal with the beginning of the Reformation. Professor Magnús Jónsson (1887-1958) wrote about the struggle between the last catholic- and first evangelical bishop in Skálholt the former having himself chosen his successor.  

Jónas Gíslason dealt with the beginning of evangelical influence in the country in several articles. One covers the part of foreigners, especially German merchants, in the Icelandic Reformation. Another is about the foundation of the evangelical group in Skálholt. Gunnar Kristjánsson (b. 1945) deals with the same subject in an article in a memorial publication on the ancient Icelandic sees (2006). Yet another article of Jónas Gíslason discussed the first evangelically inspired sermon in Iceland. It is to have taken place in 1530. Jónas Gíslason doubted the accuracy of the story. Furthermore Sigurjón Einarsson, mentioned earlier, wrote about the academic career of the first evangelical bishop in Skálholt and his development toward a Lutheran faith. In all of these articles history of ideas and/or biographical methods are used.

Hjalti Hugason (b. 1952) wrote book chapters on six convocations assembled by the second evangelical bishop in Hólar in the period of 1573-1597 whose purpose was to adapt Danish instructions on evangelical Christianity to Icelandic conditions. He demonstrated how the difference

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between Icelandic and Danish conditions created leeway for the bishops to shape the form of many evangelical practices in Iceland. This created certain possibilities for initiative and independence. Generally this meant retaining older customs and thereby creating a stronger connection to the Middle Ages than would otherwise have existed.\(^5^5\) The same author has written about the publishing activities of this same bishop which aimed to establish the Reformation.\(^5^6\)

Þórir Stephensen (b. 1931) wrote (2008) about the beginning of the Reformation from a different angle, namely about the dissolution of the monastery in Viðey and how the Cemetery which was regarded as holy by the population was defiled to counter its continued use.\(^5^7\)

**Contributions from other disciplines**

*Ethics.* Björn Björnsson (1937-2008) defended in 1966 his doctorate thesis in ethics (Edinburgh) about the Lutheran doctrine of marriage in modern Icelandic society. One chapter covers the impact of the Reformation on engagements and marriage in Iceland.\(^5^8\)

*Literary History.* In the period of 1992-2006 there was published an extensive literary history of Iceland from the beginning until the 20\(^{th}\) century. The second volume covers about a 500 year period from the beginning of the 13\(^{th}\) century until about 1750. It deals among other things with religious literature in writing and prose from the Late Middle Ages and the beginning of literature in the evangelical tradition. It offers an important insight into the spiritual culture of the nation during the Reformation and it should be noted that literature is a voluminous part of Icelandic cultural tradition and the written word had an important part in the dissemination of faith in the Icelandic rural community especially after the great advances in printing and literacy following the Reformation.


\(^{5^7}\) Þórir Stephensen, „Fjörbort kaþólsk siðar í Viðey, Saga XLVI:2, 2008: 197–199.

Two doctoral dissertations of literature that shed an important light on Lutheran religious poetry in the 17th century have recently been defended. Margrét Eggertsdóttir (b. 1960) defended in 2005 the dissertation *Barokkmeistarinn. List og lærdómur í verkur Hallgríms Péturssonar* (Baroque Master: Art and scholarship in the works of Hallgrímur Pétursson) which focuses on the main psalmist of 17th century Iceland. Furthermore in 2014 Þórunn Sigurðardóttir (b. 1954) defended a doctoral dissertation about funeral poems, funeral elegies and consolation poems from 17th century.59 There she shows that Hallgrímur Pétursson did not have as unique a position in religious poetry as has previously been portrayed.

**Conclusions**

When 20th century research on church history is examined a good overview of the development of the Reformation in light of political development during and subsequent to the period emerges. The beginning of the Reformation has also been reviewed especially as regards an evangelical group of young men with foreign connections operating in the episcopal see of Skálholt in the years before 1540. The publication of handbooks for priests and other liturgical material and its connection to publications in Denmark and Germany has also been dealt with. Finally it has been examined how much reformation measures in Iceland conformed with Danish instructions and how much these instructions were adapted to Icelandic conditions.

The silver lining in Icelandic research on the Reformation is the new interest on the subject developing among historians.

From the standpoint of church history it would be desirable if future research would focus on the following tasks: 1) The state of church affairs in the late Middle ages and on the eve of Reformation, 2) The possible effects of church-critical humanism (reformism) in Iceland during the reformation period and 3) The reformation campaign in the time of captain Páll Stígsson 1554-1566. In addition an infinite number of possible research projects on the infrastructure of the Icelandic reformation church and its development can be pointed out.

(Transl. by Elvar Ingimundarson)

Árni Daníel Júlíuson

Report on Iceland – (2) History

Introduction

The goal of this report is to survey and evaluate historical research on the Reformation in Iceland, in the field of history. This will mainly be done in accordance with the guidelines drafted for the reports of the members of The Nordic Reformation History Working Group for the 28th Congress of Nordic Historians. Ordering and subjects will be changed to account for conditions in Iceland.

An outline of the course of the Reformation is given in the church historic overview of the history of the „Long Reformation“ in Iceland. It is maybe sufficient to say that there were only the barest stirrings of an evangelical movement in Iceland. Despite this the contact with Germany was very close in the period of the Reformation, with a Lutheran church being built in about 1530, and the Iceland trade was very important for the German town of Hamburg.¹

The church historical report also gives an account of the beginning of the writing of the history of the Reformation in the country, the pre-modern writing of the history of the Reformation in Iceland. The University of Iceland has been the main centre of research into the history of the Reformation since its founding in 1911. A monumental work on the history of the Reformation was published in the period 1919-1926.² It was written by Páll Eggert Ólason, who was professor of history at the University of Iceland in 1921-1929. This work was in four volumes. The first dealt with the life and career of Jón Arason, the last catholic bishop of Hólar in Hjaltadalur in the bishopric comprising a quarter of Iceland, the north quarter. The second volume dealt with the last catholic bishop in Skálholt, Ögmundur Pálsson, and the first Lutheran one, Gissur Einarsson. Skálholt served the other three quarters of the country, the east, the south and the west. The third volume had as its subject the second Lutheran bishop in the Hólar see, Guðbrandur Þorláksson, his activities in the field of printing and publishing and other aspects of his life. The last volume, the fourth, dealt with the main

² Páll Eggert Ólason: Menn og menntir síðaskiptaaldarinnar á Íslandi 1.-4. bindi. Rv. 1919
authors of Icelandic literature in the period. Each volume was several hundred pages long, perhaps reflecting the importance of the subject in Icelandic intellectual and cultural life at the time. This served as the standard work for the history of the Reformation until a new generation of historians started to deal with the Reformation and related themes after 1970. Páll Eggert viewed Lutheranism as a foreign extremist movement and ideology, devoid of humanity and understanding of human nature. Another basic view of the position of Iceland in the Reformation, especially the position of Icelandic literature, was represented by the literary scholar Sigurður Nordal. Sigurður did not see the same degree of a cultural break with the Middle ages as the other mainstream view represented, but underlined the continuity and thematic constancy in literature from the Middle Ages to the early modern period. In the years between 1930 and 1970 there was limited research and writing on the matter from the historian’s side.

As directed, this article is intended to „survey and evaluate Reformation history research during the last generation, its background, its results and what tasks it has set up for future research.“ The article takes the view that the generation of historians in Iceland becoming active around 1990 has to a considerable degree renewed and updated research in the history of the Reformation in Iceland. An important shift from an earlier view is the insight that world of ideas in the Reformation period was completely a magical-religious world, within which every idea and action had to find its expression. The seemingly “irrational” views of the protagonists must be accepted on their terms, and translated, so to speak, into a comprehensible language without condemnation or judgement. Another common characteristic of this research is a rejection of the traditional patriotic slant in the writing of the history of the Reformation in Iceland, followed by an emphasis on social and economic historical research, then followed with an emphasis on the history of mentalities and finally to cultural history, at least this has been the tendency to some degree. Since the 1970ies several Ph.d.s, at least two synthesising works by more mature historians and much research effort

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has been expended on the matter. A considerable part of the research efforts of the generation of Icelandic historians becoming active around 1990 has been directed to research in and around the Reformation period.

History in Iceland

History as a modern academic discipline was established in Iceland around 1910-1920, with the establishment of the Faculty of Humanities. History as such was until the seventies a part of a program called Icelandic studies, wherein the combined study of Icelandic history and literature was practiced. The development of an independent Icelandic state was a powerful stimulant to the teaching and writing of history in this period. The discipline was almost exclusively served by an undergraduate program until the nineties, with the organisation of a Ph.d. program only getting under way after the turn of the millenium. Most Ph.d.’s in Icelandic history until then, with some exceptions, were products of scholars studying in the US, Great Britain, France, Germany or Scandinavia. A big change in the ideological basis of the study of history took place in about 1970-1980, leading to the establishment of a network of social and economic historians becoming active, which then spawned the aforementioned interest in the history of mentalities and culture.

Besides the University of Iceland, academic historians doing research, writing and teaching are present in other institutions, the new business universities, universities and university centers outside of the capital and collectives of independent scholars. The Faculty of History at the University of Iceland became independent of the Icelandic studies program around 1980. It is still the only academic faculty in the world dealing with the history of Iceland as an important subject of research (at present the most important subject).

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6 Not least because of a large research grant put forward by the government in the year 2000 to stimulate research into the history of Christianity in Iceland. It was in two divisions: A division funding archeological research, and a division funding research in the humanities and social sciences. At least two of the publications resulting from this are relevant to the present topic, Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir: Sagan af klastrinu á Skriðu. Rv. 2012, and Árni Daniel Júlíusson: Fjördignir kirkjunnar og tekjur af þeim 1000-1550. Rv. 2014.


Interest in the history of the church as an academic topic was in the early- and mid 20th century very much linked to the question of national or patriotic concerns. Jón Arason was (and, in most popular culture, still is) considered a national hero for being almost the only person in the history of the country, until the 19th century, to put up a fight against the Danes. The Catholic bishops of the 13th century, on the other hand, were regarded as unpatriotic and serving a foreign hand or hands. Bishops of the Lutheran period have also basked in some patriotic glory, particularly Guðbrandur Þorlákssson for saving the Icelandic language with his translation and publication of the Bible into Icelandic. Later historiography has tended to put a question mark to these interpretations, and precisely it has seen a kind of a “return of religion“, very much connected to the new emphasis on the history of mentalities and cultural history. The rise or subject of Islam, however, has never been very central, neither in Icelandic public discourse nor the concerns of academics. A Ph.d. on the so-called ‘Turks raid’ in 1627 is an interesting exception to this rule.9

Recently historians, church historians and theologians have organised a research forum called 2017, based at the University of Iceland, and with participation from other institutions, with the aim of studying and discussing the position of the Reformation in Icelandic history and culture at the 500 years anniversary of the Reformation.

Late medieval background to the Reformation

As to general characteristics of research in the period two main fields could be pointed out. One is the debate on the material, ecological and social circumstances in the middle ages, generally, and of the church in particular,10 and the other is a reevaluation of the role and experience of the Catholic Church.11 To some extent these debates have not been in touch with each other, perhaps reflecting a certain split between an ecological historical approach and a more cultural historical approach, but there are also important points of contact. A third late medieval topic pertaining to the discussion of the Long Reformation in Iceland is perhaps the development of medieval literature in Iceland and

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the reception of it in the 15th to 18th centuries. This is especially relevant in the discussion of the level of literacy and its uses, which is an important topic in the research of the Long Reformation.

When do we talk about the Late Middle Ages? The 14th and 15th centuries are often mentioned, but in Iceland few things changed around 1300. The flowering of Icelandic medieval literature in 1200-1400 cuts across the divide. The Norwegian state power tried and failed to strengthen royal or central state power in Iceland around 1300. On the other hand some things did change around 1300. Precisely the church acquired a sort of social and economical hegemony, a worldly hegemony, in Iceland around 1300, besides the spiritual hegemony it already enjoyed. This it did by amassing property in the most central and fertile agricultural districts in Iceland, where the most powerful chieftain families of the 12th-13th centuries used to have their base.

One of the main topics of conversation, research and writing in the period the last 25 years has been the great plague 1402-1404 and its effects. Around 1997 a certain consensus had been reached, among the historians at least. Until then the plague was held to have been of little consequence in the history of Iceland, but now it was established that the extent of mortality in the plague 1402-1404 (which until then had not reached Iceland) must have been at least 50-60%. There was also an agreement that mortality in another plague, in 1494, must have been at least 30-50%. In both instances this was by far the highest mortality ever recorded, by any means, in the history of Icelandic epidemiology.

On the other hand, there was no consensus on the consequences of this enormous 15th century mortality. Some held that the consequences were negligible, while others pointed out that the fall in land rent after the 15th century from 10% of farm value to 5% must be counted as something. It did not reverse, but stayed at 5%.

Archeologists doing research in the Icelandic Medieval Period organised their own research project, in an area called Skaftártungur, in Skaftafellssýsla, where the written documentation for the consequences of the pandemic in 1402-1404 is non-existent. This is in the center of the most volcanically active area in Iceland, f.ex. in between the two volcanoes Eyjafjallajökull and

14 Richard T. Streeter 2011
Grímsvötn, that did erupt in 2010 and 2011 respectively. The soil in Skaftártungur contains numerous and thick volcanic ash layers that make all datings very easy. The development and impact of farming activity can be determined by coring soil samples and analysing them in detail in the laboratory.

The results of this research on the consequences of the plague were the same as the historians had reached, that is to say the consensus among historians of an enormous and protracted contraction of farming activity after the pandemics of 1402-1404 and 1494 long into the 16th century was confirmed by research with tephrochronological methods. This was also important because written sources concerning the consequences for agriculture of the plague in 1402-1404 only cover Northern Iceland and the West Fjords. Now there was suddenly available a wealth of information on these consequences in an area where nothing had been known about it before.

This new emphasis on the impact of plague has important effects for the whole interpretation frame of the events and consequences of the Icelandic Reformation. Much of the traditional complaints about poverty, low productivity of agriculture etc. was earlier connected to negative effects of ruthless exploitation by the Danes after the Reformation, with severe punishments for breaches of morality and trade laws. Plague was not in the frame, but obviously such a catastrophic reduction in population must have reduced production and income for the elite for a long time afterwards.

Another tendency marked itself in this period. That was the very rapid progress of the Church in acquiring worldly possessions. Around 1200 the property of the church manors (cathedrals, convents) might have amounted to a 100 farms or so in total. In 1300 this number could have been 300-400. But in 1400 the sources are clear that the church manors owned at least 600 farms, and probably about 750 in total, of the 4500 farms (legal or separately taxed farm units) or so in Iceland at the time, or about 1/6th of the whole. Even this, however, was not very much when compared to the situation as it had become in 1550. Now farms in Iceland were about 4000, and of these the big church manors owned about 1200 (the cathedrals about 700, the convents 500). This was about 30% of the whole. Additionally, other forms of church property existed, with the Church as a whole owning up to 45% of all land in 1550.

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The income from land rent of the 1200 farms in 1550 was, however, similar to the income of 600 farms in 1400. The total income of the landowning class in Iceland had been halved in this period, or even more. In addition to fall in land rent the taxable properties had declined in number from about 4500 to about 4000.

Now something else shall be brought up. We go to another country. In the classic essay “The Peasant War in Germany“ Friedrich Engels, the 19th century manufacturer and social (and here historical) commentator, gives this description of the high clergy of the late middle ages: “The fast living of the corpulent bishops and abbots with their army of monks, roused the envy of the nobility and the indignation of the people who bore the burden.”17 And further:

The feudal hierarchy of the clergy formed the aristocratic group — bishops and archbishops, abbots, priors and other prelates. These high church dignitaries were either imperial princes themselves, or they reigned as vassals of other princes over large areas with numerous serfs and bondsmen. They not only exploited their subjects as recklessly as the knighthood and the princes, but they practised this in an even more shameful manner. They used not only brutal force, but all the intrigues of religion as well; not only the horrors of the rack, but also the horror of excommunication, or refusal of absolution; they used all the intricacies of the confessional in order to extract from their subjects the last penny, or to increase the estates of the church.

This is an important analytical distinction. Not only did the manors of the church grow with astonishing speed, at least in Iceland, but the clergy also had means of exploitation unavailable to the knighthood or the princes, both in Iceland and Germany and elsewhere. Amongst this was the horror of excommunication.

The account of the peasant war in Germany should leave no one in doubt that the „fast living“ of the clergy was a source of enormous discontent in most of society and had been for a long time, finally resulting in the social explosion that was the Reformation.

How was the situation in Iceland? It seems that the focus of social discontent, as far as can be seen, was not primarily the fast living of the clergy, even if the chieftains of Iceland complained in a document called Leiðarhólmsskrá in 1513 about the aggressive land purchases of the bishops and abbots. The discontent of the peasantry, however, seems primarily to have been directed at the knights and nobles who behaved in a lawless way and treated the peasantry badly. In 1496 the peasants in a Southern Iceland district called Árnessýsla united in a defensive organisation against the lawlessness and robberies of the officials of the crown and other landowners and their representatives. This is a theme repeated in earlier documentation of lawlessness (1375, 1450). Árnessýsla was the site of the large cathedral manor of Skálholt, but there is no evidence that the discontent of the peasantry was directed at the church at this time. However, such discontents surfaced a little later, in 1511, because of the introduction of fishing duties for the tenants, more about that below.

Lára Magnúsardóttir has analysed what Engels calls the “horror of excommunication” as it is represented in Icelandic late medieval documents. Lára’s aim is to take down an important part of the patriotic interpretation of Icelandic history, or rather to point out weaknesses in the scholarly toolbox for the interpretation of the history of the Late Middle Ages. She defines three unconscious or hypertextual items in this context. The first is the aforementioned patriotic interpretation of history, the second is the anti-clerical or anti-religious mindset of (older) scholars, and the third the residue of the original propaganda campaign of the Lutherans against the Catholic Church. She says that anti-religious views of scholars often are unconscious, they become one of the threads of the epistemological basis for research, and the scholar uncritically assumes that views of this kind always was and always has been one of the moving forces of society. In the end this view created an outlook of history that was little else but an account of the evil deeds of an institution that never existed (except perhaps in the imagination of a few misguided scholars). An example of this is the writings of a 20th century historian, says Lára, who in the seventies described the medieval church as a corrupt institution ruled by the arbitrary decisions of greedy bishops, who held the public in thrall with threats of excommunication, all for the deplorable purpose of gaining more wealth. In this account church was unpopular and the general public opposed it.

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18 DI 8 p. 429-452.
19 DI 7 p. 321-323.
20 DI 8 p. 362.
Lára links her criticism of historiography about the late medieval Church in Iceland to the catastrophic state of the history of law in Iceland. According to her it does not exist in Iceland as an academic discipline, and scholarly work on old Nordic law is mostly out of date. This is very problematic when dealing with the history of the church, because in Lára’s view an understanding of the history of law is the key to the understanding of the history of the church.

Lára describes the medieval church as a very progressive entity, as the first modern state. But the patriotic (and secular) understanding of history blinded scholars to the whole aspect of society and state related to the Church in Iceland. There was a great effort in understanding changes in secular law when Iceland became a part of Norway, but an equal study of the law of the Church has never been undertaken. This is a pity, because in the Middle Ages the church had an equal standing with royal power. Kings and bishops were equals, and state power had two arms; these two arms mostly cooperated peacefully with some exceptions.

Here there occurs some convergence in the two spheres of late medieval historical research, with the emphasis on the research on the growth of the wealth of the Catholic Church on one hand and the picture of the Church as a benign influence on society, the model for the modern state and a fountain of social stability on the other. In Lára’s view, the hegemony of the Catholic Church was undisputed and there was no real support for a revolution in religion. The scant signs of unrest have, in her view, been very much overinterpreted by scholars trained in a secular and modernistic tradition.

Indeed, it could be pointed out that the precondition for this position of the Catholic Church was exactly the property of the church. The fact that the Church amassed enormous riches was the basic condition for the development of what Lára calls the first modern state – i.e. the international medieval church. In this account, this did not happen in opposition to, but in harmony with society.

Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir has written on Property and Virginity, where the Church is in the role of a benefactor for women. Her material is mostly from the Diplomatarium Islandicum. The property Agnes writes about is not the property of the Church, but the property of families, mostly rich families. Agnes concentrates on the development of marriage as an institution in the period 1200-
1600. Weak central power caused an inability to enforce law, in the Late Middle Ages. Autonomous structures of law enforcement were often absent. Individuals and families assorted to various strategies to resolve disputes about property. These strategies were gradually affected by the Church’s influence on marriage and inheritance laws. “In this way the management of property in the Middle Ages was not only governed by rules imposed from above (by the state or the Church), but were also shaped by the actions and ideas of men and women of the aristocracy.” She points out that the Church was able to put in law that marriage should be with the consent of the bride, perhaps this was already a tendency in the 12th century, but certainly in the 13th century and thereafter. However, marriage did not become sacred, in the sense that it required the blessing of the church, until after the Reformation in 1587. She sums up her view of the changes following the Reformation in the following:

Change at the end of the sixteenth century was in many ways more gradual than sudden. The Reformation did not change the definition of what constituted a legal marriage. It continued to be marriage based on the consent of two individuals, who were not too closely related. … However, even if marriage lost its status as a sacrament and the Church – at least in theory – partly lost jurisdiction over marriage, the idea of what a Christian marriage meant was strengthened. The woman should be a virgin before marriage, and adultery became a crime to be punished by the civil courts. Therefore, to be able to control virginity, punish adultery, and deal with cases of separation and divorce, a more effective executive power was necessary in Iceland. By the end of the sixteenth century the central power was getting stronger, and the new seal of the island of Iceland from 1592, thus became a symbol of that change.

If the woman was not a virgin, her husband could divorce her, according to the marriage ordinance of 1587, which marked the final change in a process that had been under way since the thirteenth century. This was the result of the understanding of sacred marriage. However, the importance of virginity emerged much later in legislation than that of consent.

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22 Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir 2010, p. 436
23 Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir 2010.
Agnes, like Már Jónsson before her, also discusses the change introduced in 1564 with the so-called Stóridómur, a law in which rules of morality were linked to draconian punishment measures for severe breaches of morality, hanging and drowning, whereas the Catholic Church had been more lenient. The reason for this law was that now the secular, royal power under the Lutheran doctrine was responsible for the upholding of christian morality. Már points out that the law was instigated by Icelandic officials, and was not a specific tool of Danish oppression, which was always the interpretation of the patriotic historians.26

Social and administrative change in the Reformation

In Lára Magnúsardóttir’s opinion the Reformation in Iceland was an external intrusion into a situation where the Catholic Church exerted its social, economical and ideological hegemony almost unchallenged and in harmony with the rest of society. This means that there was no social or ideological basis for the Reformation in Iceland.

However, the commendable desire of Lára to unveil hypertexts, concealed or subconscious myths about historical structures and narratives might be extended a bit further. Is it, for example, possible that the rupture in the hegemony of the Catholic Church in Iceland by the Lutheran royal power might possibly not have been an external intrusion, an intervention of a colonial power into a society not prepared for such a project? The idea of the external intrusion might possibly also be a kind of self-evident truth. Why not, at least for a while, classify the idea of intrusion also as self-evident truth that needs to be examined consciously, to be questioned?

Vilborg Auður Ísleifsdóttir has written the most recent analysis of the Reformation in Iceland.27 The main theme of her Ph.d. is the fall of the Icelandic medieval Church in the Reformation. Her interpretation is that this event led to a change in Icelandic society. Before it had been sustainable and able to fend for itself. Now it became poor. The reason for this was that a new social and religious order, unfit for Icelandic society, was forced upon on it. Vilborg thus accepts the

26 Már Jónsson 1993.
traditional patriotic view of the period between 1550-1800 as a dismal period with Danish control being detrimental to Icelandic social development.

Vilborg does a good job of analysing the nature of the Icelandic political system and the organisation of power in the period preceding the Reformation, describing the fractured nature of power, divided between small competing feudal states. This facilitates and prepares her description of the change occurring with the Reformation as an important moment, with a sea change in the organisation of the political system and the power structure. Vilborg is also of the opinion that the documentary and narrative sources for the fractured, feudalistic organisation of power of the late middle ages are especially good for Iceland, and are relevant for the interpretation of social history of the period in Europe as a whole.

Even if Vilborg prepares the ground well for an analysis of the change in the administrative and political system in Iceland with the Reformation, she does not really follow it up with such an analysis. Instead she focuses, controversially, on what she describes as a change in mentality or official ideology following the Reformation. In her account the rather lenient and tolerant Catholic Church was replaced with the harsh Lutheranism. One of the things that followed from this was that the act of giving to the poor was no longer seen as a good deed in a religious sense. The emphasis on rational thought and intellectual reasoning increased, and in Vilborg’s account this paved the way for the later introduction of the enlightenment in the 18th century. According to Vilborg, however, these changes in mentality along with the fall of the medieval Church and the accompanying closing of convents led to the poor almost being left to their own devices. This was followed by stagnation.

This view has been criticised. The main problem is that that Iceland had a different poor legislation than the rest of Europe. The care of the poor was organised as a secular institution, which the church had nothing to do with. It was taken care of by the officially organised communities of peasants, the so-called hreppur. This had been the case as far as the written sources reach down into the Middle Ages, and it did not change at all during the Reformation. The Catholic Church did indeed care for the poor, and they were welcome at the cathedrals and convents, but in fact neither did this change with the Reformation. Poor people still were welcome at the cathedrals and the large

and rich convent farms or manorial demesnes after the Reformation and this seems always to have been the case.  

A closer look at the main contours of social development in Iceland during the 14-16th century might be of use here. The two main groups of society were the landowning elite, both the chieftains and the lords of the church on one hand, and their tenants on the other. After the plagues of 1402-1402 and 1494 the position of the peasantry was very much strengthened in some respects, as can be seen from the development of land rent, mentioned above. It fell from 10% of land value to 5%, and a corresponding fall in the income of the elite followed. But beginning about 1500 a counter-attack against the peasantry was under way from the elite. This counter-attack was related to the development of a key element in medieval life, the relationship between the lord and his man, which in Iceland also was a widely practiced and important relationship.

Marc Bloch describes this in the following way:

To be the ‘man’ of another man: In the vocabulary of feudalism, no combination of words was more widely used or more comprehensive in meaning. In both the Romance and the Germanic tongues it was used to express personal dependence per se and applied to persons of all social classes regardless of the precise legal nature of the bond. The count was the ‘man’ of the king, as the serf was the ‘man’ of his manorial lord.

Bloch describes the two-sided nature of the relationship, how protection and oppression were two sides of the same coin. Peasants needed protection during periods of conflict and they valued being protected by a strong lord. In peacetime, on the other hand, they would rather not hear from the lord, who demanded their loyalty and taxed them in various ways for the protection. In the High Middle Ages the oppressive side of the relationship had apparently become much stronger than the protective one in countries like Germany and France.

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31 For example, DI 8, p. 247.
33 Marc Bloch 1962, p. 265
The Late Middle Ages were a time of unrest and lawlessness in Iceland. The 15th century was the worst in this respect. Chieftains did what they liked and kept their own private forces. There were attempts to limit the number of men each lord might ride with through the countryside. In a law from 1489 the bishops were allowed 13 men, while the king’s representatives and lawmen were allowed 10. In another piece of legislation from 1450 it appears that the lords were not allowed to find armed men for their retinue outside of the area where they owned farms, that is to say from outside their small feudal principality or manor. It seems that the tenants had the duty to follow their lords if need arose.

There are also several examples from the Late Middle Ages that the lords saw it as their duty to protect their tenants. Bishops reminded chieftains not to attack or trouble the tenants of the cathedral manors. The manager of the Hólar cathedral estate was made to promise in the early 15th century to do nothing that would drive or alienate tenants or servants from the farms of the estate. Also it is clear that if a lord lost out in a dispute about landed property his tenants were made to leave their farms, to be replaced with the tenants under the protection of the lord who had won the dispute.

A union between tenants, were they demand to have a say as to who will be their lord and protector, is recorded in another document. The venue for this union was the aforementioned hreppur, or community. Hreppur was a community of at least 20 farmers, each living on a separate assized or taxed farm. The general rule (with exceptions) in Iceland was a single farm in each place of farming, not several farms in a village as was the rule most other places in Europe.

In the Reformation war tenants or servants of lords sided with their lords, as in the instance of the men of Skálholt killing the kings’men for robbing the Viðey convent in 1539, or Jón Arason’s men revenging his death by killing 12 Danes.
There were thus very important vertical social relations, from tenants to lords, and a strong bond of protection and subordination. In around 1500 the lords began what appears to be an abuse of this relationship. They introduced new duties that the tenants were now supposed to perform without any compensation. Among these duties were a duty to row the boat of the manor to the fishing grounds, and fish. Other duties introduced at this time was the duty to loan horses for transport and men with them, and to go home to the manorial head farm or demesne to mow hay in the summer for a whole week, a long time and a heavy burden in the short and wet Icelandic summer. At the same time the church demanded tolls from a new source, sub-tenancies.

Both these developments point in the direction of a crisis in the economic fundament of the power of the lords, with the diminishing income because of the fall in land rent. There were fewer people to farm the tenancies, and some of the convents were in the situation were a third or a half of their farms were deserted.

This development is reminiscent of the development in Eastern Europe at the same time. Here there was also enough land and a lack of working power, and the response of the lords was an intensification of the duties laid upon the backs of the tenants. There was great demand for grain from the manors in Eastern Europe. There was also great demand for fish from Iceland, and this lead to an analogous development on Icelandic manors, at least to some extent.

This points to the debate on the great power of the nobility in Eastern Europe, where royal power or the princes never were able to create any kind of active central power, because of the strong social position of the nobility. State power was also very weak in Iceland at the time. In about 1300 Norwegian royal power tried to strengthen central state power in Iceland by giving Icelandic offices to neutral Norwegians, but the Icelandic ruling families rejected this and demanded the offices for their own, and royal power had to bow to this demand.

Still in 1300-1500 real power was distributed among the lords in small feudal states, the cathedral manors, the manors of the convents, chieftaincies in Eyjafjörður, Rangárvallasýsla and the West fjords, which was the main bastion of lay power in Iceland. But in the middle of the 16th century all this changed.

41 DI 8, p. 306, DI 11, p. 86.
Similar abuses as described above of the protective and subordinate relationship between the landlords and their tenants were probably at the root of the peasant unrest in Germany and Denmark in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. It was a great social movement, a continuation of similar social movements in the middle ages, the movements that Engels calls the revolutionary movement of the Middle Ages.

The confiscation of the property of the Catholic Church changed the situation in Iceland completely. Suddenly royal power held the keys to society. It now owned the most important manors and was in possession of great income from them. Even so, society did not change much. Production proceeded unchanged on the tenancies of the manors, and most farmers were tenants as before. The manors that the Church owned were not split up or sold, but their growth was stopped. They now supplied a new power base for the Icelandic lay chieftain class, especially the convents, converted into ‘umboð’ or mandates, lucrative manors that were given to Icelandic lords. They kept a large part of the income for themselves in return for supporting the new Lutheran royal power. Even the Lutheran bishops kept all the income from the cathedral manors, and managed them in much the same way as the catholic bishops had before, with the exception that they were not allowed to expand them further.

This change in the basis of power gave society a previously unknown stability and peace. Unlike the other parts of the kingdom the 16th -18th centuries did not see a multiplication in the amount of taxes, an increase in manpower demanded for serving in the navy or the army, and there were no wars in Iceland in this period.

Up until 1970, and even longer, the taking over of the Catholic property by royal power was supposed to have led poverty and oppression over Icelanders. The fact of the matter is that the Icelanders both ate their cake and kept it, royal power took over Church property but the Icelanders kept most of the income from it. The numbers are revealing: Royal power took over about 50% of all property in Iceland, but virtually only the convent manors were directly under the king, and of

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46 Friedrich Engels: The Peasant War in Germany. London 1850.
47 Helgi Þorláksson 2003.
those only one was managed directly by the central government. This was the convent of Viðey, with about 100 subject tenant farms. The other eight convent manors were under the administration of Icelandic lay chieftains, who paid a rent from the manors. This rent was as low as a third of the income from the manors. Royal power thus only received, at most, half of the income from the convents, which again only comprised 20% of property. About 10% of the total income from Icelandic property went to the king, the rest, 90%, stayed in Iceland as before.49

Here some suggestions in the direction of how a critique of the idea of the Reformation in Iceland being primarily an external intrusion have been put forward. These suggestions are mostly along the lines of general observations regarding social and economic history. How can a discussion on more subjective matters, related to culture and mentality, f.ex. regarding the status of Jón Arason as an Icelandic national hero, be constructed?

The Reformation as violent attack on the nation of Iceland?

As to the progress of the Reformation in Iceland in 1537-1550, Hjalti Hugason provides a fine outline in his report, as mentioned earlier. The period has been described as a period of war, and in the 19th and 20th centuries Jón Arason was regarded as a national hero because of his heroism in the fight against royal power. Periodically, like in 1548-1550, the country was really a principality under the central government of Jón Arason. This has mightily impressed Icelandic patriots ever since. Jón Arason had held out 13 years longer than the Norwegian archbishop against royal power determined to impose Lutheranism in Iceland like the rest of the realm. This is also a source of great pride.

The social result of the conflict probably might have been similar in both cases, even if Jón Arason had been victorious: He might have reigned over a much strengthened central power in a new, catholic principality. Another, very different, possible result might have been that Iceland would have been left as a feudal remnant far out in the Northern Atlantic, with a multiplicity of small fiefdoms each fighting the other to the end of time.

Jón Arason wrote some verses for propaganda purposes, wherein he alludes to anti-Danish feelings, and it is not impossible that some kind of proto-nationalism or proto-patriotism was present in his mentality, and that such a thing even had some resonance in Icelandic society. At least Jón was, in the 19th and 20th centuries, an undisputed national hero, as said before. And, as we have seen, most authorities in the latest generation of historians regard the Reformation in Iceland as an external intrusion into Icelandic society. However, this intrusion was of a rather special kind, as now shall be reviewed to some extent.

The erosion of the basic social bond of the middle ages, described above as the protective and subjective relationship of lord and tenant, had progressed far by the 16th century. During the whole period of the middle ages there had been repeated challenges to the overlordship of the Catholic Church, wherein many demands, some eventually to be carried to victory by the Reformation, were formulated. The social upheaval of the Reformation effectively ended the Middle Ages, because of a successful challenge to the authority of the pope, and because the Lutheran Reformation successfully asserted a new idea of the basic organising principles of society, a new social hegemony. The ideological foundations for this challenge has been described as follows:

Luther challenged the very foundations of papal authority by claiming that there is no division between lay and cleric in the realms of estate. Here we see a glimpse of his counter-hegemonic ideas. Differences among members of the body [body of society, analogous to the body of Christ, ÁDJ] were to be understood in terms of the office that each person holds. All baptized Christians are priests, and in their occupations in the world, they exercise the vocation that all Christians receive in their baptism to advance the cause of the gospel. Luther focused on the divinely instituted task of leading civil governments and made the claim that temporal government exists to protect the people of God and the universal church. If the structures of the church begin to act contrary to God’s will, it is up to the civil authorities to fulfill their priestly roles as reformers of the church and protectors of evangelical doctrine [emphasis added by ÁDJ]. With this theological insight, Luther challenged both the medieval cosmology and the church’s hegemony at its core. This move is radical and revolutionary. By denying the fundamental separation of lay and cleric, he attacked the root of both the ecclesiastical and temporal realms as they were understood in the sixteenth century. Fully understanding the doctrines that asserted papal authority over temporal and sacred estates,
Luther recognized that the papacy had no incentive to reform itself. He hoped that the true reform of the church would now be undertaken not from within the church hierarchy, but rather by the laity, “since the clergy, to whom this task more properly belongs, have grown quite indifferent.”

The force, fierceness and power of the challenge of Luther to papal authority was both prepared and followed up by immense social movements at every level of society in the 15th and the 16th century, right up to 1648 and the peace of Westphalen. It reverberated across the whole continent of Europe. Christianity split, a large chunk of it rejected papal authority alltogether and France, England, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Scandinavia and the Baltic countries were all deeply affected in one way or another. This eventually went also for Italy and Spain, with the counter-Reformation. This social explosion can only be compared to events like the French revolution and its reverberations down the 19th and 20th centuries or the Russian revolution in 1917 and its own reverberations across the globe.

Royal power in Denmark-Norway completely adopted the counter-hegemony presented as a challenge to papal authority by Luther, not as the result of some peaceful discussions between intelligent men and women, but as a part of an uprising and revolution in world-view and ideology. The whole edifice of Christianity was redefined in a very radical way in the new doctrine of Lutheranism, and thus it followed that the foundation of society was defined in a new way. The Lutheran revolution went a long way in creating the basis of the present-day nation state, with the adoption of royal power of the role of the sovereign protector of the interpretation of Christianity in place of papal authority.

With regard to Iceland, it must be realised that in a sense the Lutheran challenge to papal authority was universal. It resonated across Europe as already mentioned, and as the Icelandic and Norwegian Catholic Churches were papist, this meant that they were, in the view of the Lutherans, as completely tainted with the abuses of power by the papacy as any other division of the Catholic Church. The international Lutheran movement could do nothing but uproot these branches of evil, with the means of the ideological weapon outlined above, the duty of temporal authorities to intervene in a Church that had gone astray.

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Luther’s challenge to papal authority was indeed counter-hegemonic. Another concept from the arsenal of Gramsci’s toolbox of ideas might be useful in contemplating further the position of Iceland in this vortex of revolution and upheaval. This is the concept of passive revolution. This concept was originally developed to explain how a number of European states adopted the forms and laws developed during the French revolution and spread by the Napoleonic Wars during the beginning of the 19th century, without there being an active popular insurrection. The basic example Gramsci used was the development of the passive revolution in Piedmont and its lead in uniting Italy around 1870. The concept has also been used by scholars to analyse the development of state power during the 18th century. An interesting example is the case of UK. In the 16th and 17th centuries capitalism developed in England, and in the middle of the 17th century it had become hegemonic in the machinery of state power. With the unification of Scotland and England in 1707 the hegemony of capitalism in England was transferred to Scotland, which was rather primitive at the time, leading to what amounted to a bourgeois revolution from above, and to the rapid development of capitalism in Scotland during the next decades and centuries.

In regard to Iceland we have seen that the Reformation has been labelled the revolution from above, imposed upon a society that in turn became impoverished because of it.

Whereas Germany was obviously the weakest link in the chain of papal authority, Iceland had a different position, but in the event it was also responsive to the counter-hegemony of Lutheranism and eventually fully adopted it as the hegemonic system of society – in exactly the same way as Catholic Christianity was adopted from the 11th century (this might be compared to the narrative of Lára Magnúsdóttir of Catholic hegemony in Iceland – see above). Some of the possible reasons have been outlined above, having to do with the breakdown of the medieval system of patronage of the lower classes by the elite (verndarkerfi), which was unilaterally breached by the upper class in Iceland, like in Denmark, around 1500. Here the strengthened central power of the Lutheran king stepped in.

Helgi Þorláksson has argued that even Jón Arason was not averse to contemplating Lutheranism. It is clear that a number of the learned in Iceland had come over to the side of Lutheranism in the period leading up to the Reformation in Iceland. The earth-shaking upheaval in confessional matters following the introduction of Lutheranism can be regarded as far larger and more imposing than one is used to think, if one realises that every thought, movement and social action occurred within a magical-religious world view. The adoption of Lutheranism might in this context be seen as suprisingly peaceful and uneventful in Iceland, compared to, say, Ireland. The existence of Catholic provinces in Iceland and Norway would also have constituted a similar threat to the Lutheran movement in Denmark and even Sweden as the continued existence of Catholicism in Ireland did in relation to the English Reformation. Iceland could at some point have been the part of a brigdehead of a rebounding Catholicism if nothing was done or if Jón Arason had prevailed.

Thus, from the point of view of social agency or subjective and cultural viewpoint the Reformation was not just an arbitrary invasion by an evil colonial power into Icelandic society – it was an intrusion, but had its roots in a more egalitarian and powerful social movement than Christianity had ever seen within its boundaries, at least since its inception in Palestine in year 30-33 AD. The changes it wrought in the whole of Europe were of a fundamental nature, and in the case of Iceland it could be argued that the traditional description of the effects of Reformation are truly misleading and focus only on negative aspects.

By uncoding the hypertext of the idea of foreign intrusion or a revolution from outside and above, in the fashion Lára Magnúsardóttir has suggested for the history of the Late Medieval Catholic Church in Iceland, the old narrative can be questioned. It could even be suggested that the Reformation in Iceland, in fact, adressed some of the most pressing problems Icelandic society was facing at that moment by means of the effects of a stronger central power described by both Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir and Vilborg Auður Ísleifsdóttir. Among these where the problem of the lack of central government and the self-rule of the lords, the problem of the danger of society developing in the direction of a tyrannical aristocracy establishing serfdom at the fishing manors, and the problem of the breakdown in the double-sided relationship between the lords and the tenants. It also stopped the expansion of the Catholic Church in the land market, which the aristocracy saw as a problem.

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Consolidation of the Reformation/The period of Lutheran orthodoxy/The process of confessionalization

From the wonderland of hypertextuality and the dark and shadowy recesses of the unconscious it is time to return to a more earthy discussion of the progress of the Long Reformation in Iceland.

As described above, the Lutheran Reformation can be viewed as an invasion of temporal power into the hegemony of the Catholic Church. There is still the question of what kind of temporal power had the right to invade this hegemony. In the description of the peasant war of Germany in 1525 Engels gives a vivid description of two possibilities, represented by Thomas Müntzer and his disciples taking over towns like Mühlhausen with a kind of communistic aims, and Luther, who condemned the peasant uprising and joined forces with the princes and kings. The Reformation opened a true Pandora’s Box of possibilities for what kind of temporal power should be sovereign in the matters of religion the new era. There was the communism of Müntzer, of the Münter rebellion of the Anabaptists in 1534, there was Calvinism, Lutheranism, the Anglican Church in England. Even the rule of Jón Arason in Iceland in 1548-1550 can from a certain viewpoint be regarded as one result or answer to this question, also the whole Counter-Reformation, on the surface a return to the old state of things, which in reality, however, could never be rebuilt. It took quite a while before things quieted down (maybe they never quite did, and then erupted again in 1640 or 1789 in a new form), and the history of the 17th century is to a large extent the history of how temporal power should deal with the new situation.

The nature of the Lutheran revolution lay then, not in any religious conviction or lack of conviction, but in a basic change in the relationship between religion and temporal power as described above. This fully occurred in Iceland as elsewhere in the Lutheran area at the moment of Reformation. The question of a local evangelical movement or not is not really relevant in this context, because once the sovereign authorities had been won over to this viewpoint, whoever they were, there was no turning back. The existence of an overly eager evangelical movement, especially of the “wrong” classes, could have complicated things very much, bearing in mind the development in Germany, Müntzer’s leadership of the peasants and so on.
The considerable research activity by a new generation of scholars of Icelandic society in late medieval history regarding the position of the church and history and the history of the Reformation we have seen, has otherwise and unfortunately not been replicated for the period 1600-1800 (or I should say 1600-1750, because aspects of the period after that, the second half of the 18th century, has recently been dealt with in an admirable way by Hrefna Róbertsdóttir). On the other hand, the interpretation of the period has undergone deep revisions in the last decade or so, at the hands of the experienced historians Loftur Guttormsson and Helgi Þorláksson, who have created a new interpretation frame for the period in regard to the idea of the Long Reformation.

Loftur was earlier in the field, with his work on the history of Christianity in Iceland in the period 1550-1800 from the millennial year, 2000. Here Loftur attempts to trace the long-term consequences of the Reformation. In his account the Reformation is to be counted among the most disputed periods of the history of Iceland. Loftur is of the opinion that the Lutheran reform did not lead to an evangelical movement in Iceland. Only a small group of local intellectuals joined the side of Lutheranism, without it provoking such a movement in Iceland. „Flestir landa þeirra munu síðan hafa gengið hinum nýja sið á hón af þegnlegri löghlýðni fremur en sannfæringu.“, says Loftur, most of the Icelanders became Lutherans rather as law-abiding citizens than because of any new religious conviction.

According to Loftur, the main task of the authorities in this period was to introduce and stabilize Lutheran sermon and rites and to educate and foster an adequate priesthood or class of preachers, both regarding their renumeration for the job and the necessary education. The king’s officials and bishops were both responsible for this, but the bishops were especially responsible for the upkeeping of Latin schools, each in its bishopric. Few priests went to university in Copenhagen or elsewhere; according to Loftur priests in Iceland were not as well educated as their colleagues in Scandinavia.

The publication of books for religious purposes was of primary importance in the Reformation. The Lutheran Reformation was unthinkable without the Bible, translated, printed and distributed as

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widely as possible. It was the basis for the execution of the idea of a universal priesthood. In about 1600 this project had successfully been carried through by Guðbrandur Þorláksson in Hólar and his network of supporters, servants and employees, not only with the publication of the Bible, but also of a wide range of other supporting literature. The strong position of book culture and writing, all along from the Middle Ages, might have been an important factor in the relative success of this enterprise.

Now the tools for the change in hegemony were in place, but the shift in hegemony, the change in the souls, was still the unfinished business. The people still weren’t proper Lutherans, correct Christians in the sense of the Reformation. “Þessi viðleitni vísar einkum til eftirtímans, tímbils hins lútherska réttrúnaðar sem í þessu riti er merkt hinni „löngu“ 17. öld (fram undir 1730, says Loftur). This means that Loftur is of the opinion that the Long Reformation lasted until about 1730. It took all this time to fix the new hegemony in the mentality. He says it was a period of great strife, social conflict and contrasts, and persecutions of those who dared to think and act differently than the authorities had decided.

Loftur underlines the strong position of the Icelandic Lutheran Bishops, a stronger position than elsewhere in Scandinavia, and also the position of priests was strengthened during this period. Even so, the parish priests were unable to really give the necessary leadership and inspirations to their congregations, by moral example and spiritual guidance. Loftur traces the reason for this to the worldly poverty of the priests, their congregations were small and the priests far too many, much more numerous in proportion to the population than in the neighbouring countries. The priests often gave up in their spiritual mission and gave in to misery and pessimism, turning to drink and adultery.

The family homes of Iceland were a place of religious worship, even more than in many of the neighbouring countries. Little by little religious literature became part of the daily lives of almost every family in Iceland. Loftur is of the opinion that many homes, however, never had anyone who could read. Also, the religious mentality appears to Loftur to have been a very mixed affair, both shaped by Christian ideas and all kinds of folklore that affected each other and created a complicated and often contradictory whole.
But with the advent of Pietism and further with development of the Enlightenment things finally took a turn for the better, says Loftur. In his opinion the Pietists finally achieved the goal of “universal priesthood“ (perhaps the equivalent in religious terms to the idea of the legal equality of all people), the counter-hegemonical idea first put forward sometimes deep in the Middle Ages, and then taken up by Luther. Loftur sees the age of Pietism (from about 1730) as a kind of new Reformation. Finally the Reformation had fully arrived, and it soon merged with the vitalising spirit of the Enlightenment. Like the original Reformation, this new Reformation was an initative of the authorities, instigated by officials and priests. It seems that the general public was sometimes slow in the reception of this new, progressive movement.

In Loftur’s opinion, reading was not a skill universally posessed by the general public, until the 18th century. In this opinion not everyone agrees with him. Among those who disagree is Helgi Þorláksson, who also has given an account of the Long Reformation. Helgi is of the opinion that reading was common in the 16th century. At least one person was able to read in most homes, is his view. Helgi leads many witnesses to this, visitors to Iceland among them. I can add that in the Búalög, laws for managing the farming activity in Iceland from the Late Middle Ages, there is provided for the fee a person should receive for teaching someone to read (and to play chess).

There are other differences between the account of Helgi Þorláksson and Loftur Guttormsson of the progress of the new hegemony. Helgi also points out that the formal Reformation was effected in a relatively short time, but another process then began, the “real” Reformation or Long Reformation, a slow process of dissemination and turning of souls.

But Helgi is of the opinion that this Long Reformation was fullfilled in around 1630 in the sense that Catholic symptoms or characteristic symbols of Catholicism were no longer to be found or they had been transformed, people had mostly adapted to the formal frame of what the authorities believed to be the correct Lutheran behaviour, and the way had thus been paved for a proper religious conversion of the general public from catholicism to lutheranism. Helgi means by this that the general public internalised the basic principles of the Lutheran faith, and lived accordingly. Many signs point to the church and royal power having reached this goal (proper religious conversion) in around 1670 or so.
Among the main arguments Helgi puts forward to support this statement is his remark that a period of relatively favourable economic conditions began about 1630 and standing right up to 1680, facilitated the establishment of an authoritative priesthood with comfortable means to appear as the representatives of the new faith to the general public. By visiting every home regularly this team of priests effected the internalisation of Lutheranism in Iceland, also with the help of proper literature printed at the press at the bishopric in Hólar in Hjaltadalur.

Another of his arguments is that there was conflict between worldly and spiritual power in the period 1550-1630, because the main families of the aristocracy disputed with the powerful bishops Guðbrandur Þorláksson and Oddur Einarsson, but after 1630 this situation changed completely. Thereafter the two arms of the Lutheran leadership was in agreement in goals and means for quite a while and it produced a powerful thrust of the realisation of the idea of universal priesthood.

Other questions concerning the development of society in the wake of Reformation have received relatively little attention. In the writings of scholars like Helgi Þorláksson and Loftur Gutormson the first steps have been taken in lifting the veil on the history of a period that hitherto has been represented in a rather negative and unfair view produced by the partiotic understanding of history preferred by the Icelandic independence movement in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Was Iceland impoverished by the consequences of the Reformation? Two basic myths exist about the outcome of the Reformation. One is that economic life came to a standstill and the country became unsustainable economically. The other is that society descended into a kind of a collective madness, schizoprenia, depression and irrationalism, produced by demands for following a kind of Lutheran party line, the ‘rétttrúnaður’.  

There is not enough room here to discuss this in any meaningful depth, but as to the former myth it is clear that the consequences of the plagues have been very much underestimated for the period 1400-1600, and that 17th century was anything but a depressed century in the economic sense, as already mentioned. Farming and fishing thrived during the whole period between 1630-1680, and

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57 A typical interpretation in this spirit is to be seen in the movie “Myrkrahöfðinginn” by Hrafn Gunnlaugsson.
58 Helgi Þorláksson 2003.
mostly also in the period between 1550 and 1630. The other matter will not be discussed here, but I refer to a forthcoming work on this subject.  

**Concluding remarks**

Perhaps a certain movement from the new interpretation of the Catholic Church as completely hegemonic and in no need of reformation in such a place as Iceland is appropriate. This is because of the different and equally new consensus that Icelandic society in the Late Middle Ages was fractured and benefitted from the strengthening of state power that followed the Reformation. The Lutheran earthquake shifted the social landscape in such a way as to make the strengthening of central power inevitable, like a tsunami. There is a paradox and a contradiction here that must be discussed. Could the Church itself have become the central power, as it was to some extent after 1520? It has been called the first modern state here, and so had the means to do it. Many things can then be discussed in this relation.

Another important question is the difference between the great dissatisfaction with the Catholic Church in the more central parts of Europe, compared to the northern parts. Were there no fast living and corpulent priests in Iceland? There were, but they have not shown up in this current research, and they did not provoke a local evangelical movement against them. Was the Catholic Church even somehow in the situation of the underdog, being unable to fully exert its authority in Iceland, as suggested by Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir? Or possibly some kind of channel for resistance or counter-hegemony to Late Medieval temporal power, being “the first modern state?” The questions pile up.

There is also a great lack of research into the reconstruction of the hegemony of the Church in Iceland in the period 1550-1630 or 1730. The life, resistance and persecution of Jón lærði in the early 17th century can be named as an example of the conflicts rising in the wake of the Reformation. The process was full of conflicts like Loftur Guttormsson has pointed out, which need much more research.

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59 Torfi Stefánsson, forthcoming.
60 Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir 2010, p. 213.
61 Viðar Hreinsson, forthcoming work on Jón lærði Guðmundsson.
Otherwise the concluding remarks of Hjalti Hugason are to be very much recommended for further discussion, also in the historical field.
The history of the reformation in Norway: basic facts

From a political point of view, the reformation in Norway took place in 1536, along with the reformation in Denmark, and as part of the reformation in Denmark. The reformation in Norway went along with the loss of political sovereignty. Throughout the High Middle ages, Norway had been an influential and powerful kingdom in its own right, with king Sverre and his open opposition to Rome as the most famous episode demonstrating the international importance of Norway’s royal power. But during the period of the Kalmar union (starting 1397) Norway had lost in influence, and eventually became a weak partner between the stronger sisters Denmark and Sweden. Sweden withdrew from the union in the early 16th century, but the Norwegian elites were not able offer a similar resistance to Denmark. One reason for this was the lack of coordination between the political interests of a) the North, with the archbishop of Nidaros as the most powerful leader, b) the West, with the Hanseatic citizens of Bergen as the most influential group, and c) the East (Oslo, Hamar).

The end of this political fall of Norway was the union with Denmark in 1536/37. During the Kalmar union, each of the three countries had their own privy council taking care of national interests. This came to an end in 1536/37, and since then Norway was in a political perspective nothing more than a landscape under the Danish crown. The Danish king appointed the civil servants to Norway. And with the reformation, the Danish king also appointed the bishops and the other members of the clergy, most often with candidates not only educated in Denmark, but also born in Denmark.

So, from a national and political point of view, the history of the reformation in Norway is a rather sad story. The reformation was not only introduced to this country from abroad, it had also only to a very small extent been prepared – either by popular movements or by an intellectual elite – in advance. There are some scattered observation of individuals taking interest in the new religious
movement, most of all in Bergen, but nothing which might deserve the name of an organized movement or an intellectual centre.

What actually was at hand, was a strong and well organized opposition to the new religion. This opposition was led by the archbishop in Nidaros, Olav Engelbrektsson, and it was rooted in a strong national and European network. Consequently, the initial reformation struggle in Norway was mainly a struggle on top of society, between the Danish King on the one hand and the Catholic archbishop on the other. This was a scenario different from most other protestant countries in Europe, where Protestantism and National interests in one way or another were often closely linked to each other. In Norway, the protagonists of Protestantism represented an obvious challenge to national interests and national identity. The national cause was defended and supported by the Catholic Archbishop, who could support his cause looking back upon a proud history of the Norwegian kingdom in cooperation with Catholic bishops.

From this perspective, it is easy to understand that a main objective of the Danish king was to get rid of the archbishop of Nidaros, and at the same time to disestablish and destroy Nidaros as a major religious centre in the North. So, the archbishop had to flee from the troops of the King, and the relics of Saint Olaf were removed from the altar in the cathedral of Nidaros. This was the first Protestant action necessary in order to prepare Norway for Protestantism, and also the only major political struggle taking place before the Protestant take over.

With Norway defined as a kingdom under the Danish crown, and with Nidaros disestablished as an opposing religious and political centre in the north, the introduction of the new religion in Norway was most of all a mater of political administration and diplomacy. The king decided to act carefully, holding on to several of the old bishops after having obliged them to swear loyalty and obedience to the king and the new religion. The same strategy was applied to the clergy. Gradually, most of them could then be educated from the reformed Protestant Theological Faculty in Copenhagen.

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1 Cf. Most recently Steinar Supphellen (ed.): Nytt søkelys på Olav Englebrektsson. Skrifter (Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab) 2/2004a
2 See the typical treatment of this theme in Halfdan Koth: Olav Engelbriktsson og sjølvstende-tapet 1537. Oslo 1951. Koth was not only a well known professor of history, but also the foreign minister of Norway when the war started in 1940. The book about Olav Engelbrektsson should be read in this perspective: as a story about resistance to foreign take-over.
The Superintendents used different methods in order to make sure that basic reformation practice and belief were introduced on a local level. In the West (Bergen and Stavanger), they summoned the clergy to synods, and the regulations from these synods belong to the rather scattered primary sources preserved from the first years of Norwegian Protestantism. In Oslo (the east) and in Trondheim (the north), the superintendents gave priority to visitations. The most important text bearing witness to this is Jens Nilssøns extensive *Visitatsbog* from the 1580ies and 1590ies, which is the most important source reporting on the status of reformation changes on a local level in Norway in the late 16th century.

The legal framework of the reformation in Norway was the same as for the reformation in Denmark. Most important was the church ordinance from 1537/39. When this text was issued, the king was aware of the fact that in Norway might need a specific religious legislation on some points. But when the attempt was made more than 60 years later to adjust the legislation to some specific Norwegian challenges, very few changes were actually made to the original church ordinance.

**The National context**

Writing reformation history has in the Nordic countries most often in one way or the other been connected to national interests: to an interest in supporting and influencing the way national identity is defined. Norway is on a Nordic basis left alone as the only country where it was impossible or at least extremely hard to link Reformation history to the process of Nation building.

Already the early modern historians dealing with Norway tend to avoid or to say little about the reformation as part of Norwegian history. The late 16th century clergyman *Peder Claussøn Friis*

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3 Cf. Ingmar Brohed (Ed.): *Reformationens konsolidering i de nordiska länderna 1540-1610*. Oslo 1990; especially the contribution by Ingun Montgomery.
5 Oluf Kolsrud (Ed.): *Utkast til en norsk kirkeordinants / efter kong Christian IV's befaling forfattet av norges superintendenter i aaret 1604 og nu etter tiltak av reformations-jubelaurets biskopper paa offentlig bekostning for første gang utgivet ved Oluf Kolsrud ; med et sendebrev fra den norske kirkes biskopper om den lutherske reformations væsen og betydning*, Christiania 1917. Cf. also Tarald Rasmussen’s article in Ingmar Brohed (Ed.) (See footnote 3).
from Sør-Audnedal, wrote extensively on history and topography of Norway and the Norwegian possessions, but was most of all interested in the medieval roots. The Icelandic born Tormod Torfæus spent great parts of his life as historical author and researcher at Karmøy in southern Norway, and is regarded as one of the founders of the discipline of critical history writing in Norway. But he, too, focussed on the medieval tradition. His extensive volumes Historia rerum Norvegicarum ends in 1387, and he is most of all occupied with the interpretation of the original sources from the saga period.

Ludvig Holberg was a Norwegian by birth, and occupied himself intensively with the History of Norway and Denmark in the late 1720ies and the early 1730ies. But Holberg takes little specific interest in describing a Norwegian history. He is preoccupied with Denmark and with the Danish kings as his main heroes. In Holberg’s Church History, Luther is praised as one the heroes of history, due to his opposition to the papacy and his promotion of a good organization of the church, subordinated to the king. But in spite of his focus on the early modern period of royal union between Denmark and Norway, Norwegian reformation history is no important topic. Norway is – not surprisingly – looked upon as integrated in Denmark, and the reformation history is a history of the Danish reformation.

The first extensive reformation history written in Norwegian by a Norwegian was Stener Johannes Stenersen’s Udsigt over den Lutherske Reformation: med en Indledning om Kirkens Tilstand før samme, published in Christiania in 1818–1819. Stenersen was the first professor of Church History at the newly (1811) founded University in Christiania. He was a follower of Grundtvig, but after Grundtvig’s “mageløse oppdagelse”, he felt obliged to correct Grundtvig’s position through biblical Lutheran confessionalism. His two-volume work on the reformation is no research publication, but a printed edition of lectures on the reformation, introducing some main concepts and teachings of Luther and the reformation. And in spite of the context of teaching future clergy at a newly founded national university, the history of the reformation has little to say about the

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7 Norrigis Bescriffuelse, Ed.: O. Worm, København 1632; Norske Kongers Chronica, translated and edited by O. Worm, København 1633 (new ed. 1757)
8 Historia rerum Norvegicarum, 4 vols., København 1711. See also T. Titlestad: Tormod Torfæus – ei innføring, Stavanger 2001
9 Dannemarks og Norges Beskrivelse København 1729; Dannemarks Riges Historie, København 1732–35; Almindelig Kirke-Historie, København 1738.
10 Stating that Apostolic Confession could be traced back to from Jesus himself.
national reformation of Norway. It was the theological confessional part of the history he wanted the students to get acquainted with.

Throughout the 19th century this was the dominating attitude to reformation history within the faculty of theology: Reformation history was converted to and treated in terms of dogmatics and confessional Lutheranism, and not in terms of national history. The Grundtvig-position, which in a fundamental way connected Christianity to national traditions and national history, was rejected not only by Stenersen, but even more so by the dominating professor of the Christiania faculty throughout the 1840-ies and 1850ies: Gisle Johnson. Gisle Johnson and his allies rejected Grundtvig’s position on a fundamental basis, and replaced it by Lutheran confessionalism. The price to be paid for this, was that Norwegian university theology was detached from the national challenge of establishing the academic basis of Norwegian nation building. To Johnson and his followers, it seemed nearly impossible to connect a Lutheran identity to National Norwegian interests without being linked to or associated with Grundtvig and his followers. Therefore, academic theology up to ca. 1900 stayed away from the nation building project, and concentrated on the strengthening of a confessional position.11

The Historians, on the other hand, had a central position in the academic support of Norwegian nation building in the mid- and late 19th century. But here again, for obvious reasons, the reformation in Norway had little or nothing to offer. The discussion concentrated instead on the question whether the roots of the new nation should be identified through and associated to the period of union with Denmark (Ludvig Daae; this was the concervative position)12 or whether the new nation should rather – once again – seek its roots in the Middle ages, when Norway long ago had been a strong nation in its own right and where the Norwegian people was not ruled by foreigners (Ernst Sars, professor of history since 1874).13 Along these overall lines of the development of Norwegian history, the “rule of the people”, which was rediscovered in through the

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11 One interesting effect of this strategy was the hiring of the excellent German scholar Theodor Caspari to the University fo Christiania. He was hired in from Leipzig by Gisle Johnson in order to assist in the battle against Grundtvigianism, and concentrated on the task of disproving the Grundtvigian presupposition that the words of the Apostolic confession cold be traced back to Jesus himself.
12 Professor of history from 1876 to 1910.
13 Udsigt over den norske Historie, 4 vols, 1873–1891
19th century, had important roots in the Middle Ages, but no roots at all in the Norwegian Reformation.\textsuperscript{14}

The academic discipline of history has in Norway continued to be closely linked to the project of nation building and to the effort of defining national and political identity. The uses of history have to a large extent served these purposes. And the High Middle ages, the period of Norwegian strength and influence, has preserved its position as a major field of research. One obvious hero was (as already mentioned) king Sverre (1177-1202). His protest against Rome and the pope on behalf of his country could in a Norwegian context overrule and replace Luther’s protest against the papacy. In addition, the specific structure of Norwegian rural society, with a smaller degree of feudal subordination of “ordinary people”, could serve as a source of identification for the modern democratic Norway, were the people was once again empowered after the long period of Danish subordination.\textsuperscript{15}

Not only the historians in Norway preferred the High Middle Ages to the Early Modern period and the reformation. The Church Historians, too, followed a similar path. Here, the \textit{history the Christianization} of Norway emerged as a priority research topic during the 1840ies, and continued to be so for generations.\textsuperscript{16} Several interesting aspects were underlined when the profile of the Christianization was drawn up. First of all, it was of primary importance to prove that the missionaries and the main influences contributing to the change of religion came from the West: from the British Isles. Norway had \textit{not} been Christianized from the South, from Rome, but from the West. The Christian roots of the country did not support and verify a connection between the Norwegian and the Roman church in central Europa or Rome. Rather, the research on the Christianization contributed to supporting the connections to Britain and the Anglican Church, as something different to Rome.

Secondly, the Christianization only to a limited extent implied a subordination of Norway into an over-national church structure. Far more important was the national aspect, which was evident already in the 11th century. The king was the primary agent representing the new religion.

\textsuperscript{14} The closest connection between the national interests and the people at the time of the reformation could according to this view be found in early modern rural oppresings. In Norway, however, these had nothing to do with religion or reformation ideology. Cf. Koth: \textit{Norsk bondereisning}, Christiania 1926.

\textsuperscript{15} Line of continuity from Sars over Kåre Lunden and Sverre Bagge to our own days. To be inserted.

\textsuperscript{16} Cf. Rasmussen (Footnote 6).
Christianity more or less came along with the birth of the Nation, for the first time united under a strong king (Olaf Haraldsson). And Christianity even came along with a new life given to the native Old Norse language, which was from the outset used in most of the central texts of the new religion. In this way, the religion of 11th and 12th century Norway was interpreted as a kind of proto-lutheranism, closer to 19th century Protestantism than to 19th century Catholicism.

These were more or less the same national advantages as the ones that in other Nordic countries (or in Germany) could be attributed to the reformation. But since the character of the Norwegian reformation was so abnormal, a different writing of national church history was needed. And in Norway, the intense preoccupation with the period of Christianization to a considerable extent replaced the research on the reformation period. Like the historians, also Norwegian church historians found what they needed (= the close and positive link between religion and national identity) in the Middle ages, – not in the reformation.

Institutional overview: History and church history in Norway

Today, academic research on history is present at the universities of Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Tromsø, Stavanger and Agder, and additionally at several high schools in different parts of the country. The major institutes, though, are to be found at the four universities mentioned at first. Academic church history strictly defined is present at the three theological faculties (University of Oslo, Menighetfskultetet (Oslo) and Misjonshøgskolen in Stavanger). In addition, research on church history/history of Christianity is present at the faculties of humanities in Oslo and Bergen and Tromsø.

General history. Until the second world war, Norway had only one University: the one in Oslo. But since 1908, there were two faculties of theology. As for the historians at the university of Oslo, they have – with a few exceptions – taken little interest in church history/history of Christianity. General research focus has been the social, economic and political history of Norway in the 19th and 20th centuries. And many research publications in this field have paid little attention to the international context as perspective for interpreting and understanding the Norwegian case.
Research on the High Middle ages has, however, been kept alive all the time. Here, the historians have written about the church as an institution with economical resources and political power, which could be used for good or bad. In most cases, the latter function has been underlined. Less attention has mostly been paid to Christianity as an integrated part of medieval culture, and the interpretations of medieval Christianity have often been superficial and inadequately informed in terms of the international research context.  

In the post war period some significant exceptions to this general trend should be mentioned, mostly outside the University of Oslo: At the university of Bergen, Sverre Bagge’s Centre of excellence has been doing interdisciplinary and comparative research on European peripheries in the high middle ages. Here, church historical perspectives have also played in important role, and the political and cultural role of Christianity has been included on a professional basis, according to the international state of the arts. At the university of Trondheim (NTNU), Steinar Imsen has for a long time been dealing with church historical topics from early modern and late medieval Norwegian history. His doctoral dissertation on Superintendenten from 1982 is – in spite of the author’s insistence on a general historical (not church historical) point of departure for his research – also an important church historical contribution to the reformation history of Norway, and it generated an interesting interdisciplinary discussion when it was presented. More recently, Steinar Imsen has – together with a team of cooperators – published a large volume on the history of the archbishopric of Nidaros up to its fall 1537, a topic which is certainly highly relevant to further research in Norwegian and Nordic reformation history. At the University of Tromsø, Lars Ivar Hansen is responsible for a research project on The Protracted Reformation in the North. At the university of Oslo, Arnved Nedkvitne has – not least as professor emeritus the last years –

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17 Examples to be mentioned.  
18 CMS: Link  
21 Cf.: http://uit.no/prosjekter/prosjekt?p_document_id=317402
contributed with a number of publications demonstrating an increasing interest in and competence on church historical topics.\textsuperscript{22}

\textit{Church history.} Church historical research on Norway at the institutions of theology has, especially during the most recent decades, had a special focus on the modern period; on the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries. Her one can observe a development similar to the one in general history.\textsuperscript{23}

Research on the medieval church history of Norway played a significant role up to the Second World War, but since then this is not any more the case. With the exception of the research on the modern period, the general trend in Norwegian Church History has been to deal more with international topics (including European Reformation History) than with specific Norwegian topics. This has resulted in a rather disintegrated situation, with no national Church historical Society and (unlike Sweden or Denmark) no national yearbook or review for Norwegian Church History.\textsuperscript{24}

**Late Medieval background to the reformation**

The Late Middle ages and times of the Kalmar Union never belonged to the preferred periods of research in Norway, neither among church historians nor among general historians. It was a period of decay, between the glorious times of the Norwegian kingdom of the High Middle ages on the one hand and the dark times of the union with Denmark on the other hand. From a traditional Protestant point of view (among Lutheran church historians) there was no reason to go deeper into this period, which was thought of as a period not only of National decay, but also as a dark period of the Church. And also from a general historical point of view, it seemed much more important and much more interesting to study the politics and legislation and literature of the High Middle ages: the times of the influential Norwegian kings, the old Norse legislation and the old Norse literature.

\textsuperscript{22} Arnved Nedkvitne: \textit{Lay belief in Norse society 1000-1350}, København 2009, Ære, lov og religion i Norge gjennom tusen år, Oslo 2011


\textsuperscript{24} During the first half of the 20th century, Norway, too, had its Yearbook of Norwegian Church History, published with the title \textit{Norvegia Sacra}, with the supplementary volumes \textit{Bibliotheca Norvegiae Sacrae}. Most of the volumes appeared in the period from 1921 to 1948. The two series joined forces in 1950, but since then only three volumes have been published; the last one in 1980.
General history. Consequently, the High Middle ages were left as a somewhat neglected period of Norwegian history writing. It was worth looking into in order to see what went wrong.\textsuperscript{25} As a specific contribution to understanding this, several historians had a focus on demography and on reduced population due to pestilence. More than anyone else, Ole Jørgen Benedictow has contributed significantly to research on these developments.\textsuperscript{26} In general, historical research on Norwegian Late Middle Ages was not at all undertaken in order to better understand the preconditions of the Reformation, but in order to analyse the reasons for the fall of Norwegian power and sovereignty ending up in total Danish take-over.

Church history has not played an important role in this historical research, – with one exception: The studies of the Archbishop of Nidaros and his ecclesiastical institution. As the Norwegian nobility and royal families lost influence and power, the archbishopric was the most important institution to preserve and nourish interests of Norwegian sovereignty and resistance to Danish take-over. In \textit{Norges nedgang}, the collection of historical contributions to the interpretation of Norwegian Late Midle Ages, Lars Hamre wrote an interesting essay on the \textit{Erkebispedømmet i unionstiden}.\textsuperscript{27} The volumes edited by Steinar Imsen (2003) and Steinar Supphellen (2004) are the most recent contribution to the research on the importance of the Nidaros Archbishopric.\textsuperscript{28}

\textit{Church History}. Strangely enough, church historians have so far taken little part in research on Late medieval Nidaros. The field has been dominated by general historians, historians of music and liturgy, art historians and archeologists. In a Protestant ideological perspective, one might assume that his defence of a national cause was not sufficient to make the Archbishop of Nidaros important. Within a theological context, he was anyway a defender of a losing party, he belonged to the wrong side.

A generally negative attitude to Late Medieval Christianity may be an important reason why Norwegian church historians have been doing little research on the church history of this period.


\textsuperscript{26} Ole Jørgen Benedictow: \textit{Plague in the late Medieval Nordic Countries} (1992) and \textit{The Medieval Demographic System of the Nordic Countries} (1993)

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Norges nedgang. Senmiddelalderen. Norske historikere i utvalg} (Cf. footnote 24), pp. 171–212.

\textsuperscript{28} Imsen’s volume is part of a book series: \textit{Senter for middelalderstudier: Skrifter}. Several volumes in this series deal with the Medieval (including the Late Medieval) tradition of the Archbishopric in Nidaros, with a special focus on the history of the Nidaros liturgy. Cf. Footnote 20 above. To Supphellen: see footnote 1 above.
But here, too, there are exceptions: Oluf Kolsrud, professor of church history at the University of Oslo and founder of Norsk historisk Kjeldeskriftinstitutt, took the initiative to editing a large number of medieval Norwegian sources, including sources from the Late Middle ages. And in his Norsk kyrkjesoge i Millomalderen, he offered an overview of Medieval Church history closely related to the original sources. Here, the Late Middle Ages, too, were treated in considerable detail. More recently, Torstein Jørgensen (Misjonshøyskolen Stavanger, and for several years also member of the Centre of advanced studies in Bergen) has been doing research on the Late Medieval penitential letters in Rome dealing with Norwegian cases.

Church historians have beyond this also to a certain degree been dealing with the Late Middle Ages in publications about general themes. In some of the monographs on Luther’s theology published by Norwegian church historians, the late medieval context of Luther’s theology has been treated in greater detail. Sometimes, this has been done most of all in order to demonstrate the contrast between medieval and Reformation theology, but sometimes it has been just as important to establish a context of continuity for interpreting Luther and his religious views.

If one presupposes, as many researchers do today, that Late medieval religiosity and Late Medieval Church life should be looked upon not primarily as a negative contrast to, but much more as an important contexts of continuity for understanding Reformation church history and Reformation religion, there is, from a church historical point of view, considerable desiderata concerning research on Late Medieval Norwegian Church history. Church historians should once again take part in research on the Nidaros traditions, as they did in the 1920ies and 1930ies (e.g. Oluf Kolsrud). And not less important: Church historians should take up research on a neglected source material most relevant to understanding pre reformation religiosity in Norway. A great number of

legends related to Mary and the saints were edited more than 100 years ago, but since then, very little has been done in order to evaluate and interpret these interesting sources.\textsuperscript{33}

### The introduction of the Reformation

The Reformation in Norway was introduced not only from above (mainly without popular support), but also from the outside (definitely defining Norway as a Danish province. And the introduction of the Reformation as such has never been an important object of research in Norway. It has been a common attitude to presuppose that Protestant religiosity and protestant church life needed more time in Norway than elsewhere in the North in order to be accepted and integrated in society and in the daily life of the people. But from the 16\textsuperscript{th} century, not too many sources are available which could contribute to confirming or disproving this kind of assumptions. Jens Nilssøns \textit{Visitatsbøger} (cf. Footnote 4) certainly is one of the most valuable source at hand, and this text contains many local reports confirming the presence of the old belief up in the 1570ies and 80ies. But no monograph and hardly any research contributions at all have been devoted to analysing this text during the last 100 years.

Church historical research seems to have been dominated by the ideological presupposition that the Norwegian people really did not make Lutheranism their own until Protestantism was renewed through the lay movements in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{34} And Norwegian reformation history has been no priority field of research. The field has mostly been covered by smaller studies, spread on a number of topics.

One first category of studies to be mentioned has to do with the \textit{clergy}: the key social group responsible for introducing the new religion to the country. Already in 1897, the church historian Anton Christian Bang published his prosopographic overview of the Norwegian Protestant clergy in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{35} Later studies have not pursued Bang’s broad and partly also quantitative line of

\textsuperscript{33} Cf. C.R.Unger (Ed.): \textit{Heilagra Mana Sogur}, vol. 1–2, Christiania 1877, and C.R.Unger (Ed.): \textit{Mariu saga : Legender om Jomfrea Maria og hendes Jertegn / efter gamle Haandskrifter}, 2 Vols. Christiania 1871. These editions of (mostly) translated texts from legends of Mary and the saints still seem to be highly relevant to further research on Late Medieval Norwegian (and Icelandic) religiosity.

\textsuperscript{34} Brandrud: To be inserted.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Den norske Kirkes Geistlighed i Reformations-aarhundredet (1536–1600). Biografiske, kulturhistoriske og kirkehistoriske Oplysninger}, Christiania 1897.
research, but rather dwelt with specific aspects of the clerical culture of the late 16th century. Their education has been analysed and described in several studies. The influential group of the so-called Oslo-humanists (including superintendent Jens Nilssøn in Oslo and his family) has also been described in different connections. Steinar Imsen’s Superintendenten (cf. footnote 19) also contributes to the understanding of the Norwegian clergy in this period, as does also the historian Gudmund Sandvik’s book about clerical finances at the time of the reformation from 1965.

Another important field of research has been the Catholic resistance to the reformation, after Olav Engelbrektsson had left the country. This is, as already mentioned, easy to understand from an ideological point of view, due to the fact that the Catholic side by the introduction of the reformation in Norway was the most consequent defender of national interests and traditions. A pioneer in this field was Oscar Garstein, who was for decades very active as a contributor to Norwegian church history research without holding any university position. More recently, the catholic resistance has been treated in Arne Bugge Amundsen and Henning Laugerud: Norsk frienkerhistorie.

The regional diversities of a large and not too densely populated country like Norway (only about 150,000 inhabitants) should be paid attention to in an overview of the reformation in the country. A particular role was played by Bergen due to the city’s membership and important position in the Hanseatic network, with easy access and close contact to German cities which were early influenced by reformation ideas. Further investigations about the Reformation in Bergen would be welcome. North Norway, too, deserves special attention as a special kind of periphery in Reformation history. Here, the new University of Tromsø’s research project (se footnote 15) will probably be able to present new knowledge within the first few years.

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40 Oslo 2001.
42 The first results can be expected in the volume The protracted reformation in Northern Norway. Introductory Studies Ed: Lars Ivar Hansen, Rognald Heiseldal Bergesen and Ingebjørg Hag, Stamsund 2014
Finally: The broader understanding of the social, political and legal context of the reformation in Norway has also been improved considerably during the last years. A few notable examples with a special relevance to reformation history shall be mentioned here.  

Consolidation of the reformation

The consolidation of a Lutheran confessional culture in Norway was a slow process, strictly ruled from Copenhagen as far as legislation as well as training and appointment of clergy were concerned, but nevertheless resulting in a variety of confessional culture which in certain respects was different from Denmark.

The legal aspect. The initial intention (announced in the Danish 1537/39 ordinance) to serve Norway with its own Church ordinance resulted in nothing more than minor adjustments in 1607. As far as questions about the relationship between ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction in Early Modern Norway are concerned, less work has been done here than in the neighbouring Nordic countries. But some important contributions have appeared recently: in addition to Riisøy’s book (see footnote 34), Erling Sandmo´s PhD-thesis from 1998 should also be mentioned in this connection. Within this interdisciplinary filed of Legal history and Church history, further studies would certainly be needed in order to reach a broader understanding not only of the actual functions of social discipline in Early Modern Norway, but also of the way in which new ways of thinking about the relationship between law and religion affected Norwegian society in the 17th century. An interesting element in this context is the continuing uses and receptions of Old Norse legislation traditions. Comparative Nordic studies of different ways of handling the new Protestant principles of ecclesiastical legislation (in the tradition from Melanchthon and the Wittenberg school of legal thinking) would no doubt be a most awarding undertaking.

44 See Footnote 5.
46 Following up international research trends as articulated e.g. in the research of John Witte. Cf. his God’s joust, God’s justice : law and religion in the Western tradition, Grand Rapids 2006.
The clerical order. With the reformation, the clerical order was redefined. It was no more defined primarily through its holy rank imposed by the ordination, but rather – more and more – through learning/education and through loyalty to the king. In Norway, the new Protestant clergy was not only for the most part educated in Denmark, but they also very often were Danish by birth. Due to this, the social distance between the congregation and the pastor in many cases increased. On a biographical level we know a lot about many of the 16th century clergymen who served in Norway for a shorter or longer period. The prosopographic overview is available, too, since Bang’s study from 1897 (see footnote 34). But the specific profile of the clerical order and its role as transmitter of a Protestant clerical culture still remains to be examined.

Transmitting a confessional culture is certainly not only a question of books and theology, but also about social values and practices. In early modern Protestant culture, the clergy was on the one hand – more so than in late medieval society – defined as a social example, to be followed by the congregation. On the other hand, the increasing social distance between clergy and people contributed to reducing the effect of this *exemplaritas*. In this connection, one once again has to pay attention to regional differences, for instance between North Norway on the one hand and Bergen on the other.

*Books, studies and reading.* Books remain an important source for studying the transfer of confessional culture. One thing here is the theological profile of the pastors and the superintendents, passed on through their university training in Copenhagen or elsewhere. We know something about the importance of Philippism in the tradition of Niels Hemmingsen especially in Western Norway in the late 16th century, and the attempts to pursue an iconoclastic line of politics by superintendent Jens Skielderup in Bergen. But we know little about the profile of Protestant learning in Early Modern Norway. A recent contribution to answering this question is Gina Dahl’s monograph *Book Collections of Clerics in Norway, 1650 – 1750*.

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We also know something about which foreign universities were most frequently visited by Nordic/Norwegian students. In spite of valuable studies to this topic, important work is still left to be done in order to further illuminating the media and contents of the transfer of Protestant learning in Norway in late 16th and early 17th centuries. An important topic in this connection is the more popular part of protestant religious culture: songbooks, collections of sermons and cathecisms. What can be said about the distribution of this kind of books in Norway, and to what extent (and since when) did local Norwegian initiatives manage to compete with the dominant editions published in Kopenhagen?

New research projects. Early modern protestant culture can be studied from many different perspectives, and an overview like this can never be close to exhaustive, – neither with regard to existing research from various disciplines nor (even less) with regard to interesting possibilities for future research. One interdisciplinary and comparative research project – about to be finished – at the Faculty of theology of the University of Oslo has studied changing attitudes to death and the dead in late 16th and early 17th century Norway (and Denmark). Primary sources have been funeral sermons and epitaphs. These sources have been registered, described and interpreted. A new research project – again interdisciplinary and comparative Nordic – about to start out 2015, is studying changes in religious topography in the North in the Early Modern Period.

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50 Ludvig Daae: *Matrikler over Nordiske studerende ved fremmede universiteter*. Christiania 1895. Vello Helk: *Dansk-norske studierejser fra reformationen til enevælden 1536-1660 / Vello Helk; med en matrikel over studerende i udlandet*, Odense 1987. More recent: Otfried Czaika: *David Chytraeus und die Universität Rostock in ihren Beziehungen zum schwedischen Reich*, (= Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 51), Helsinki 2002. Following up this line of research, more is still left to be found out about the specific Norwegian group of students.  
1. Introduction

Short presentation of the history of the Reformation in the country

The introduction of the reformation in Sweden is often associated with the tensions in the late medieval Nordic Union. The election of Gustav Vasa (1496?-1560) as king of Sweden in June 1523 is traditionally held as an event that marked the rise of a Swedish state independent from the Kalmar Union. Even though it is debated whether this event really marked the end of the idea of a Nordic union, the successive state building of Gustav Vasa provides an important factor for the establishment reformation in Sweden. The new ruler needed an ideological – and theological – legitimization of his government which was challenged by national as well as by foreign powers. Furthermore, since many bishops, including the exiled archbishop Gustaf Trolle (1488-1535), had propagated for the union, Gustav Vasa was clearly aware of the dangers of a politically strong church. He was also aware of the political impact that the bishops had had in Sweden during the politically turbulent fifteenth century. The kingdom was also in need of economic resources. To accomplish the defeat of the Danish king Christian II (1481-1559), Gustav Vasa had taken loans from the Hanseatic League. The reformation, with its practical implications of decreasing the church’s political, economic and juridical power, could provide economic resources as well as power legitimization for his government.

At the time of Gustav Vasa’s accession to the Swedish throne, many of the bishoprics were vacant, and the archbishop was in exile. Furthermore, many churches and monasteries were in need of repair due to the civil war. Among the bishops, the only true opponent of the reformation was Hans Brask (1464-1538) in the diocese of Linköping. It was a weak church that confronted the king and the new theological ideas.
However, it was not the political need of the king that first introduced reformation ideas into the kingdom. The thoughts of Luther and other reformators were circulating in the country already at Gustav Vasa’s accession to the throne. In trade cities like Stockholm and Söderköping, sermons and pamphlets with reformation ideas were spread during the early 1520s.

In order to solve the financial problems, Gustav Vasa and the council made some infringements in the church. In the year 1523 was performed confiscations of silver (chalices, shrines, monstances) from churches and monasteries. During the following year, the king housed military horses in some monasteries and in the year 1526 he closed the newly founded carthusian monastery Pax Mariae (Mariefred), which he claimed as his heritage. All these infringements and the taxations of the peasants, were criticized during two upheavals in Dalarna (1525 and 1527). As a response to these upheavals and as a way of establishing a firmer juridical and political foundations for his politics, the king summoned a diet in Västerås 1527. At this diet, where the clergy were not permitted to be involved in the decisions, the nobility, peasants and burghers approved the king’s decision to limit the economic, political and juridical privileges of the church. It was also decided that God’s word should be preached in a “pure” way. Even though none of these decisions explicitly meant a breach with Rome nor implied the introduction of a Lutheran reformation, the consequences and later interpretations of them were decisive for the creation of a national evangelical church in Sweden.

At the same time some liturgical transformations were performed. Mass in Swedish was being celebrated in Stockholm during the late 1520s. Masses in Swedish were introduced (and also resisted) in other parts of the country during the 1530s. A first general decision of a reform of the liturgies on national basis was issued in 1536. During the early 1540s, a general transformation of the mass was performed. Even though the mass in Swedish at this time had many similarities with late medieval liturgy and cult practice, it was by many people considered as a disruption of traditional piety.

At this time, the early 1540s, the Swedish government had made a clear stand for the introduction of a reformation. At the diet in Västerås 1544, the kingdom was said to be “evangelic”, and for that reason many catholic traditions were abolished (for example masses for the souls of the departed; pilgrimages etc). For a period of time, the title “bishop” was abolished and the power of the church leaders was limited. A state governed church modelled by Gustav Vasa’s German councellors
Georg Norman (d. 1552/1553) and Conrad von Pyhy (d. 1553) was introduced. However, the church and government did not make a confessional stand for neither Confessio Augustana nor any other confession at this time. The Lutheran archbishop Laurentius Petri (1499-1573) did however issue many church regulations, which would eventually be sanctioned in the important Church Order of 1571.

Due to the lack of confessional foundations, the church policy in Sweden was clearly influenced by the rulers’ own political (and sometimes theological) interests. Whilst Gustav Vasa avoided confessional stands in order not to create tensions with neighbour countries or create tensions in the country, his son Eric XIV (rule: 1560-1568) opened for Calvinistic influences in the country, which erupted in a conflict of the use of water in communion. His younger brother Johan III (rule: 1568-1592) on the other hand, is well known for his dialogue with the pope and for his attempts to make the Swedish church and its liturgy more “catholic”. During his early reign, he issued two important documents in line with his irenical church policy: The Nova Ordinantia (1575), which was a complementary church order, and the Liturgia Suecanae Ecclesiae Catholicae & Orthodoxae Conformis (1576), also known as “The Red Book”, which was a new – very controversial – liturgy for the Swedish church.

A clear stand against the church policies of Johan III was issued at the important meeting in Uppsala 1593, which was summoned by his younger brother duke Charles (Karl, later Charles IX) (rule 1599-1611) after Johan’s death in November 1592. At the meeting in Uppsala, Confessio Augustana was declared as the official confession of Sweden. This Lutheran foundation of the kingdom was secured politically through Charles victory over Johan’s son, king Sigismund, in 1598.

Until his death, the Lutheran orthodox clergy tried in vain to make Charles IX swear loyalty to the Confessio Augustana. This was accomplished neither under Charles’ reign nor under his son, Gustav II Adolf. But in his succession agreement 1611, Gustav II Adolf promised to protect the citizens and their faith as it was explained in Confessio Augustana and in the decisions at the Uppsala meeting. Therefore, the year 1611 is sometimes used to denote the end of the relatively long reformation process in Sweden.
**Short presentation of the writing of reformation history in the country before the nineteenth century**

The first Swedish scholar to write the full story of the Reformation in Sweden was Johannes Messenius (1579–1636). Between 1609 and 1613 he was professor in law at the newly resurrected Uppsala University. During his time in prison at Kajaneborg castle in Finland (1616–1636), to which he was sentenced because of alleged high treason (it is probable that his Catholic faith was one of the most important reasons behind the prisonment), he finished many of his most important historical works. *Scondia Illustrata*, which was written ca 1620 – 1624 (printed 1700–1705) deals with the whole history of Sweden until 1611. In his accounts on the Reformation, where he draws on sources (literal and oral) that are no longer available, he focused especially on the conflict on the liturgy of Johan III.

The study of the reformation during the seventeenth and eighteenth century was in many aspects devoted to publication of source-material. For example, in *Inventarium ecclesiae Sveo-Gothorum* (1642) Johannes Baazius (1583–1649) published many important texts and items which are usable in research of today even though they should be used in a critical way. Other still usable source editions are Haquin Spigel’s, *Skrifteliga bevis* (1716) and Uno von Troil’s *Skrifter och handlingar til uplysning i swenska kyrko- och reformationshistorien* (five volumes, published 1790-91).²

2. General interest within church history and practical theology (with a focus on reformation research)

It should be emphasized, that the reformation research in church history and practical theology was very vital until the 1960s. Thereafter the study of the reformation has not been very high on the agenda at the theological departments. As a consequence, the reformation research in these fields

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² To this category belongs also Schefferus 1698; Peringskiöld 1719. von Stiernman’s *Alla riksdagars och mötens besluth* (1728 – 1743) is often used even today. He also published *Biblioteca suiogothica* (partly printed 1731). In Andreas Olavi Rhyzelius works *Episcoposcopia Suiogothica* (1752), we find an account of the reformation which was based on the source-material, even though his conclusions are sometimes disordered. Sven Baelter published *Historiska anmärkningar om kyrkoceremonierna* (1762), which is still usable in many ways. One of the most important collections from the eighteenth century is: S. Wilskmans *Svea rikes ecclesiastique wärk* (1760); O. Wallquist, *Ecclesiastique samlinger* (1788-1795).
since the 1970s is limited to a few articles and dissertations. Therefore, it is relevant to enhance the research made before 1970, not least as a background for the search of new perspectives and questions that has not yet been posed.

**The development of church history (and practical theology) as an academic discipline**

During the nineteenth century, the study of church history underwent basically the same development as the field of history. It became increasingly important to free the analysis from the contemporary values and beliefs and it was also held to be possible to reach objective truths about the past. The importance of objectivity and of source criticism made the method of studying church history secular. Scholars were not as interested in discussing God’s providence in history as had been the case during the earlier centuries. At this time, church history became an independent field in the academic theology. Even though the study of church history had existed at the Swedish universities since they were founded, it did not exist any independent chairs in the field until 1831, when the first chair in church history was established in Lund, to be followed by another chair in Uppsala 1886. From this time, until the 1960s, the development in the field of church history was to a large extent dominated by the two possessors of the chairs in Lund and Uppsala, who performed and directed almost all teaching and seminary training.²

The key-figure in introducing a source-critical study of church history in Sweden was Henrik Reuterdahl (1795-1870), who was professor in Lund between 1845 and 1855.³ His work *Svenska kyrkans historia* (published in four volumes 1838-1869; he was not able to complete his planned twelve volumes) was ground breaking in the sense that it had a source-critical perspective based on a thorough investigation of sources which were valued methodically.⁴

Reuterdahl was also the first church historian dealing with the reformation (as well as with other periods in the history of the church in Sweden) in a modern way in the last volume of his life work *Svenska kyrkans historia* (IV:1, 1866) which was devoted to the period 1520–1533. During the same time as Reuterdahl published his volumes, Lars Anton Anjou (1803-1884) wrote *Svenska

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2 See Brohed 2000 p. 117.
3 See Blückert 2009 p. 184 and Österlin 2001 p. 32.
kyrkoreformationens historia in three volumes (1850-1851). A few years later Anjou also published Svenska kyrkans historia från Upsala möte 1593 till slutet av 17:e århundradet (1866). Even though it had a clear, sometimes almost defensive, Lutheran perspective, Anjou’s work was based on a rich variety of source material, and it was also signified by a critical perspective and the aim of giving the coherence of the process.\(^5\) Anjou’s three volume work remained the most important study of the reformation in Sweden until 1933.

**The rise of modern Swedish reformation research**

At Uppsala University Herman Lundström (1858-1917) became, in many ways, the father of the twentieth century reformation scholarship in Sweden. From him, a succession from supervisor to disciple can be found, relating to some of the most important reformation scholars in Sweden during the last century: Hjalmar Holmquist, Sven Kjöllerström and Åke Andrén. Lundström was influenced by the source-critical school of Harald Hjärne, which also emphasized the interrelation between European and Swedish historical development and the orientation toward the “great personalities” that were thought to decide the direction of this development. This orientation toward certain personalities and their impact for the church and society as they were related to an interplay between national development and the European context, was typically for the study of church history at this time.\(^6\) The focus on the reformation became weaker in Uppsala with Emanuel Linderholm (1872-1937), who held the chair in church history in Uppsala between 1919 and 1937.\(^7\) However, during Linderholms time as professor in Uppsala, one important work on late middle ages was supervised: Gösta Kellerman’s *Jakob Ulvsson och den svenska kyrkan under äldre Sturetiden 1470-1497* (1935).\(^8\)

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\(^5\) Holmquist 1933b s. 317.

\(^6\) This perspective is observable in his dissertation on the Swedish archbishop Laurentius Paulinus Gothus (vol. I-III, 1893, 1898) (Laurentius Paulinus Gothus was bishop in Skara 1608-1609, bishop in Strängnäs 1609-1637 and archbishop in Uppsala 1637-1646). Apart from this magisterial work, Lundström mostly published shorter works and published several editions of sources, especially from the reformation, see Brohed 2000 p. 118-119. At Lund university, the reformation study was of importance for Otto Ahnfelt (1854-1910), who was appointed professor in church history in Lund 1894. His publications of source-material from this period is still of great value.

\(^7\) However, in 1917 the church historian Emanuel Linderholm published his *Gustav Vasa och reformationen i Sverige*, which was a short analytical work.

\(^8\) This modern orientation was also clearly followed by his successor Gunnar Westin. This orientation toward the study of free churches was upheld and developed by his apprentice and successor Gunnar Westin (1890-1967), who held the chair in Uppsala between 1937 and 1956. Even though Gunnar Westin concentrated his own research on the free church movement, he also published some studies on older material, for example Westin 1934 and Westin 1937-38. During this rather vital period of church history in Uppsala, some dissertations were also devoted to reformation and early modern problems, for example Cnattingius 1939; Göransson 1950; Heldtander 1955. Of these, Hans Cnattingius (1906-1971)
The golden period of reformation research in Sweden (ca 1920-1950)

A revival for church history in Lund came with Hjalmar Holmquist (1873-1945) who held the chair between 1909 and 1938. Holmquist had defended his dissertation in 1903 in Uppsala, under the supervision of Herman Lundström, on bishop Johannes Matthiae (1592-1670; bishop in Strängnäs 1643-1664) and his role in the Swedish church. Holmquist is today mostly remembered for his volume on the reformation (Holmquist 1933) in the planned nine volume work on the history of the church of Sweden (of these planned nine volumes, only five were eventually published). Under his supervision fifteen dissertations were defended in Lund. Of these, three were on the reformation: Sigfrid Estborn Evangeliska svenska bönböcker under reformationstidevarvet (1930); Emil Färnström Om källorna till 1571 års Kyrkoordning med särskild hänsyn till tyska kyrkoordningar (1935) and Sven Kjöllerström Striden om kalvinismen under Erik XIV (1935).

However, the theological study of the history of Christianity was not conducted only in the field of church history. An even older academic discipline was practical theology, which had been introduced in Uppsala 1806 and in Lund 1809. At the beginning, the purpose of this field was to introduce a practically oriented field in the pastoral training as counter-weight against the increasingly theoretical theological teaching. Despite this, the field became successively more and more theoretical during the 1830s, not least due to the influence of the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), who saw practical theology as the “crown” of the theological study.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century and during the early twentieth century, the field of practical theology became more “purely” directed at a historically oriented study. This development and Sven Göransson (1910-1989) would continue their research on the pre-modern period. Cnattingius published a study on the meeting in Uppsala 1593, Cnattingius 1943 and also a biographical analysis of Johannes Rudbeckius, in Cnattingius 1946. He also wrote some studies on late medieval and reformation monasticism, see Cnattingius 1963 and Cnattingius 1969.

He was clearly influenced by Lundström whose study on Laurentius Paulinus Gothus he later described as a “landmark in Swedish church historiography”, see Westin 1945.

The foremost church historian in Sweden during the 20th century was, in many ways, Hilding Pleijel (1893-1988), who was professor in Lund 1938 until 1960, at basically the same time period as Westin was professor in Uppsala. Most of the dissertations from Lund during Pleijel’s time, were concentrated to the period 1600 until the middle of the nineteenth century, see Brohed 2000 p. 125. However, in line with his research program on popular piety in the old peasant society, some dissertations with a focus on earlier periods were defended: David Lindquist, Studier i den svenska andaktslitteraturen under Stormaktstidevarvet. Med särskild hänsyn till bön-, tröst-, och nattvardsböcker (1939) and Kristor Gierow’s Den evangeliska bönelitteraturen i Danmark 1526-1573 (1948).
was enhanced by the fact that many church historians were appointed as professors in practical theology. Just like church history, practical theology was increasingly “un-theologized” or rather “un-confessionalized” during the twentieth century. In practical theology, the study of the reformation was of foremost interest for many decades. Edvard Rodhe, who held the chair in practical theology in Uppsala between 1912 and 1921, published many studies in the liturgical traditions in reformation Sweden. In Lund, this orientation was followed by Yngve Brilioth (1891-1959) who, at the time of his appointment, was professor in church history at Åbo Academy. Yngve Brilioth was originally a historian, influenced by the Hjärne school. One of the foremost achievements of Brilioth was his analyses on late middle ages, a field that he started to explore already in his dissertation in history, Den påfliga beskattningen av Sverige intill den stora schismen (1915). Brilioth’s successor Sven Kjöllerström (1901-1981), who was professor in practical theology at Lund university for 26 years (1941-1967), made numerous contributions to the study of the reformation in Sweden, especially in the fields of liturgy and ecclesiastic law.

The decay of reformation research in church history

The de-confessionalization of both practical theology and church history had as consequence that these fields became increasingly more open to phenomena beyond the official Lutheran mainstream.

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11 On this development, see Andrén, Å, 1996 p. 11-16.
12 This anti-normative attitude was emphasized by Edvard Rodhe (1878-1954), who was first professor in practical theology in Uppsala (1912-1921) and thereafter in Lund (1919-1925). Through Rodhe the field got many of its still remaining features: a historically oriented study of liturgy, homiletics and canon law, see Andrén, C-G, 1996 p. 43; Andrén, Å, 1996 p. 17; Selander 2001 p. 140f.
14 Rodhe 1917.
15 See Andrén, C-G, 1996 p. 46; Selander 2001 pp. 142-143.
17 He later became associate professor (docent) in church history in Uppsala, and professor in Åbo 1925. From 1928 until 1940 he was professor in practical theology in Lund.
18 Andrén, C-G, 1996 p. 47; Selander 2001 pp. 143-144. During the 1940s until the 1970s were published a number of studies on ecclesiastical right (canon law) and the reformation. In these studies the reformation has been discussed as a period of transition in canon law, especially in relation to the tensions and the balance between church and secular government. The investigations of the developing church order in Sweden have highlighted the impact of both continental evangelical principles of law and the praxis of the church as well as the political situation in contemporary Sweden, Andrén, C-G 1996 p. 53. In this field, Sven Kjöllerström (the most important of his contributions are Kjöllerström 1931; Kjöllerström 1936; Kjöllerström 1940; Kjöllerström 1953; Kjöllerström 1957; Kjöllerström 1964; Kjöllerström 1971) and some of his former students, have made several contributions. As an example, during the early 1970s, two dissertations on the church policy of Johan III was defended, one on the Nova Ordinantia, and one on the king’s policy toward the remaining monasteries, see Ivarsson 1970 and Persson 1973. In the field of church right, the relations between church and secular government in the 17th century has also been discussed, Kjöllerström, 1944; Lindegård 1957.
church life. The period between 1920s until the 1960s saw an intense interest in revivalism and free churches as well as in popular piety in the field of church history. Meanwhile, the reformation research in church history was put on backburner after Holmquist’s retirement. However, this did not imply that the whole early modern period was forgotten. Sven Göransson, who upheld the chair in Uppsala between 1956 and 1977, was oriented toward the study of the Lutheran orthodoxy of the seventeenth century. Among his monographs in this field could be mentioned: *De svenska studieresorna och den religiösa kontrollen. Från reformationstiden till frihetstiden* (1951); *Den synkretistiska striden i Sverige 1660-1664* (1953); *Den europeiska konfessionspolitikens upplösning under Karl X Gustav* (1956).\(^{19}\) The orientation toward the early modern period was also upheld by his successor Ingun Montgomery (b. 1936) who defended her thesis *Värjostånd och lärostånd. Religion och politik i meningsutbytet mellan kungamakt och prästerskap i Sverige 1593-1608* (1972) in Bergen, Norway. However, Montgomery originally stood under Göranssons supervision and is furthermore considered as the one of Göransson’s students who methodically was closest to him, both regarding the period of study as well as in perspective. She also succeeded Göransson as professor in Uppsala 1977. Even after moving to the chair of church history in Oslo, which formally happened in 1984, she has pursued her studies in reformation and early modern church history.\(^{20}\)

With the exception of Montgomery, the reformation research has been more or less out of the agenda in Swedish church history during the period 1970 until c:a 2000.\(^{21}\) However, during the last fifteen years (at least) three dissertations on sixteenth and seventeenth century church history have been defended in Lund: Stig Alenäs: *Loyaliteten, prostarna, språket. Studier i den kyrkliga försvenskningen i Lunds stift under 1680-talet* (2003); Sinikka Neuhaus: *Reformation och erkännande. Skilsmässöärenden under den tidiga reformationsprocessen i Malmö 1527-1542* (2009) and David Gudmundsson: *Konfessionell krigsmakt. Predikan och bön i den svenska armén 1611-1721* (2014).

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\(^{19}\) After succeeding Westin as professor 1956, he never returned to the 17th century in any larger studies but rather oriented his research toward the 19th century, Brohed 2000 p. 127.

\(^{20}\) See Jensen, Thorkildsen & Tønnessen 2006. After Montgomery, the professors in church history in Uppsala have oriented their own research mainly to the modern period, see Brohed 2000 pp. 128-129. Among the dissertations oriented toward the pre-modern period some examples could however be mentioned: Hållander 1999.

\(^{21}\) The other church historians in Lund at this time, for example Berndt Gustafsson, Lars Österlin and Bertil Rehnberg, were also oriented toward modern church history, Brohed 2000 p. 131.
A golden period for reformation research in practical theology (ca 1950-1970)

In practical theology reformation research was highly alive well into the early 1970s. During the post war period, practical theology was characterized by the methods used by the two brothers Carl-Gustaf (b. 1922) and Åke Andrén (1917-2007) who for some years they held both the chairs in practical theology in Lund and Uppsala. In the same tradition as Kjöllerström, they emphasized the historical orientation of practical theology.22

Åke Andrén, who was professor in Uppsala for 29 years (1954-1983), initiated his career with some voluminous studies of the liturgical traditions in reformation Sweden.23 In his dissertation, defended at Lund University, he dealt with the preparations for communion (nattvardsberedelse) in relation to its medieval setting.24 After the move to Uppsala, he concluded the intense study of reformation liturgy in Sweden with a thorough study on Holy Communion in reformation Sweden.25 Between the years 1950 and 1954 his published studies on the reformation numbers more than 1100 pages.26 After 1954 Andrén mainly wrote minor studies on reformation themes, especially in the fields of ecclesiastical right and liturgy.27 He summarized much of his writings on the reformation in the third volume in the series Sveriges kyrkhistoria (1999).28 Even though Åke Andrén himself upheld the reformation research in Uppsala, very few of his doctoral students chose this period for

22 Andrén, Å, 1996 pp. 19-20; see also C-G Andrén 2008 p. 40. During this time the name of the field changes name to kyrko- och samfundsvetenskap (Studies in Churches and Denominations). At Uppsala university the field is today known as kyrkovetenskap (in English: “Ecclesiology”), and in Lund the name praktisk teologi, i.e. “practical theology”, has again come into use. Through its historical and non-confessional orientation, practical theology/ecclesiology in Sweden differs from many of its international counterparts, see Andrén, C-G 1996 p. 48; Selander 2001 p. 145.
23 It is worth noticing, that Åke Andrén’s supervisor, professor Sven Kjöllerström, encouraged him to write his dissertation on the reformation jubilee in Sweden 1793. However, as the source material turned out to be rather meagre and unexciting, and Andrén turned to reformation studies, see Andrén, C-G 2008 pp. 28-29.
24 Andrén, Å, 1952. Even before his dissertation he published an earlier unknown document, known as Introductorium theologicum, which he analysed and attributed to archbishop Laurentius Petri, Andrén, Å 1950.
25 Andrén, Å 1954.
26 Beside these printed studies, he also finished an unprinted licentiate thesis “Nattvarden i reformationstidens svenska kyrkoliv” (1948), see Andrén, C-G 2008 p. 30.
27 Among these, some articles has been rather influential, such as Andrén, Å 1953; Andrén, Å, 1973a; Andrén, Å, 1973b; Andrén, Å 1975; Andrén, Å, 1976; Andrén, Å 1981; Andrén, Å, 1990a; Andrén, Å, 1990b; Andrén, Å, 1992. See also Andrén, Å, 2000; Andrén, Å, 2003; Andrén, Å, 2004a; Andrén, Å, 2004b.
28 Andrén, Å, 1999. Carl-Gustav Andrén, who was professor in practical theology in Lund from 1967 until (formally) 1984 (in 1977 he became “rector” for Lund university and in 1980 he became University Chancellor), followed Kjöllerströms tradition, and studied liturgy and canon law in medieval and reformation Sweden, even though he also contributed with studies on modernity, see his own description in Andrén, C-G, 1996 pp. 48-49. His successor Lars Eckerdal was also oriented toward liturgy and canon law/church orders, but was oriented toward 19th and 20th century and Sven-Åke Selander has had a focus on religious didactics and hymnology.
their dissertations.\textsuperscript{29} Even though Andrén’s successors in Uppsala, have devoted their research interest to later time periods, some of these, especially Sven-Erik Brodd, have presented studies on reformation themes.\textsuperscript{30} Among later reformation researchers in practical theology, the most important has been Christer Pahlmbad (b. 1946), who has presented a new way of viewing the so called mass in Swedish with a focus on its continuity with late medieval liturgical practice. He has hereby highlighted the traditional rather than the disruptive elements in the reformation mass.\textsuperscript{31} In some articles on liturgy and sermons in the Swedish reformation church, he has also enhanced its continuity with medieval liturgy, even though he also acknowledges a slow protestant influence.\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{Reformation studies during the 2000s}

From the 1960s the church history courses in theological education, especially on the ground level, were marginalized. During the same time, more students were given the opportunity to study at the theological departments. Some transformations of the courses on ground level during the 1950s and 1960s, facilitated for future teachers to join these courses, as well as other students who did not wish to work either as clergy or as teachers. The amount of students was multi-doubled in a couple

\textsuperscript{29} Actually none of the doctoral students that defended their dissertations during Andrén’s time as a professor focused on the reformation in Sweden. Instead, most of the dissertations were oriented toward the Middle Ages and the nineteenth and twentieth century. The only exception was Bjarne Hariede, \textit{Konfirmasjonen i reformasjonstiden. En undersøkelse av den lutherske konfirmasjon I Tyskland 1520-1585} (1967). It should also be mentioned that Andrén supervised three licentiate thesis on the reformation in Sweden: Pehr Edwall, Tidegården i den svenska kyrkan under 1500- och 1600-talen (1959); Bernhard Ulfner, Klockarämbetet i Sverige under reformation och ortodoxi (1967); Magda Tholcke, Dopexorcismen i Sverige under reformationstiden (1968). None of these were ever printed. More than ten years after Andrén’s retirement, Gösta Mellberg defended his thesis, Mellberg 1995, on union and division of parishes and benefits in the diocese of Skara in the period between 1527 and 1680.

\textsuperscript{30} As a specimen in his application, Jan Arvid Hellström included a study on parish churches and rooms for worship during the early modern period in Sweden, which was published in a comprised version 1987: Hellström 1987. This study was regarded as a “pilot-study” for a larger project on rooms of worship. Sven-Erik Brodd has among his many studies on the episcopacy and Mariology published some articles on the reformation: Brodd 1982; Brodd 1989; Brodd 1990; Brodd 1994. The practical theological milieu of Uppsala has also had a medieval orientation with Alf Härdelin (b. 1927) as a key figure. In his research, Härdelin has presented various studies on medieval and also on some reformation themes. Among his many works, three may be mentioned: Härdelin 1996; Härdelin 1998 and Härdelin 2005. The medieval tradition in practical theology at Uppsala university has during the last decades been upheld by Stina Fallberg Sundmark.

\textsuperscript{31} See his dissertation, Pahlmblad 1998.

\textsuperscript{32} See Pahlmblad 1994; Pahlmblad 2001; Pahlmblad 2002. He has also studied the theological attitudes toward virgin Mary in some works of Swedish reformation theologians, especially among the brothers Olaus and Laurentius Petri, Pahlmblad 1996. Pahlmblad has also studied the practical aspects of Laurentius Petri’s liturgical theology, Pahlmblad 2000; Pahlmblad 2004.
of decades. As a consequence, higher education and research in church history and practical theology is no longer limited to Lund and Uppsala. Much of the reformation research that has been presented in Sweden after the turn of the millennium has been made at the younger universities.

Otfried Czaika (b. 1971) defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Helsinki 2002, and has later worked as assistant professor in historical theology at Linköping university, as Ph. D. Researcher at Royal Library in Stockholm, and as professor in church history at Norwegian School of Theology, Oslo. In his research he has focused on the growth and impact of German Lutheran confessionism, especially its impact on the rise of Lutheran orthodoxy in Sweden during the late 16th and early 17th century.

Martin Berntson (b. 1972) defended his doctoral thesis in Göteborg University, at the Department of religious studies. His research on the reformation has mainly been oriented toward problems in the fields of church policy, practical theology and cultural history, especially concerning the practical transformation of late medieval piety and the popular defence of traditional religion.

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33 Andrén, C-G 2001 p. 41.
34 From the 1960s, several universities have established courses and departments of religious studies. At some universities, for example in Gävle, Göteborg, Karlstad, Linköping, Umeå, graduate courses for Ph.D. studies were established. As a consequence, dissertations in church history have also taken place in Göteborg and Umeå (even though the field has formally been “religious studies”). In the year 2014 there were senior lectures with competence in church history and practical theology in Lund and Uppsala as well as at the universities in Dalarna, Göteborg, Jönköping, Linköping, Umeå, Söderåsens, Stockholm School of Theology and The Newman Institute in Uppsala. At ground level (the level below advanced studies) church history is usually studied together with practical theology/ecclesiology and missiology under various names such as “Church and Mission studies” (Lund and Uppsala), “History of Christianity” (Göteborg, Jönköping and Söderåsens) or “Historical theology” (Linköping, Umeå and Stockholm School of Theology).
35 Czaika 2002; Czaika 2004a. He has also written about the impact of Melanchton in sixteenth- and seventeenth century Sweden, Czaika 2007b; Czaika 2008a; Czaika 2009e; Czaika 2009f. Another important field in Czaika’s research is the connection between church history and history of books. Through catalogues of private libraries he discusses the possibilities of drawing conclusions about the reception of ideas and theology. Czaika 2009a; Czaika 2011; Czaika 2013. A third track in Czaika’s interests is the use of the reformation heritage in Scandinavia of today and reformation historiography, Czaika 2009e; Czaika 2009d; see also Czaika 2004b; Czaika 2005; Czaika 2007a; Czaika 2008b; Czaika 2008b; Czaika 2009b; Czaika 2010.
36 In his dissertation he explored the dissolution of the monasteries in sixteenth century Sweden with a special focus on the resistance against these dissolutions or transformations. He has written a number of articles in this field, and also extended the scope toward the kingdom of Denmark, Berntson 2003; Berntson 2006; Berntson 2007; Berntson 2010b; Berntson 2010c. He has also written about the popular resistance against the transformations of the church as a whole. The source material has to a large extent consisted in material from the rebellions against king Gustav Vasa, Berntson 2000; Berntson 2009; Berntson 2010a; Berntson 2012c. He has also began a project on the early modern theatre as a didactic tool in the confessionalization process, Berntson 2012a; see also Berntson 2005; Berntson 2008; Berntson 2012b.
The rise and fall of reformation studies in theology in Sweden

Why did the study of reformation at the theological departments ”die out” after the 1960s? Ingmar Brohed has concluded that after Hjalmar Holmquist’s time as professor in Lund (i.e. from the late 1930s), the study of medieval and reformation church history has been transferred to practical theology. Brohed experienced, that when it came to chose field of study, Ph.d. students tended to chose topics related to modernity. This may according to Brohed be due to the need to explore new fields, but it is also probable that the elder source material is considered intractable by younger researchers. The problems of devolving into old Swedish, old handwriting as well as the Latin language, is considered difficult to cope with the time limits of the ordinary Swedish Ph.D. study.  

A similar – but slightly later – tendency is to be discerned in practical theology. In this field there was likewise a tendency during the latter half of the twentieth century to focus on modern source material, from the period from 1850 and onward. Just like in Brohed’s discussion, it has been suggested that this tendency is due to both the lack of language skills (especially in Latin) as well as the time limits in the research education.

It should be emphasized, that the diminishing importance of medieval and reformation studies in church history and practical theology in Sweden in the post-war period, is not unique for church history. A similar tendency is to be found in the field of (secular) history. This may according to my view be due both to the radical source critical paradigm that reached national acclaim in the 1940s, as well as to the tendency in both school and university teaching since the 1960s, to emphasize contemporary problems and highlight history only when it comes to provide a direct understanding of the contemporary situation.

The institutional foundation of church history/practical theology

It is important to emphasize that the education and the research in these fields at Swedish universities is not confessional. There are therefore no basic differences in perspective or method in education and research between the theological departments and the departments of religious

37 Brohed 2000 p. 133.
studies in the humanities. This situation is partly due to the fact that the humanistic study of religions has grown organically inside the theological faculties at the state universities. In many other European countries this study of religion has rather developed as a reaction against a confessional theological academy. Therefore, the term religionsvetenskap (a derivation from the German Religionswissenschaft) in Sweden can include for example bible exegetics, systematic theology and church history as well as philosophy of religion, history of religion and psychology of religion.

The only periodical that is wholly devoted to church history in Sweden is Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, which is published annually. Sometimes articles in church history appears in periodicals such as the theological Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift or Svenskt Gudstjänstliv, or – more rarely – in historical periodicals Historisk Tidskrift or Scandia. The only scholarly organization devoted to church history is “Kyrkohistoriska Föreningen”, founded by professor Herman Lundström in Uppsala 1900. This association is responsible for the publication of Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift and organizes yearly “Kyrkohistoriska dagen”. Furthermore, many of the associations devoted to the study of the history of certain dioceses, contributes to the national church history, both through organization of seminars and lectures, and through publications of monographs and anthologies on their respective dioceses.

3. Interest within the discipline of history in writing about the Reformation after 1970

The starting-point

Looking at Swedish historical research on the Reformation published before 1970 it is crucial to remember that the Reformation was not essential for the creation of the subject of history at the end of the 19th century. On the contrary, state, political power and political conflicts were essential. Accordingly, it was not obvious for historians to write about a religious phenomenon as the Reformation. However they did but focused on state building and politics and gradually, as the research interest changed, on economics. You might say that these topics typical for all historical research were clearly shown in relation to a religious phenomenon as the Reformation.
An important part of the Swedish history in the beginning of the 16th century, the classical time of the Reformation, was the disintegration of the Kalmar Union in three different states among them the Swedish kingdom led by the famous Gustav Vasa (1496-1560). In national history writing he is more or less the father of the Swedish realm. In this narrative it is often said that Gustav supported the Reformation because he wanted the wealth of the Church to build a new, independent state. An important discussion in connection with this was whether all violent and political events in the decades before and after the Diet of Västerås (1527) can be seen as religious conflicts and whether the decisions of the Diet in the recess were a Lutheran or rather a part of a political and economic victory of Gustav Vasa with small religious purposes. Politics and economics have even dominated historical research of clerical institutions before and after the Reformation and in history writing on 16th and 17th century church and religion have been seen as subordinate to political and economic purposes during the period when Sweden became a great power in Europe. The history of the Reformation was not mainly about religion.

From 1970 cultural history grew strongly among Swedish historians. Culture was defined as the world picture or the interests of individuals or groups. Historians tried to go inside the head of the leaders or ordinary people, in order to understand historical development, and to make qualitative research. Even if this was an obvious change in Swedish historiography it took at least 20 years before the interest of religion started to grow. The reason might have been a difficulty to understand religion as culture. In modern society religion is about individual and existential belief. Analyzing powerful or collective activities the analyses must be about other cultures or group interests or pure power ambition, not about religion. The development of cultural history in Swedish research of the Reformation is the theme of the following text.

**History writing on the period before 1560**

*Expansion of power or discipline.* We start this review with a great historian of the 16th century, *Lars-Olof Larsson*. He has been working with Swedish 15th and 16th century for many years and in 2002 he published a biography of King Gustav Vasa presenting a greater picture of Swedish history
before and after the Reformation.\textsuperscript{39} It is about the before mentioned Swedish disengagement of the Kalmar Union and of Denmark and the creation of a strong Swedish state, in a world full of resistance and revolts. Gustav Vasa is described as a ruler in a true Machiavelli way for instance because of his way of handling the Church. He confiscated all its values, estates and different sorts of incomes, in order to get resources to build the new state, or to pay his debts from the war. The last rising against Gustav, \textit{Dackefejden} (1544), describes Larsson as an important peasant revolt and its result awareness of the importance of listening to the peasants for a ruling king.

As to the Reformation and its religious impact the political and the economic part of the process from 1527 to 1544 is most important to Larsson. He writes that we didn’t know what religion meant to Gustav. In a discussion of the impact of the Diet of Västerås he writes that the economic parts were most important. It was a political and state financial dividing line made with tactical skillfulness and total unscrupulousness.\textsuperscript{40} Larsson argues that the religious formulations in the decisions of the Diet were so vague that it was possible for everybody to accept them, and it is formulation like the true words of God being preached in a true way. Even if Larsson states the Diet of Västerås was not a Reformation diet he underlines that many political actions between 1527 and 1544 can be seen as parts of a Lutheran plan, such as publishing Lutheran books, a Bible in Swedish (1541) and taking over the appointment and the judgment of clericals at the top of the Church. All was important for developing of a new Lutheran Church in Sweden.

A historian of education, \textit{Per-Johan Ödman}, wrote in 1995 a history of Sweden from the Middle Ages until today, and in this major review of Swedish educational history the Reformation plays an important part in what Ödman calls a great educational project.\textsuperscript{41} The Reformation is initiated by the king and two of his religious advisers, Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae. The main reason for Gustav was politics and economics, for Olaus religion and for Laurentius something in between as he was politician in the Church.\textsuperscript{42} Ödman’s thesis is that from at least the Diet of Västerås the king worked with his Lutheran project, but realizing that it was not that easy to change the world picture of people he used a strategy of change combined with tolerance. Gradually he emptied the old

\textsuperscript{39} Lars-Olof Larsson.
\textsuperscript{40} Lars-Olof Larsson, p. 139.
\textsuperscript{41} Ödman.
\textsuperscript{42} Ödman, pp. 73-76
rituals for content. He met opposition but he never gave up and in 1544 he took over the Church for the purpose of making loyal subjects, among others things through 22 new learned schools.

Both Larsson and Ödman can be described as modern expressions of the old attitude to the Reformation underlining power and state building as a conscious plan from the new Swedish king; a plan that succeeded very well. They differ in how they estimate the impact of religion in the recess of Västerås as well as in how consciously the king used the Lutheran religion in his state building project.

Political cultures. From the 1970s Swedish historiography about medieval and early modern time has been inspired by theories of political culture arguing that you cannot just look at the top of a powerful state if you want to understand what happens politically. You have to examine political participants at all levels of society and to look for different ways of interplay between state and local society. Important Swedish scholars who have started this new way of studying politics and the state are Eva Österberg and Harald Gustafsson and Harald Gustafsson did it in his research into the decades around the Reformation in his book on the disengagement of the Kalmar Union.43

As a criticism to older research, as Larsson, Gustafsson argues that the result, the realms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway and their borders, was not obvious from the beginning. It was not a question of Swedish liberty from Denmark. On the contrary, he shows a complex and elaborately analyzed political play with many participants, different political cultures and many possible endings. In general Gustafsson is critical to history operating with modern nations as the obvious political structure all through history, but he also shows doubts about the strength or the aim of an early modern king just to decide how to rule and to succeed politically.

Gustafsson underlines that religion was an important identity in the beginning of the 16th century and that the result of the Diet of Västerås did contain a pronounced Lutheran statement. The formulation, the true word of God, was a typical Lutheran formulation well known as that in society. At the same time he does not see any important influence of religion in the state building process he has been studied. It was about power, politics and political traditions, even when he analyzed identities. He writes that the typical early modern rhetoric about the Christian realm was

43 Gustafsson.
not important in political fights in the early part of the 16th century. As to his own critics it is interesting to underline that he found specific political traditions with great influence bound up with exactly the three realms to come.

In his dissertation Mathias Cederholm has studied late medieval peasant resistance in the Danish region Scania and the Swedish region Småland, 1490-1525. This included resistance against the church and the clergy. Cederholm has analyzed everything that can be called a peasant rising, even smaller risings. His result is that they all were resource conflicts, and showed that peasants had different ways of making protest or trying to get influence acting in a political culture with great differentiation. As to the meaning of the Reformation even peasant conflicts against the church were material and not religious. Cederholm has found some critics of the church including needs for better or for right clerical services, but never anything that could be read as Lutheran. So, peasant resistance at the time of the Reformation was mainly about material resources or economics.

As we have seen, the scholarly focus on political cultures in relation to state building or local conflicts do not change the older attitude that religion and religious changes were not important in the decades of the Reformation, even if Gustafsson emphasizes the use of Lutheran concepts in the recess of Västerås. Last person to be described in this part is Peter Reinholdsson. He has also studied rebellions or risings in the late medieval Sweden and the beginning of the 16th century, but in all Sweden and only the greater uprisings. He criticizes ideas about these being only for peasants and claims that rebellions before the rising of Dacke (1544) consisted of cooperations between different groups. The rising of Dacke was the first peasant revolt in Sweden. He understands this social cooperation as an answer to the threats of a new state against an old way of legitimizing and organizing society with an important mutuality between individuals and groups and an idea of an individual or a collective right not to be controlled. He finds it in their language, activities and organizations. Even if Reinholdsson disagree with Cederholm he also mainly focus on political and economic oppositions, but he even presents several interesting examples of religiously important conflicts. Together all these historians have in different ways made it clear that early modern politics were not just about the state.

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44 Cederholm.
45 Reinholdsson 1998.
Religion as an important part of the Reformation in the beginning of the 16th century. In the middle of the 1990s Magnus Nyman severely criticized what he called the focus in history writing on the Lutheran victory in Sweden.46 According to him scholars have only discussed the opposition as cultural tardiness; people didn’t want changes. Opposing this he wrote a book about the Catholics from Gustav Vasa to Queen Kristina. By a large number of Catholic elements, which did not disappear, he showed the impact and the strength of this tardiness. The Lutherans tried to suppress Catholic elements, especially in 1540s, but didn’t succeed. It was almost impossible to find Lutherans outside Stockholm during the first part of the 16th century and the Catholic was a real alternative in the second half (see next part). Nyman interpreted it as a fight between two confessions, and the problem is that history has been written by the winning part.

In Nyman’s research we find arguments for seeing religion as an important part of the Reformation, even if his result is that the Reformation didn’t succeed in creating a religious change. Perhaps it was a good way to provoke Swedish historians to focus on the cultural impact of Gustav Vasa’s new state. In an article Peter Reinholdsson argues that Nyman’s research shows the importance of analyzing religion because it was important to people at the time and because it was not that easy to change, not easy to be Lutheran. At the same time he criticizes Nyman for being so interested in confessional conflicts that he doesn’t recognize the impact of conflict among ordinary people and in ordinary life. Reinholdsson wants to focus on culture instead of ideas, you might say.47

Even the medievalist Gabrielle Bjarne Larsson wants to illustrate religious culture around the Reformation and she does it as a criticism of the often claimed non-religious impact the recess of Västerås.48 Not allowing cloisters to exist and the clergy to serve all types alters meant that prayers and masses for the dead or for the souls before death disappeared. To Gustav Vasa and his advisers the clergy was supposed to preach and not to have masses for souls. This was an enormous change in people’s everyday life. Before the Reformation it was tremendously important to help dead relatives or friends through the purgatory on their way to heaven; it was a crucial part of their worldview. The denial of the purgatory, and by that the masses for souls, was an important religious part of Gustav Vasa’s so called economic Reformation. Accordingly, the impact of recess of Västerås

47 Reinholdsson 1995.
48 Bjarne Larsson 2011; Bjarne Larsson 2012.
was religious, but you only see if you are familiar with the role of religion in the medieval society.

Two PhD-theses from Lund University are obvious examples of modern research focusing on religion as an important factor in the history of the Reformation. As for Bjarne Larsson it is important for these two researchers to discuss and show a crucial religious change in the 1520s. Just like Bjarne Larsson *Per Stobaeus* starts with attitudes from before the Reformation writing about Hans Brask, the last Catholic bishop of the important diocese of Linköping.⁴⁹ Brask fought for the old church as long as possible but left Sweden in 1527, and died 1536. There is lots of material written by Brask, but it has never been used for understanding him as a powerful and busy bishop. In Stobaeus’ books we find his religious world picture as well as analyses of his work in society. He was not just thinking of political or material power, Stobaeus shows convincingly how Brask understood all his practical duties religiously.

It was important for Brask to fight for the Church because of its extensive responsibility. It had its own laws; own tradition and the pope and the Curia were the main and deciding organs. It was not possible for a king or a national group of theologians to decide what was right religiously. They just didn’t have the authority. The state and the Church were to cooperate.; the Church even played an important role in the Council. Accordingly, Brask could not accept the idea of the truth being obvious for everybody in the Bible. The Bible didn’t have that sort of authority. And if you let heretics take over the Church God was to punish society severely. Being so important it was necessary for the Church to have wealth in order to function and to defend itself.

Generally you can say that the bishop, in Brask’s point view, was the mediator of grace and had the superior responsibility for society and for the relation of mankind to God. If this didn’t function God would punish with plague or other diseases, bad harvests or war. What makes Stobaeus’ results even more interesting is that he compares with Lutheran ways of managing the same types of clerical duties such as the relation to God and often he doesn’t see a great difference.

⁴⁹ Stobaeus 2008; Stobaeus 2010.
In her dissertation *Kajsa Brilkman* does not start in the medieval society but focuses on the language of the Reformation as a discourse.\(^{50}\) It is a fruitful way to show the impact of the new religious meaning or the connection between religion and politics. Important in the Lutheran religious discourse was a subject with soul, heart and capacity of understanding, everything in order to improve the possibility of salvation and the relation with God. Accordingly, everybody was supposed to read and understand the Bible but that did not mean that they could understand it in their own way. There was only one true way to understand it; a true Christianity, but it was important to understand.

The subject who understood, which is the title of her dissertation, was even the subject that was addressed in the political discourse of 16\(^{th}\) century, in state building as well as in all ambitions of organizing households and local communities. Brilkman finds this in her analyses of letters and other texts from Gustav Vasa and his surroundings. It was indeed a political subject with responsibility and obedience who was addressed. It was a part of a new Lutheran discourse. Even if political actors didn’t talk about religion the comparisons between political and religious discourses show convincingly that the Lutheran influence on politics in the 1520s was essential.

**History writing on the period after 1560**

It has been a central problem in Swedish history writing to decide when the Reformation was a fact in Sweden; was it with the Diet of Västerås or later, perhaps after the meeting in Uppsala in 1593. As we have seen it is a trend among young 16\(^{th}\) historians to underline to religious change in 1527. A reason for the older skepticism for this what happened in Sweden after the death of Gustav, especially King Johan III (1537-1592). He was married to a Catholic woman, his children were brought up catholically and he was an active the leader of the Church trying to integrate old rituals and religious ideas. The earlier mentioned *Magnus Nyman* argued that Johan had Catholic plans and that it was a real possibility for Sweden to become Catholic again.

In his biography of Johan III *Lars Ericson* has an interesting discussion of the king’s church policy and interprets it in another way, not containing a true Catholic ambition, but a serious try to

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\(^{50}\) Brilkman.
combine the two confessions, or to recreate a Christian church for all, as it was before Luther. He combined Lutheran and Catholic ideas, but most of all he worked from his interest of the old church and the fundamental rituals. Again we see a critic of a too simple use of the interplay between the two confessions as a way of explaining Swedish history in the 16th century and an attempt to study at contemporary wishes and ambitions in their own right.

When Johan died Sweden got a real Lutheran king, Karl 9, or that is at least the ordinary history. *Erik Petersson* and *Annika Sandén* have written a book about this king and his archbishop Abraham Angermannus. Together these two men started a rebuilding of Sweden in 1595, as Petersson and Sandén express it. Angermannus was to travel around the country, visiting every parish, in order to inspect, admonish and punish. He began in February 1596 in Scania and travelled for four months. We have a protocol from his inspections in the diocese of Linköping and that is what Petersson and Sandén have analysed. In their book we got a comprehensive and interesting picture of a very practical Reformation trying to make the clergy preach in the right way and perform the ceremonies correctly. Angermannus was to control the clergy and, through their knowledge, the status of sin in every parish. This is not about words in a recess but a severe ambition for control and if necessary change. It is not easy to say whether the non-accepted was Catholic remnants or just sinful behavior, it was not as important for Angermannus as the ambition to change it to the right way, the Lutheran way.

In comparison with earlier research it is interesting to underline that in the description of Petersson and Sandén the main purpose for this travelling was not to politically build a new state, but the fear for God’s punishment for all sin committed in society and in addition a fear for doomsday which was supposed to come soon. The reason for Angermannus’ sternness was this fear. He didn’t succeed well, people disapproved his behavior. It was too much or perhaps not legitimate. Karl ended the bishop’s work and put him into prison at the castle of Gripsholm.

*Mats Hallenberg* has written about these Swedish vicars of the 16th century who were controlled by Angermannus but his analysis is classically Swedish; it is not about religion and not about fear, it is about power and control. In Hallenberg’s description the local vicars represented the state but at
the same time he was the leader of the local community with conflicts of his own, in relation to different social groups in the parish.

**History writing on the 17th century**

*The State – ruling, discipline and confession.* The Swedish interest of the state and state building was great in the historiography of the 16th century, but it is even greater in the history of the following century. In 17th century Sweden became a great power in Europe and at the same time the Swedish state was strong; only one third of the Swedish landowners were nobles and the rest freeholders and peasants under the Crown. This might explain the enormous interest of the state among historians. In the decades after 1970 this interest was combined with questions about the power and the oppression especially of the peasantry; in a marxistic point of view the state was seen as feudal.

Even in the research on the 17th century religion has been included since 1990s. A good example of this is *Anna Maria Forssberg*’s dissertation about war propaganda and mobilization 1655-1680, a period where Sweden was involved in two great wars after its involvement of the Thirty Years War.54 It is mobilization of soldiers as well as taxes. It is important for Forssberg to understand how it was possible for the state to make the peasants support the war in this way and her answer is the use of religious preaching in the propaganda, especially the idea about war being God’s punishment for sinfulness. The state could not just demand but had to argue for its wishes for resources. In this the Church was extremely important. The war was explained by the sin but at the same time the Church presented an idea of a good king who would function as a protection against the war. To Forssberg it is more a verbal violence than a peaceful argument.

Using Lutheran religion in the state’s suppression is as mentioned even essential in *Per-Johan Ödman*’s Swedish educational history and he names the 17th century the triumph of conformism and describes different sorts of education and disciplinarian processes ending up in a theocratic orthodoxy and a total compliance among people in Sweden.55 The theory of confessionalisation, inspired by German scholars like Heinz Schilling, is even useful in this specific Swedish context.

54 Forssberg.
55 Ödman, pp. .
Nils Ekdahl’s dissertation about the preaching of Haquin Spigel (1645-1714) from a political and rhetorical perspective is an example of this. He sees a connection between the theocratic preaching and the establishing of a confessional state. Spigel had ideas of Sweden being the new Israel and Ekdahl concludes that his sermons were “a part of the dissemination of a confessionally shaped national myth which bound the people to God, as well as a part of the maintenance of social discipline among subjects.”

Even Erland Sellberg bases his research on the theory of confessionalization. As a historian of ideas he writes about state building but from a specific part of the Church, the universities and the philosophical part of the education. He analyses a debate between bishop Paulinus and professor in ethics Jonas Magni. Even if the Church was a part of the state because of the importance of the confession the theologian debate might be a sphere without influence of the state. Sellberg exposes two ways to go: Paulinus argued that truth found in the Bible was important, even in practical, clerical life, in preaching. Magni wished to start the debate in the non-Christian, scholastic tradition from Aristoles and by that he chose a more philosophical and less practical discussion and a university more independent from the state, but even with lesser political influence. Sellberg finishes his book with a comment on the relation between state and church and claims that a confessional state never would accept a church protecting its own sphere, as Magni wished, and that was shown by the Church Law from 1686. Among Swedish historians this might be an argument for 1686 as the true year for the implementation of the Reformation.

A popular way in Sweden discussing the state building from a top-down perspective is the idea of a judicial revolution during the 17th century and exactly this comprehensive Church Law has been described as an important and typical part of this revolution. An example of this is Malin Lennartsson’s research on divorces during the 17th century showing that the diocese became more controlling in relation to the inhabitants of the parishes by means of this law.

The Clergy – as public officials or actor in the Church. The relation between the Church and the state is important in Swedish historical, even in works about the clergy as public officials or

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56 Ekedahl
57 Ekedahl, p. 251.
58 Sellberg
59 Lennartsson.
participants in a power struggle against the state. It is theme we even find for the 17th century. Cecilia Ihse has written about the clergy in the Swedish diet 1642-1686, that is before the absolute monarchy of Karl XI. The church and the clergy were subordinate to the state or the state used the church. To Ihse it is important that the state never marginalised the church but let it participate in the state building process. It was a give and take. The church legitimised the power of the state but at the same time the church got possibility for defining its own role and their official duties. Peter Lindström has studied clergy appointments in parishes in Northern Sweden and shows for the 17th century an interaction between the diocese and the inhabitants of the parishes, with very little practical influence of the state.

World picture – religion, magic and nature. The focus on state and politics can be challenged by taking religion seriously and trying to understand it not just as a tool of secular and political interests but as a functioning world view with its own problems, logic and solutions. Hanne Sanders studies what she calls a Lutheran world picture before 1800 consisting of a human world between the power of God and the Devil. She argues that there is a fundamental difference between this religious-magical world view and a modern secularized view in relation to the meaning or the function of religion. In a pre-secularized view religion was culture and knowledge, in a secularized it was an individual and existential faith and by that not the base of common culture and the knowledge of society. She finds this Lutheran world view in legislation and shows that it was built on an idea of only one true belief and only one way to understand the Bible. Laws and regulations ordered different ways to teach about this truth and showed great anxiety for those who misunderstood or tried to teach another truth. In Sanders’ opinion it indicates a serious protection of a common truth, just like we try to protect science, human right or democracy.

The common, religious culture made it possible to communicate and the task for historians is to unveil important conflicts among the people of the 17th century, instead of defining them before the analyse looking for the state or the elite against the people, Lutheran against Catholic. In the Lutheran culture of 17th everything was coming from God or the Devil; among people you might find ideas of other powers in nature. Common is the belief in active powers outside human beings which man always is in dialogue with; God is one of these. In a secularized world view only human

60 Ihse
61 Lindström.
62 Sanders 1995; Sanders 2001; Mellem Gud og Djävelen; Sanders 2003; Sanders 2004; Sanders 2010.
beings are active. Analyzing the diocese of Lund Sanders has tried to find this Lutheran world picture in function in relation to things like schools, hospitals, wars, information, order, ethics, and marriage. She finds a Church with great responsibilities and in close contact with many serious public matters, even serious for ordinary people. It is not the tool of the state.

You find thoughts like these among several Swedish historians after 1995. In 2000 even Linda Oja wrote a review of the legislation of the 17th century, and found that the main purpose was to protect and propagate the true Christian belief. It was important to feel right and do right and they had lots of methods to attain this; preaching but even the ceremonies were important. It existed an obvious ambition of education but it didn’t address specific groups, e.g. the people. The purpose was to create uniformity in the church. To Oja it is about power but you have to understand it from the inhabitants’ points of view.

In her dissertation from 1999 Oja analysed how people categorized magical phenomena. She found a broad agreement on the evilness of witchcraft as well as of harmful magic, but no agreement as to benevolent magic or white magic. For those who used it was good, a power from God in order help other people. The clergy disagreed. The conflict was within a religious-magical world picture and it was about benevolent magic. The clergy believed that even this magic originated from the Devil because the power of God was only for the clergy to use. Otherwise the magical power of the church was threatened. Oja even discussed the idea of nature. In the 17th you saw God’s and the Devil’s acts in nature; in the 18th century nature has become just nature. What was magical was now unreal or a result of sickness. This parting between nature and magic was for Oja a part of secularization.

Annika Sandén, who was the co-writer of the book of Angermannus, wrote 2005 her dissertation about what she calls views of society and welfare strategies using public protocols from 1600-1620 as sources. She discovered common ambitions for all in the city of Linköping to create and protect a good society with space and responsibility for all and compared this with modern welfare ideas. To create this order was not just for welfare of the inhabitant but even for the pleasure of God. And in the church room you could experience the divine order of society and during the ceremonies create

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63 Oja 2000
64 Oja 1999.
stable relation to God, getting his protection against war, bad harvests, plague and other diseases, and his love and success in life.\textsuperscript{65}

In his dissertation \textit{Olle Larsson} has compared the bishop’s church visitations in the 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{66} In the 17\textsuperscript{th} century it was a meeting with all people from the parish, a popular arena and the topics were order and moral not religion, education and poor relied as in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. To him these meetings with the bishop show a common religious culture important for all in the local community and for the order between the inhabitants. It is like Peter Lindström’s result on clergy appointments. \textit{Ann-Sophie Arvidsson} has studied how church and society took care of the surviving relatives and even she finds lesser control and more care.\textsuperscript{67}

\textit{Bodil E. B. Persson} has written about the plague and how people tried to stop it from the conviction that it was a result of the anger of God. It was important for them know why God was angry and how to prevent it, and if it was right to use magical methods.\textsuperscript{68} \textit{David Larsson Heidenblad} has compared how a thought-figure about man’s morally responsibility for catastrophes got different expressions to different times, from anthropogenic climate change to premodern ideas about divine punishment for sinful behaviour.\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Barbro Bergner} has studied sermons on dead persons showing a dramatic religious language and knowledge about morality in life and the meaning of death.\textsuperscript{70} And \textit{Jonas Liljequist} showed in his dissertation about sodomy or sexual relation with animals in Sweden how a confession of crime might have been a way to commit suicide in a religious world where suicide was an unforgivable sin.

In 2011 \textit{Martin Kjellgren} wrote about a scientific conflict about astrology in Sweden 1590-1630, and again we meet Laurentius Paulimus Gothus and now even the Finnish astrologer Sigfridus Aronus Forsius. Astrology being a very traditional science was discussed and its influence reduced during the first of decades of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{71} It is common to interpret this as a process of modernization where the rational thinking replaced religion and magic, a decline of magic. To Kjellgren it was a discussion within a religious world picture where the clergy was skeptical to

\textsuperscript{65} Sandén 2005
\textsuperscript{66} Olle Larsson.
\textsuperscript{67} Arvidsson.
\textsuperscript{68} Persson.
\textsuperscript{69} Heidenblad.
\textsuperscript{70} Bergner.
\textsuperscript{71} Kjellgren 2011
getting knowledge from outside the Bible and saw possibilities for non-theologians to be able to read the sky and find truth. The risk was greater because of the book printing which made it easier for everybody to get the astrological knowledge. The church didn’t want prophets outside the church. They wanted to strengthen the authority of the church and to define to difference between religious norms and that which was religiously divergent. Just like the definition of the dividing line between white magic and religion, showed by Oja.

*Elite culture, popular culture and the long reformation.* For many historians the history of the Swedish reformation has focused on dating the Swedish Reformation. Was it Lutheran in 1527, or 1594, or when? Historians from the previous part studying world view do not focus on this, but it is easy even to find an idea of a long Reformation among Swedish cultural historians. It has partly been developed together with an idea borrowed from Peter Burke: the fundamental early modern cultural conflict between elite culture and popular culture, including a prolonged education of the people by the elite. Many of these researchers have indeed contributed to the knowledge of the early modern religious culture or mentality.

An important scholar in this tradition is Göran Malmstedt. He published his thesis in 1994 about thoughts of time from 1500 to 1800; a period characterized by reduction of church festivals. 72 You would expect that all days for saints should disappear after the Reformation, but they didn’t. Many of them remained and were supplemented with special days for praying focusing on the state, introduced by Gustaf Vasa. The real change took place in the 18th century; at that time all days for saints disappeared and left for rest was only one Sunday every week. Because of economic needs in connection with a change in production it was necessary to replace the traditional and more qualitative time with a modern and more quantitative time. The traditional elements survived both 16th and 17th century, and during this period Malmstedt even found a religious mentality containing the idea of God showing his anger by interfering in nature.

In a book from 2002 about life around the parish church Malmstedt recognizes Lutheran elements about silence listening to the preaching of the clergyman but even quite chaotic elements. 73 He doesn’t call them Catholic but writes that it was not what the Lutheran church wanted. He argues even here for a tension between traditional and modern elements and talks about a special faith

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72 Malmstedt 1994.
73 Malmstedt 2002.
among the peasants, a bringing up of the people and church discipline. In some concluding remarks he writes that maybe the Lutheran elite should not have been satisfied before the gravity of the revivals in the beginning of the 19th century. To Malmstedt a reason for the failed Reformation is the local clergy; they were not educated enough and were to much a part of the local peasantry. In his description of the religious life around the church Malmstedt shows a religious mentality and a religious practice which is far away from the common idea of Lutheran parish with commotion and disorder inside and outside the church and with a mix-up of rituals and faiths. No matter how you explain this it is a very interesting picture of the 17th century Swedish Church.

Monika Weikert has analyzed another part of the early modern Swedish Church which does not fit in with the common, theologian idea of a Lutheran church; votive church offerings. She shows that it was widely distributed and accepted among people as well as the clergy. She understands it as a part of a communication with gifts and argues that this even included the communication with God in the Lutheran Sweden. As Malmstedt she explains it as an example of a long Reformation and a result of a meeting between official and unofficial ideas. A true Lutheran vicar wouldn’t have accepted it, she writes, but the clergy did. Her explanation is that votive church offering wasn’t that threatening because it doesn’t threaten the faith monopoly of the Church.

If we compare these historians with the earlier mentioned cultural historians working with world views the last one should be more interesting in recognizing how a Lutheran church functioned 150 years after Luther and how all these religious and magical elements worked together and created conflicts, than with a discussion of what true Lutheranism is. In a way it is typical that Malmstedt’s definition is the severe and individual Christianity of the 19th century. It is also difference in the definition of the church, to Malmstedt the true church is only the part of the clergy that behaved like true Lutheran, not all the clergy, which would have been claimed by historians from the other group.

The dualism between people and elite has been used in a more descriptive way in Sweden by Soili-Maria Olli writing about people who made a pact with the Devil and Mikael Häll about erotic nature spirits and the demonic sexuality. For both it is relevant to use the distinction between people and elite, because in these cases they did not agree. Among people it was possible to contact

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74 Weikert.
75 Olli; Häll.
with nature spirits without being in contact the Devil, and all contact all contact with the Devil wasn’t dangerous. But elite and the people existed within a common world view with very active powers in nature.

At last an important Swedish research tradition should be mentioned. Before or in the beginning of the cultural change Bengt Ankarloo started a lifelong research in Swedish witchcraft, including social history, legal history, theology and cultural history/anthropology.76 Per Sörlin and Maria Wallenberg Bondesson are two historians from 1990s and 2000s who have followed this pattern.77 Marie Lennersand and Linda Oja renewed it 2006 by writing about life after the great witchcraft processes in 1668-1671.78 It is not possible to describe this research discussion in a short text like this, but is obvious that religion was important when you defined and judged a witch. You have to believe in the power of witchcraft and to find an explanation. As in Olli’s and Häll’s research evil creatures even witches in the 17th century were to be placed in the Lutheran dualism between God and the Devil as the Devil’s tool.

Religion: gender and nationalism. Two topics have been popular in Sweden for the last 10-20 years; gender history and the history of nationalism. Both these topics have had great actuality for early modern historians and for both religion and the Reformation have been important.

Frequently early modern gender historians start at the discussion about the impact of The Reformation on gender relations. Lyndal Roper declared years ago that for women the Reformation was the beginning of a negative development. This has been repeated, discussed and criticized among Swedish historians up till today.79 The fundamental idea is that by the Reformation the patriarchal society won. It was almost impossible for women to survive outside marriage and marriage was dominated by the power of the husband. It is an idea of a severe, hierarchical society. The Church had the responsibility for and the control of marriage and as an institution marriage was religiously defined. So, religion and the church have great space in this research. At the same time you find discussion like the earlier mentioned about the growing control over people during the 17th century with focus on the cooperation between state and the church or the subordination of the

76 Ankarloo.
77 Sörlin; Bondesson.
78 Lennarsand and Oja.
79 The hard picture is clearly seen in Taussi Sjöberg and Sjöberg, and the discussion in Andersson, Bergenlöv, Jansson, Karlsson Sjögren, Lennartsson and Lindstedt Cronberg.
Church. The Church law of 1686 is central in most descriptions and descriptions of a hard sexual moral. The modification of the severe picture could be that it was not that hierarchical or that it is possible to find different positions of women in the early modern society, and that the development might have been positive for women.

The research is too great to describe individually but it is worth to call attention to some historian. In her dissertation Anna Hansen describes what she calls regulated marriages with different power relations but with the married couple (man and woman) at the top. Focus is not just at gender but even at the marriage.\textsuperscript{80} Annika Sandén has in her dissertation written about the marriage protected by the church as a central societal institution creating welfare for everyone.\textsuperscript{81} Hanne Sanders has shown that the main aim for everybody getting in contact with the diocese was to be married and to create well functioned married couples. People and the church had a common interest, because nobody looked at marriage as suppression but as a opportunity to have a good life. It is a modern attitude to think that you can just live by yourself, perhaps by the help of the state.\textsuperscript{82}

Among historian who has been looking at nationalism or ethnicity in the 17th century some have discussed the relation between religion and nationalism. In his great work on early modern nationalism Jonas Nordin argues that religion was a part of this nationalism in 17\textsuperscript{th} century and Nils Ekedahl is combining the confessional state and nationalism seeing Haquin Spegel’s writing about “The Swedish Israel” as a way of creating a national identity on Lutheran ground.\textsuperscript{83} Even Göran Malmstedt has written an article expressing this connection between early modern nationalism and religion.\textsuperscript{84}

Analysing bishop Peter Winstrup’s preaches and talks in relation to the wars between Denmark and Sweden in the middle of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century Hanne Sanders also focuses on the idea of the Swedish and the Danish people described as other peoples interacting with God from Israel’s people in the Bible.\textsuperscript{85} It is a continued Bible history. War and peace are gifts from God as well as the result of the peace treaty. God punishes because of man’s sinfulness and gives the peace because of his own

\textsuperscript{80} Hansen.
\textsuperscript{81} Sandén 2005.
\textsuperscript{82} Sanders 2010.
\textsuperscript{83} Nordin; Ekedahl.
\textsuperscript{84} Malmstedt 1999.
\textsuperscript{85} Östlund.
goodness. It is not about confessions and it is not about the opposition between nations, as in a modern nationalism. It is only differences among people in a common religious history.

Joachim Östlund has in his dissertation analysed a special communiqué which was written every year from the state to the people supposed to be read aloud in the church (böndagsplakat) from 1660 to 1919. As to the 17th century it is crucial for him that did talk about confessions. And neither is it about being Swedish. The communiques are not used for creating a national identity built on a Lutheran ground as Ekedahl wrote about. On the other hand Östlund finds identification with a Christian world and a wish to bring peace to Europe. Most pronounced is the wish to create a moral order with individuals in dependence on each other and a common bliss and welfare in peace. This mutual agreement about creating a moral order is the main impact. This is very like the result of Sandén in her local material from the Swedish city, Linköping. It is not just suppression, it is not just hierarchical. It is a mutual view with happiness and unhappiness.

**History writing about the period after 1720**

Looking at the historiography for the period after 1720 we find research about clerical institutions like the vicar, “sockenämman” (the organ in the parish for the inhabitants) and the responsibility of the church to communicate news, e.g., new laws. It is often about ambitions of structuring society, local interests and the interest of the church and the state. In more cultural historical works some authors recognize a cultural continuity considering a Protestant culture other a cultural change involving a lesser magical attitude to nature or you might say more focus on nature as nature with its own laws, but created by God. The new individual piety among the Moravian Brethren, the pietism and the revivals of the 19th century century are popular topics, too. Even a cultural discussion of the impact of secularization is found in research on religious life of 18th Stockholm and personal piety among revivalists.

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56 Östlund.
57 Some examples are: Arvidsson; Bergström; Lindström; Furuhagen; Reuterswärd.
58 Some examples are: Jarrick 1985; Jarrick 1987; Jarrick 1992; Nordbäck; von Wachenfeldt; Sanders 1995.
59 Bergfeldt; Sanders 1995; Sanders 2004.
4. General perspectives in the study of the reformation in church history/practical theology since the 1970s

During the late 1960s we can discern a revival for the reformation studies on the international scene. This development was characterized by a methodology outlined by Bernd Moeller in his article “Probleme der Reformationsgeschichtforschung” (1965). As a church historian, Moeller criticized the systematic-theological orientation that was prevalent in the Reformation research at this time. This orientation was according to Moeller characterized by a more or less “a-historical” approach to the Reformation process. What was needed was a combination of these theological perspectives and the social-political perspective. It was according to Moeller also important to emphasize that Medieval catholic piety was fully vigorous even in the early days of the Reformation. In line with Moeller’s arguments, the international reformation studies have since then often been characterized by broad perspectives where theological, social and political aspects have been incorporated.

In Swedish theology this kind of methodology would have been a very much welcome at that time, when there existed a huge abyss between perspectives in the reformation studies between systematic theology on the one hand and church history/practical theology on the other. However, at this time the systematic-theological interest in Luther – in the so called Luther renaissance – was slowly decaying in Sweden. Also in practical theology, the reformation field was clearly abandoned in favour of studies of modern church life.

Ingun Montgomery was one of the few (church) historians in Sweden who showed an awareness of the innovative transformations in the international study of the reformation from the late 1960s. Already in the foreword to her doctoral thesis (1972), she appreciated that the earlier strict divisions between theology and history were beginning to disappear. Instead she noticed the consciousness in newer methodology on the close relation between religion and politics. She described this socio-historical method as a study of clusters of problems in the relation between Christianity-church-society as a totality. This perspective opened up for a new understanding of the relation between church and state, between religion and politics. The overall principle was the unity and totality, the

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interplay between dynamics and ideas in society which were regarded as a whole. This methodological stance was in line with the development in the international reformation study at this time, but it was also in line with the method proposed by Montgomery’s teacher and earlier supervisor Sven Göransson. Göransson appreciated the new perspectives in international church history after the second world war concerning the relation between religion and society, a perspective which he described as “church and theology are investigated as religion in its Sitz im Leben”.

A. Late middle ages

*The long reformation – and the continuity perspective.* Through the new perspectives on the reformation studies from the 1960s and 1970s, it became problematic to view the reformation era as a time of innovation. Rather, one of the most important new perspectives in the reformation study was to view reformation theology in a continuity perspective where the reformation became understandable only in light of its late medieval context. The leading scholar in this field has been Heiko A. Oberman and his disciples (like Kenneth Hagen, Franz Posset and others). Consequently, ideas that have been regarded as typically “luteran” have been studied rather as continuations of ideas developed in a dynamic late medieval theological traditions.

In one way, the late medieval continuity with the reformation church in Sweden has been acknowledged since the early twentieth century. In many of Yngve Brilioth’s studies, he emphasized the tradition and continuity between the periods. He was personally influenced by the contemporary Oxford movement and its historical view of a continuity in the history of the church based on tradition. Unlike the elder protestant view of the late medieval period as a decay and the reformation as a kind of recovery, Brilioth had a dynamic history philosophy according to which the church is always in need of renewal although a tradition is also always upheld through for example the communion life. Through this perspective, he could acknowledge the continuity between late

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92 Göransson 1974 p. 15.
medieval and reformation piety, especially concerning reformation mysticism, death preparations (dödsberedelse) and prayers in the preparations for communion.95

The continuities between the late middle ages and the reformation era has been of foremost interest since at least the 1930s. For example, in his dissertation (1952), Åke Andrén analysed the preparations for communion (nattvardsberedelse) in relation to its medieval setting.96 Also in his later studies he usually related the developments during the reformation to the ancient and medieval preconditions.97 Andrén was not unique in this since. In many studies in practical theology from this time, the transition from medieval liturgical traditions and the new liturgies of the reformation were discussed.98

In her Ph.D. study, Stina Fallberg Sundmark (b. 1977) has analysed the visitation of the sick in both medieval and reformation traditions in Sweden. Through this long perspective, it has been possible to discern that some acts that were changed and disappeared during the reformation whilst others survived but were invested with a new theological interpretation. Even though there were transformations, it was during both periods considered of importance that sick and dying parishioners received the care of the church.99

One of the foremost propagators for the Oberman perspective in Sweden has been Christer Pahlblad, who has studied the “mass in Swedish” in relation to late medieval liturgical texts and presumed practice. His basic thesis is that although the reformed mass was given a new theological content – especially what concerns the canon prayers – its “outward forms display continuity with late medieval usage”.100 The most dramatic changes in the liturgies were, according to Pahlblad, rather the abolishment of the canon prayers.101 The consequence of this argument is that the

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95 Göransson 1997 pp. 68-69.
96 Andrén, Å, 1952. Even before his dissertation he published an earlier unknown document, known as Introductorium theologicum, which he analysed and attributed to archbishop Laurentius Petri, Andrén, Å 1950.
98 For example Andrén, Å 1952 and Johansson1954; Johansson 1955. The liturgy of the seventeenth century was, with some exceptions (see Jansson 1954) not highlighted in the same extent. However, some studies on mass music and hymn singing have been done, Kroon, 1953; Jacobsson 1958; Liber cantus Upsaliensis, utg. med inledning av Pehr Edwall (Laurentius Petri sällskapets urkundsserie 2 (1943); Liber cantus Wexionensis, utg. med inledning av Pehr Edwall (Laurentius Petri sällskapets urkundsserie 3) (1943).
99 Fallberg Sundmark 2008. A similar long perspective is used in Hanna Källström’s (b. 1978) dissertation where she has studied the functions of the cathedrals in Linköping and Lund as devotional milieu, Källström 2011.
transition from Late Medieval liturgy to a reformed mass, was a smooth process without radical change. The Swedish reformers found it important to let the new mass stand in a structural continuity with Late Medieval liturgical practices.102

However, late medieval theology and piety is a varied tool box. Whilst Pahlmblad has used his deep knowledge of late medieval liturgy to emphasize the “catholic” aspects of the reformation in Sweden (which according to Pahlmblad were made more purely Lutheran during the early seventeenth century), it has also been possible to show that ideas that earlier have been viewed as expressions of mere late medieval Catholicism, was actually in line with reformation ideas. Otfried Czaika has for example emphasised the reformation aspects in the activities of Sveno Jacobi, bishop in Skara, and has thereby complicated the traditional description of him as a “reforming catholic”.103

The vigorous late medieval church life. Another important assumption in the international reformation research field has been to show that the late medieval church was not in the state of decay, but was fully vigorous. This perspective has sometimes been combined with the assumption that the reformation was more or less a political affair on behalf of the elites not corresponding to the will of the people.

The study of medieval liturgical traditions flourished in practical theology in Lund during the 1940s and 1950s.104 The research was based on new textual findings in the archives, which provided a view of medieval liturgy as more differentiated than had earlier been assumed. Among the many theologians that were schooled in this milieu,105 one should mention both Carl-Gustaf Andrén and also Hilding Johansson (1918-1993).106

During the last forty years the most important Swedish theologian dealing with the piety of the middle ages has been Alf Härdelin (b. 1927). In a number of studies he has extolled the spirituality of the middle ages as an important research field. Even though many of his studies are oriented

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105 See for example Björkman 1957; Kroon 1953; Strömberg 1944.
toward the broad European scene and the early and high Middle Ages, he has written some studies on the late medieval church in Sweden. He has, for example, studied the last decades (1521-1596) of Vadstena abbey. In this study, he emphasizes that the dissolution did not come from inside the nunnery, but from the “political and anti-Catholic” pressure from the outside. 107

A similar perspective might be found in Martin Berntson’s dissertation (2003) where he problematizes the elder argument, that the monasteries and friar houses ca 1520 were signified by spiritual decay. Rather, many of the houses were affected by the political and military tensions between Denmark and Sweden. Furthermore they were facing opposition from some of the bishops who wanted to strengthen their influence on the houses.

**B. The reformation era**

*The long reformation perspective.* Even though there may have been theological continuities between these two periods, in a social, political and cultural perspective the efforts of making people adopt the new ideas has since the 1970s been described as a slow or even unsuccessful project. This view is upheld in opposition to the elder description of the reformation as an answer to a popular demand for reform. As a reaction to this view, two issues have been raised. First, that the late medieval popular piety was dynamic and fully integrated in society even at the beginning of the reformation. Second, it has been noticed that people actually tried to resist the reformer’s attempts to change their rituals and way of living. 108

A pioneer in this field is the American historian Gerald Strauss (1922-2006) with his study *Luther’s house of Learning* (1978). Strauss saw the reformation as a didactic project which ultimately failed since people did not fulfil the knowledge and behavior that the reformers demanded. The elite lacked interest for popular piety and the common people was uninterested in the new ideas that the elite tried to implement. Instead, people were indifferent to the reformation ideas and addicted themselves to the surviving remnants of catholic saint’s cult or to magical practices. Even though

108 This resistance could be passive in the sense that people continued to pray and live as they had always done. It could also be active with people violently defending their old piety through weaponry. For example in England and Sweden the resistance against the reformation found expressions during the upheavals, for example in the Pilgrimage of Grace 1536 or in the Western rising 1549.
the reformers triumphed in their efforts to transform the church organization and in coordinating their interests with the temporal power, they failed in their efforts to change the faith of the people. Another important work in this field is the monumental work *The Stripping of the altars* (1992) by the English church historian Eamon Duffy (b. 1947). In this history of the reformation in England, the author described the dynamic of late medieval piety and he also revalues the counter reformation of “Bloody Mary” and claims that she had more popular support for her attempts than has previously been known.

The thought of the reformation as a long period is not very radical concerning the Swedish scene. Already Sven Kjöllerström could describe the reformation as a complex transition phase, where the development was related to the contemporary political as well as the theological transformations.\(^{109}\)

Among church historians Martin Berntson has, with inspiration from both Duffy and Robert W. Scribner, studied the resistance that were articulated by clergy, nobility and common people against the transformations of the church during the reformation era. The resistance was mostly directed against the (threat of) abolition of traditional mass piety, sacraments and sacramentals, devotion of the saints, fasting and the monasteries. The resistance was based on several grounds. Many of the customs had been sanctioned by the customary law. Theologically, the traditional rites and ceremonies were regarded as “service of God”, i.e. men’s response to God in the covenant between God and men, which ultimately secured the salvation of man. He has also argued, that these popular demands contributed to Gustav Vasa’s scepticism concerning rapid changes in the church ceremonies.\(^{110}\)

Confessionalization perspectives. The confessionalization thesis that evolved among German scholars during the 1980s was in many ways a continuation of the analysis of the socio-political impact of the reformation from the 1960s. The direct inspiration came from Gerhard Ostrech’s

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\(^{109}\) See Österlin 1981 p. 198. Another significant feature in his studies was his emphasis on theological continuities in the history of the church of Sweden. The foundation of this continuity was in Kjöllerström’s perspective the church orders compiled by Olaus and Laurentius Petri and the decisions at the Uppsala meeting 1593. Even though this ideal reformation church was threatened from various directions during the reformation – both from the Calvinist and Catholic groups as well as from the German notion of a state governed church – this tradition was maintained into modernity. Kjöllerström’s insistence on proofing the maintenance of this tradition from the reformation could be related to his own personal faith heritage with its roots in the Lutheran “old church” traditions that were (and in some ways still is) significant in part of the western parts of the province of Västergötland in the diocese of Gothenburg where he grew up, Österlin 1981 p. 199. In line with this piety, he dismissed the possibility of a continuity with the historical episcopacy through the perseverance of the apostolic succession, see Österlin 1981 p. 200.

\(^{110}\) Berntson 2000; Berntson 2003; Berntson 2009; Berntson 2010a; Berntson 2012c.
(1910-1978) insistence on the relation between the reformation and early modern social discipline. According to the confessionalization thesis the collaboration between church and state in Europe during the early modern period in their common aim to discipline and confessionalize society and citizens, was of decisive importance in the creation of the modern European state.\textsuperscript{111}

The confessionalization thesis has not really found its way into Swedish research, neither in church history nor in history. However, even though the thesis has not been explicitly mentioned, the impact of the church and the Lutheran tradition in the politics of seventeenth century Sweden is not a very controversial topic. The fact that the national development should be viewed in light of the European Reformation, was important already for Hjalmar Holmquist who presented the Lutheran church of Sweden as a folk church that had some unique national features, but it could according to Holmquist not be understood if the common historical development in Europe was neglected.\textsuperscript{112}

Also in Åke Andrén’s handbook (1999), the situation in Sweden was consistently presented in relation to the political and theological development in Europe at the same time. The reformation process in Sweden is portrayed as clearly intertwined with the national political developments and was in many ways a consequence of a collaboration or convergence between reformation theologians and royal power.

The impact of German Lutheran confessionalism on the rise of Lutheran orthodoxy in Sweden during the late 16\textsuperscript{th} and early 17\textsuperscript{th} century has been investigated by Otfried Czaika. His dissertation dealt with the Rostock theologian David Chytraeus who through his teaching and writings strongly influenced Swedish clergy and other dignitary during the latter half of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{113}


\textsuperscript{112} Brohed 2000 p. 119; see also Brohed 2001 p. 128-129.

\textsuperscript{113} Czaika 2002; Czaika 2004a. He has also written about the impact of Melanchton in sixteenth- and seventeenth century Sweden, Czaika 2007b; Czaika 2008a; Czaika 2009e; Czaika 2009f. Another important field in Czaika’s research is the connection between church history and history of books. Through catalogues of private libraries he discusses the possibilities of drawing conclusions about the reception of ideas and theology, Czaika 2009a; Czaika 2011; Czaika 2013. A third track in Czaika’s interests is the use of the reformation heritage in Scandinavia of today and reformation historiography, Czaika 2009c; Czaika 2009d; see also Czaika 2004b; Czaika 2005; Czaika 2007a; Czaika 2008b; Czaika 2009b; Czaika 2010.
Furthermore, Sven Göransson’s method was characterized by a focus on doctrines that methodologically were related to the development in the church and society, i.e. the social and economic context. Göransson actually established the prevailing methodological foundations of church history in Sweden to be described as a study of Christianity and the church in its interrelation with various cultures, religious, social, cultural and economic contexts and societies.\footnote{114} Likewise in Ingun Montgomery’s dissertation study, the aim was to investigate the ideas that influenced, determined and were propagated in the discussions between spiritual and temporal authority as they interacted in political and religious affairs in the Swedish society during the period between 1593 and 1608.\footnote{115} In this and in other studies on the reformation, Montgomery has regarded the reasons behind the success of the Lutheran reformation in Sweden as more or less due to political causes rather than as a consequence of a popular cry for reformation in the church. She has described the impact of royal power in the introduction of the reformation as a significant feature of the Swedish situation.\footnote{116} In this perspective the king Gustav Vasa introduced the reformation due to practical and administrative reasons, because of the possibilities in Lutheran theology of princely infringements in the church, rather than because pure theological reasons.\footnote{117} Furthermore, the “catholic” church policy of king Johan III has been described by Montgomery as based primarily on political and financial reasons. Both Gustav Vasa’s and his son Johan III’s attitude to the church was therefore due to “practical” motives (an often recurring phrase in

\footnote{114} See for example Brohed 2000 p. 127. 
\footnote{115} She has also published several shorter and popular studies on the same theme, i.e. the relation between temporal and spiritual authority and the political impact of the reformation. However, she has prolonged the time scope and included both the early reformation as well as the later part of the seventeenth century, Montgomery 1970; Montgomery 1972; Montgomery 1983b; Montgomery 1986; Montgomery 1990a; Montgomery 1990b; Montgomery 1990c; Montgomery 1990d; Montgomery 1995; Montgomery 2000. In connection to the 350 year jubilee of the battle of Lützen (1982), she published some studies on the impact of religion and the Lutheran heritage in the propaganda of Gustav II Adolf, Montgomery 1982; Montgomery 1983a; Montgomery 1983c. She has also made some studies on the impact of the German evangelical reformers, especially Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchton, in the Swedish theological debate and church organization, Montgomery 1998; Montgomery 2006. She has also made some shorter articles in encyclopedias such as Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon and The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation, Montgomery 1975-1977; Montgomery 1996a-e; Montgomery 2003; see also Montgomery 1983d; Montgomery 1984; Montgomery 1993. Through her deep knowledge of the reformation in various parts of Scandinavia, it is of no surprise that she was included in the group of editors that worked with the volume Reformationens konsolidering i de nordiska länderna 1540-1610 (1990) in which she also participated with two articles, one introducing text and two summaries. In 2002 the fourth volume of the series on Swedish church history was published with Montgomery as the main author. In accordance with this perspective she has also emphasized the conservatism among the peasants in Sweden as a difference in relation to the situation in Denmark. The introduction of the reformation is hereby regarded as a consequence of the tensions in the Nordic union (Kalmarunionen).
\footnote{116} Montgomery 1983c; Montgomery 1990a pp. 119-123; Montgomery 1983b pp. 47-55.
Montgomery’s studies). In accordance with the discussion in her doctoral thesis, the conflicts during the late 16th century and early 17th century, is viewed by Montgomery as an interaction of political and religious motives. Even though Montgomery rarely refers to the confessionalization thesis, most of her research revolves around its basic issues. Especially worth noting is her insistence on the importance of religion in making Sweden into a great power in Europe during the seventeenth century. This importance lay, according to Montgomery, especially in the role of religion in the process of nation building.

The applicability of confessionalization thesis on Swedish conditions has been problematized. Martin Berntson has emphasized two problems when it comes to use this thesis on the Swedish material. First, the confessionalization thesis is developed in adjustment to German preconditions and does therefore not fully correspond to the preconditions of the development in either Eastern Europe or in Scandinavia. Second, as many scholars have emphasized the popular resistance of the attempts to discipline or confessionalize the people, this fact complicates the idea of religion as a force that brought forth modernity. However, this does not prevent a scholar from using the confessionalization as an ideal that could be found across the confessional and national borders. It is at the same time important to note that this ideal – a people that behaved good and had good knowledge about the faith of the nation – was not wholly unique for the early modern period.

118 Montgomery 1990a p. 126.
119 As a defender of the evangelical faith duke Charles (later king Charles IX) could justify a political opposition that otherwise would have been impossible. Through the decisions at the meeting in Uppsala 1593, he could identify the kingdom with its chosen confession, and claim that the defense of the confession was also a defense of the country. The confession was in a way used as a tool to reach authority. Montgomery 1972; Montgomery 1990a p. 129. After Charles accession of the Swedish throne, in the disputes with the clergy concerning the demarcation lines between the spiritual and temporal authority in the rule of the church, the clergy demanded that Charles should swear to follow the decisions of the meeting in Uppsala 1593, Charles himself saw himself as custos utriusque tabulae, and in line with this identity, he made suggestions to the new handbook for the church, a task that the clergy thought belonged to them. Charles did never resign to the clergy’s demands to dictate his religion since in his view it was the regent that decided the religion of a state in accordance with the principle cuius region, eius religio, Montgomery 1972; Montgomery 1990a pp. 130-131; Montgomery 1983b pp. 57-60. Montgomery has also stressed the close interaction between the religion and the national self-consciousness in the reign of Gustav II Adolf, whereby the evangelical faith in the form that it was introduced in the country during his grandfather Gustav Vasa, and patriotism were closely related. The legislation against catholic activities in Sweden during his reign, was in many ways politically motivated, Montgomery 1983c pp. 43-48. This national consolidation on the Lutheran faith was a prerequisite for the international engagement of Sweden in the conflicts of contemporary Europe where the king was described as a defender of the true evangelical faith, Montgomery 1983c pp. 50-51.
120 See for example Montgomery 2000 p. 698. It is also worth noticing that she contributed with an article to one of the most important anthologies in this research tradition, Montgomery 1986.
121 See the discussion in Berntson 2010 pp. 358-364. These thoughts have given rise to the provocative reflection, that the confessionalization thesis may sometimes function as an ”excuse” for historians to indulge in matters of church history.
The negotiation perspective. Depending on how they are explained, the perspectives given by scholars on the slow reformation in many ways contradicts the confessionalization thesis, at least its assumption that the implementation of reformation ideas was successful. If it was not successful, the confessionalization could not be regarded as a key event in the modernization process. Intersecting these perspectives, a third perspective has been presented since the late 1990s. I call this “the negotiation perspective”.

In this perspective reformation is discussed as neither a success nor as a failure. Rather its focus pays attention to how faith practice was negotiated on various levels on society. This perspective does not recognize common man as either completely ignorant of reformation doctrines, or as victims of an oppressive elite. There certainly was a confessionalization ideal but this earned both success and failures in its implementation. Research has therefore to recognize what was resisted and what was accepted and delineate the possible logic behind this negotiation. The basic question is: Why and how did the elite try to discipline the people, and why and how did people accept or resist these attempts? According to this perspective, the practical church life and moral behaviour among common man is seen as a consequence of negotiation on various levels, from the household to the parliament.

This perspective has been promulgated by scholars such as the Germans Henrich Richard Schmidt and Andreas Holzem, the Dutch historian Herman Roodenburg, the American-German scholar Ute Lotz-Heumann, and the American Keith P. Luria. Considering the Swedish scene, it has been adapted by Martin Berntson, who has recognized undercurrent negotiations about the reformation during the upheavals during the early reign of Gustav Vasa. He ties the anti-reformation arguments to the characterization of late medieval upheavals as a form of mobilized petitions or negotiations. Since these upheavals both could be regarded as illegitimate events (whose leaders from the clergy and nobility often were executed) they often also resulted in actual agreements between the king and the peasants which included promises to preserve traditional religion. These rebellions are according to Berntson therefore to be seen as negotiations about traditional religion. If this is true, they both point backward, toward rebellions as part of a late medieval political culture, and forward toward new forms of negotiations (for example in the parliament) concerning the role of traditional religion.
C. The confessionalization of the 17th century

The situation of the national and religious minorities. In the very few dissertations in church history on the 17th century since 1970, there is a slight tendency to focus on national minorities. This perspective might be related to the contemporary multicultural situation in Sweden which has given rise to the misconception of the early modern era as a very monolithic period in Swedish history when it comes to faith, ethnicity and identity. This perspective has been nuanced by these studies.

In 2003, Stig Alenäs defended a thesis in Lund, on the role of the church in the "Swedification" in Lund Diocese during the 1680s. In this process, the local clergy had a very important role in the abolishment of Danish language and church customs. However, Alenäs shows that the rural church deans did actually permit many officially forbidden Danish church customs (for example the use of wax candles) to live on in the parishes. The loyalty of the deans was not fully oriented toward the Swedish government.  

In Uppsala 1999, Tore Hållander defended a thesis on the religious assimilation of the Walloons in the province of Uppland during the period 1636 until 1693. Since most of the Walloons belonged to the Calvinistic confession, the aim of the Swedish state was to assimilate them to Lutheran faith, an ambition which was nearly accomplished at the end of the 17th century. However, some Walloon families still adhered to Calvinism as this time.  

Confessionalization culture. Another reaction toward the confessionalization thesis is Thomas Kaufmann’s (b. 1962) concept of confessional culture. According to Kaufmann, the confessionalization thesis has neglected the unique components in the single confessions. With the concept of confessional cultures, Kaufmann delineates some common themes in the Lutheran confessional culture. These themes are thought to transcend both national borders and Lutheran theological substructures such as Lutheran Orthodoxy and pietism.

This perspective has lately been adopted into Swedish church history through David Gudmundsson in his dissertation in Lund, Konfessionell krigsmakt (2014), where he finds Kaufmann’s concept

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122 Alenäs 2003.
123 Hållander 1999.
very usable in the search for confessional strands in field sermons and military prayer-books from the seventeenth until the early eighteenth century. In this study, Gudmundsson argues that the three key elements in Lutheran confessional culture, outlined by Kaufmann (i.e. Martin Luther as a symbolic figure; strong eschatological awareness and the importance of preserving the God-given social order; anti-papalism), finds clear expressions in the sermons and prayer books of the Swedish army during the period 1611-1721.

5. Proposals and perspectives for future research

History

For future research it is important to continue to focus on the impact of religion and on the church in a greater context. It is important to use the inspiration of cultural history to find this collective meaning. It might be used for suppression; it might be used for creation of groups and collective culture. No matter what it gave people a world picture, ethics, identities, hopes and understandings and it is very different from modern ways of thinking. The questions for the future are how we start. What can be learnt former history writing?

Firstly, it is important to be critical to the dominance of the state in the discussion of the Reformation. It moves the focus from culture, religion and from a local praxis. It is perhaps an anachronistic way of looking at the early modern society.

Secondly, there are lots of reasons for being skeptical to hierarchical studies. Many historians have showed the mutual and popular reality in the local community and around the local church in the 16th and 17th century, perhaps a part of a religious culture. Again a risk for anachronism

Thirdly, it is important to be critical to the meaning of confessions in Swedish history. Almost all cultural history have shown that conflicts in the 16th and 17th were about religion but not about confessions. In this challenge we really have the need for cultural history.
Forthly, and as a consequence of the critic to a confessional approach, we ought to make research on what really happened in the beginning of the 16th century. What was the consequence of the Reformation? What was the same before and after 1527? This requires cooperation between mediaevalists and early modernists, and again an open mind for a foreign religious culture with its own logic. Perhaps discourse analysis like Brilkman’s is one way to go on.

Fifthly, it is important to continue the discussion of the long Reformation or I would say different ways of living in a Lutheran society, being aware of the great difference between the society before and after 1720. The Lutheran society of the 16th and 17th included strong powers in nature (God and the Devil) and a developed communication with these and an important mutuality between people, and this is very different from the Lutheran society of the 19th century, but both were Lutheran.

Sixthly, we got to continue the discussion about the development: the disciplining of the people, the long Reformation and the secularization.

**Church history**

I would suggest that the following items in the study of reformation in Sweden in the field of theology have been neglected or are in need of a new analysis.

- **Comparative Nordic studies on the reformation.** One of the foremost differences between the emerging Nordic national churches was their relation to the German reformation. In 1990, Ingun Montgomery acknowledged the need of relation the various Nordic attitudes to the thoughts and ideas in the German reformation, but concluded that this was a completely different research project than the present. In such a comparison, both the confessionalization thesis as well as the concept of confessional culture might be useful frameworks. However, whilst the confessionalization thesis fails in the understanding of the dynamics of the practical reception of the confessional ideals, the concept of confessional culture is according to my view less useful when it comes to understand the discourse of the “senders”. But as complementary frameworks for comparative studies, both perspectives are useful.

• *The continuities in church policy between the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries.* Even though the study of continuities with late medieval church has a long tradition in Sweden, this perspective has mainly been oriented toward piety and spirituality. An interesting perspective would be to investigate the continuities between the reformation and late medieval political reform attempts in the church as well as late medieval resistance against these reform attempts. The attempts of the secular state to make infringements in the church during the reformation are probably not so unique for this period as might be thought.

• *The interaction between politics and theology during the early Reformation.* This interaction is often presupposed and it is usually referred to as a precondition for the successive development of the reformation in Sweden. But the “theology of Gustav Vasa” has not yet been studied. In Sweden the focus has rather been on liturgical and canon sources rather than political sources (with Montgomery as a possible exception). We all know that Gustav Vasa used theology to legitimize his government, but expressions did this legitimization take and what sources did he use?

• *The conflict on the liturgy during Johan III’s reign.* It might be strange to mention such a well-known event in this presentation, but the fact is, that the liturgical conflict has not yet been fully investigated. The only monograph in the subject is Hammargrens dissertation from 1898. Hjalmar Holmquist concluded already in 1933 that a thorough historical-critical investigation on the liturgical conflict remain as an important task for research. More than eighty years later, this conclusion is – unfortunately – still true.

• *The transformation of the sacred rooms.* As a specimen in his application, professor Jan Arvid Hellström included a study on parish churches and rooms for worship during the early modern period in Sweden, which was published in a comprised version 1987 (Hellström 1987). This study was regarded as a “pilot-study” for a larger project on rooms of worship. This project was probably never delineated. But a renewed analysis of continuities and discontinuities as what regards the theological interpretations of the holy rooms/houses for service could be interesting especially in relation to similar studies in cultural history.

125 Holmquist 1933b p. 333.
Swedish liturgies of the seventeenth century. The rising interest concerning the church liturgy in the field of cultural history is not matched by a similar interest among theologians, which is regrettable. Whilst much research on the late medieval and reformation liturgy have been conducted during the twentieth century, there are very few studies devoted to the liturgy at the time of the confessionalization.
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