

SIVERT ANGEL

The Confessionalist
Homiletics of
Lucas Osiander
(1534–1604)

*Spätmittelalter, Humanismus,
Reformation*

82

Mohr Siebeck

Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation
Studies in the Late Middle Ages,
Humanisms and the Reformation

herausgegeben von Volker Leppin (Tübingen)

in Verbindung mit

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*En hic est Lucas OSIANDER in ore diserto
Qui Verbum docuit de pietate DEI.*

bbb. 3.

Sivert Angel

The Confessionalist Homiletics of Lucas Osiander (1534–1604)

A Study of a South-German Lutheran Preacher
in the Age of Confessionalization

Mohr Siebeck

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Sivert Angel

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Abbreviations

- CR Philipp Melanchthon, *Corpus Reformatorum*. Ed. Carolus Gottlieb Brettschneider (Halle: C. A. Schwetschke, 1846).
- RGG¹ *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch in gemeinverständlicher Darstellung*. Edited by Friedrich Michael Schiele and Leopold Zscharnack (5 vols.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1909–1912).
- RGG⁴ *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*. Edited by Don Browning, Hans Dieter Betz, Bernd Janowski, and Eberhard Jüngel (8 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998–2005).
- TRE *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. Edited by Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller et al. (36 vols.; Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977–2004).
- WA *D. Martin Luthers Werke*. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. 77 vols. Edited by Joachim K. F. Knaake et al. (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau, 1883–2009).

Introduction

For Lutherans, faith was received passively and justified the believer without merits, but it was still not a faith that occurred out of nothing. Faith's coming into existence depended on the preached word, and therefore even a passive conception of faith involved some form of activity. This was so not only because the word had to be preached and heard, but also because it had to be preached the right way in the right situation if it was to create a saving faith. Many different strategies were possible to meet this aim. This study will describe some of these strategies and the theology and political interests they express.

The religious formation studied here took place when Lutheranism had gone from being a critical voice within an established Catholic Church to having become a religion of its own, reproducing itself from generation to generation. As an established religion, Lutheranism's political and social functions became more obvious. The Lutheran church became a central institution contributing to integration, morality, and a shared identity in the countries that established themselves as confessional Lutheran states. This study will investigate how theological and political concerns interplay in shaping the form and content of the Lutheran *formation*.

It will do so by a case study of the preacher Lucas Osiander. Sermons will be employed as the study's main source material, and therefore it is the intentions and activities of formation that will be studied rather than the results. By analysing in detail a selection of Lucas Osiander's sermons and tracing how theology and politics were interwoven in them, this study will describe how a very central instance in the Lutheran forming activity, namely preaching, was connected to specific historical conditions, and how central theological concerns were accommodated to new challenges. It will analyze Osiander's sermons as a means for moving and forming congregants who were also subjects of a confessional secular authority. Thereby it will investigate his sermons as expressions of a Lutheran formation taking place in a specific historical situation.

Lucas Osiander is a welcome case for such an investigation. Sermons were not only his preferred mode of communication, but his religion's most prestigious genre, and as a preacher he was centrally placed as part of a theological elite which in this period of history was among the foremost Lutheran centres of learning. He was involved with religious instruction from a central position in

Württemberg, a territory that had become one of the foremost examples within the Holy Roman Empire of a Lutheran confessional state.

The study of the distinguished but typical Lutheran preacher Lucas Osiander is also a study of something more. Osiander was a pupil of Johannes Brenz, the most famous Württemberg theologian and author of Duke Christoph's church order written from 1552–1559,¹ and he became a close friend and ally of Jacob Andreae, one of the major figures behind the *Book of Concord* and legendary chancellor of the University in Tübingen for many years.² He was himself a doctor of theology who on occasions taught at the University in Tübingen, and who established a dynasty of university theologians in Tübingen.³ It is safe to describe him as a central Württemberg theologian. He also held a key position in the Württembergian church. As court preacher for many years, he presented some of the country's most exposed sermons, had a seat in the central church council, and was a link between duke and church in Württemberg. When he later became abbot in Adelberg and general superintendent, he was, together with the other three general superintendents and the dean of Stuttgart, one of five leading clerics in the territory.

¹ Sabine Holtz, *Theologie und Alltag: Lehre und Leben in den Predigten der Tübinger Theologen 1550–1750*, Spätmittelalter und Reformation N.R. 3 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1993), 20–21. Holtz' study has been a valuable resource for this work. It deals with similar source material as this study, namely Lutheran sermons from the time after 1550, and it has a similar interest for theology's relationship to societal life. However, Holtz pursues this interest differently from the study undertaken in this book. In her study, the problem to be investigated is identified on an abstract level and answered through an analysis of a wide source material. The question about the relationship between theological doctrine and social-ethical norm is answered by an investigation of how theology through preaching contributes to the constitution of society's system of symbols and values. The sermons are studied as mirrors into the currents of time, and the vast sermon material is categorized according to the doctrinal themes they negotiate. They are analyzed to show how doctrine and moral, elite theology and popular religion are interrelated. The study concludes that the elite theologians of the Lutheran orthodoxy through their sermons succeed in laying down a norm for human life. Holtz, *Theologie und Alltag*, 1–10, 372. The present study aims at similar description, namely that of the relationship between church practice in the form of preaching and life in society. However, by employing a more narrow focus, it follows this aim along a different path, as this chapter will describe in detail. It will describe one preacher as a political agent in a certain historical process, namely Lutheran confessionalization in Württemberg. By a rhetorical analysis it will describe how his sermons functioned in a certain situation, but thereby it will also identify aspects of this style of preaching that are tied to specific historical situations. Hopefully this will enable a more precise description of the interests that were negotiated in the sermons, of how the sermon negotiated them, and of how doctrinal concepts held political significance and responded to political interests.

² Martin Brecht, "Andreae, Jakob", in TRE 2, 672–680; and Julian Kümmerle, *Luthertum, humanistische Bildung und württembergischer Territorialstaat: Die Gelehrtenfamilie Bidermann vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg 170 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2008), 117–118.

³ Kümmerle, *Luthertum, humanistische Bildung und württembergischer Territorialstaat*, 81.

Osiander's career as a preacher took place during the period when Württemberg emerged as one of the leading Lutheran territories within the Empire. Württemberg was admired among fellow Lutheran territories for its early, well-planned church order with its integration of secular and religious concerns. The territory came to be regarded as one of the important Lutheran voices within the Empire. Through its famous university in Tübingen, it became a major supplier of theologians to other Lutheran territories in the Empire and thereby a significant exporter of Lutheran theology and ideas.⁴

Osiander's biography is in itself interesting with its dramatic shifts and conflicts as well as its great success and failures. He had a prominent origin as the offspring of first generation reformer Andreas Osiander, who had fallen into disfavour with mainstream Lutherans due to a conflict over the doctrine of justification, but remained secretly allied with Johannes Brenz and Duke Christoph of Württemberg. Still, this study will treat these parts of his biography only briefly and instead focus on two phases of his life that are of special interest for the study of religious formation in the intersection between theology and politics. Part One examines the first phase when Osiander served as court preacher in Stuttgart from 1569–1594, and Part Two examines the second phase when he was city preacher in Esslingen from 1598–1603. In these two phases of his life, Osiander found himself as a preacher positioned between the interests of church and duke, and later, seemingly, between the interest of church and city council, but in fact also between the interests of city and territory. In Part One, funeral sermons make up the main source material. These were presented on the occasion of deaths in the ducal family and they show how faith and salvation and an existence in the beyond are connected with the lives of concrete examples, namely the deceased. Part Two studies catechism sermons presented to the youth of Esslingen as a means of educating them in a Christian life and a saving faith. These sermons present a comprehensive picture of Christian teaching and therefore also a theological level complementing the form of preaching studied in Part One.

1. Confessionalization

This study aims to describe Lucas Osiander as a preacher in his historical context. Because of the way the case of Lucas Osiander is placed in time, and because

⁴ Matthias Langensteiner, *Für Land und Luthertum: Die Politik Herzog Christophs von Württemberg (1550–1568)*, (Köln, Weimar, and Wien: Böhlau, 2008), 244–245. Dieter Mertens claims that Württemberg from the end of the 1550s took the leading role among orthodox Lutheran territories; "Weltliche Territorien: A. Württemberg", in *Handbuch der baden-württembergischen Geschichte*, ed. Meinrad Schaab and Hansmartin Schwarzmaier (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1995), 119.

of the themes to which it calls attention, a discussion of the “confessionalization” thesis and its applicability for this study is unavoidable. The relationship between church and secular authorities in the formation of the population in early modern German territories is a central research interest associated with the paradigm, and the parts of Osiander’s life and work that are to be discussed in this study fall within the epoch that has been described as the peak of confessionalization.⁵

The German historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling developed the theory of confessionalization during the late 1970s as a perspective on historic change in German societies and the Holy Roman Empire in the period from, roughly speaking, the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 to the end of the Thirty Years’ War in 1648.⁶ It continued the perspective called “the era of the building of confessions” (*Konfessionsbildung*) which was introduced in the late 1950s by Ernst Walter Zeeden and referred to the period as a time when a similar development took place within the three major confessions, namely that they consolidated themselves according to dogma, institutions and morality.⁷ The theory of confessionalization emphasized how the building of the confessions was linked to the formation of the early modern state. By employing Gerhard Oestreich’s concept of social disciplining (*Sozialdisziplinierung*) scholars could show how church and state cooperated in the formation of the early absolutist state that later appeared.⁸ They could do so by subordinating the shorter history to a universal historical perspective,⁹ so that the short history was not understood only according to the conscious interests of its actors, but also by what was effected unintentionally.¹⁰ On one level, the confessionalization process brought confessional constraint within the territories and animosity between the territories in a way that led to a devastating war, but on another level the monopolization within the territories and the competition between them laid the foundation for early modern society. It made possible coherent and controllable territories with manageable structures and competent servants, and contributed to the formation of a disciplined

⁵ See Heinz Schilling, “Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620”, in idem, *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen zur europäischen Reformations- und Konfessionsgeschichte*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte and Olaf Mörke (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2002), 524.

⁶ See Stefan Ehrenpreis and Ute Lotz-Heumann, *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), 62–79. See especially 71.

⁷ See Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann, *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter*, 63; and Ernst Walter Zeeden, “Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung in Deutschland im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 185, no. 2 (1958): 251–252.

⁸ Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann, *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter*, 65 and 68. However, this disciplining perspective was present already in Zeeden’s concept. See Zeeden, “Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung”, 256 and 274.

⁹ Schilling, “Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich”, 505.

¹⁰ Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann, *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter*, 72.

population of subjects.¹¹ According to Schilling, this universal historical perspective makes possible a new historical evaluation of the epoch. It is not only to be seen as the depressing transition from the glorious Reformation to the tragic Thirty Years' War, but as something more, namely a reorganization of society with lasting significance.¹²

The progression of confessionalization has been divided into several stages.¹³ Schilling has described the years 1540–1560 as its initiation period and the 1570s as years of confrontation when heterogeneous opinions were excluded, people fled from territories because of confession, and an offensive of confession-building displaced the pragmatism of the religious peace treaty. The 1580s were the peak of confessionalization as territories willingly risked peace and disrespected agreements and alliances for the sake of confession, theologians encouraged secular authority to disrespect imperial law if they could thereby hurt confessional opponents, and great public disputes caused disturbances within territories. During these years, Protestants took over dioceses and organized visitations effectively. It was in this period that Lucas Osiander was at the height of his career: In a time when confessional theology provided premises for domestic and foreign policy in Württemberg, Osiander was a central counselor at the duke's court and a member of the church leadership, and could therefore contribute to the processes here labeled as confessionalization. Toward the end of this period he fell into disfavour with the new duke and ended up in the imperial city of Esslingen. Here he influenced the shape of religious life and church organization in a time when imperial cities were losing some of their religious independence to the confessional territorial states that surrounded them. The last phase of confessionalization took place during the Thirty Years' War, when the terrors of war weakened confessionalization prior to the peace treaty of Westphalia.¹⁴

According to Schilling, the confessionalization process effected a confessional polarization affecting all areas of life. It involved a religious formation that was at the same time also a political and social formation. The process let Christian morality function as the morality of society.¹⁵ Schilling identifies the engine behind the change that took place during the confessionalization era not only in the competition between the territories, but also in a synergy that arose when two processes from two different parts of society met. In theology and religion there was a struggle for stability, and a similar struggle for stability was a governing

¹¹ Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich", 526 and 530.

¹² Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich", 504–505.

¹³ Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann, *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter*, 71.

¹⁴ Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich", 515–527. Zeeden had given the process a slightly broader dating and saw it as beginning after the Peasants' War, with the Diet of Speyer and the beginning of the visitations in Saxony and lasting for approximately 100 years. See Zeeden, "Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung", 250, 252, and 259.

¹⁵ Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich", 530.

interest of the early modern state. These two areas of society interacted with each other in this struggle in a way that resulted in a closer integration of church and state, expressed in the visitation system, school and university politics, and in the politics of marriage and family.¹⁶ When the subjects of a territory were bound to a confession and unity of faith was secured by law, religion emerged as the bond holding society together. In this way, confessionalization contributed to several different tendencies within territories, such as social discipline, concentration of society, and political and social integration, even though the traditional conflict between the dukes' absolutist ambitions and the nobility's influence remained throughout the period.¹⁷

Confessionalization has been an influential thesis for the last few decades, but it has also been criticized. For this study, the most relevant criticism against it is that there is an implied *etatism* inherent in the theory because it views the state as the dominant historical agent.¹⁸ Heinrich Richard Schmidt has been an important voice for this objection. He claims that the confessionalization thesis has shifted focus from the religious form of life and the content of faith that was of primary importance in Zeeden's original research concept of *Konfessionsbildung*. The reason for this, he claims, is that within the confessionalization paradigm religion does not appear as interesting in itself, but only as a subordinate and partial process in the universal historic account of the state's disciplining, as a stage in its development. According to Schmidt, a researcher who sees religion as a means for disciplining will never be able to make religion the real subject of his or her research.¹⁹ Such a perspective would be impossible if one instead started by asking about the faith of individuals, Schmidt claims. As an alternative to the focus on the state and the disciplining that takes place top-down, Schmidt advocates the opposite perspective. According to him, a perspective that respects the religious dimension of life also admits that faith and morality can never be realized by a disciplining state, but must be rooted individually in the believer's

¹⁶ Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich", 513 and 528–530. Zeeden also identified stability as a main motivator for this change; Zeeden, "Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung", 286. He also saw that this motivation had a double basis among church theologians as well as among secular lords; *ibid.*, 253, 255, and 257.

¹⁷ Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich", 535.

¹⁸ In their survey of the concept's research history, Stefan Ehrenpreis and Ute Lotz-Heumann list the following as the most important issues that have been discussed: the claimed parallel developments between the three confessions; the characteristics and validity claims of the different confessions; and the paradigm's implied *etatism*, meaning the view of the state as the dominant historical agent. See Ehrenpreis and Lotz-Heumann, *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter*, 67. Since this study is restricted to only one of the three confessions, the first objection will not be discussed. The second objection will be dealt with in the next section's presentation of Thomas Kaufmann's view of the confessionalization thesis.

¹⁹ Heinrich Richard Schmidt, "Sozialdisziplinierung? Ein Plädoyer für das Ende des Etatismus in der Konfessionalisierungsforschung", *Historische Zeitschrift* 265, no. 3 (1997): 639–641 and 648 and 658.

awareness of the world and the hereafter, of the meaning of life and his or her view of eternity, and in his or her faith in an omnipotent and retaliating God.²⁰

Instead of the movement that takes place top-down in society, Schmidt focuses on the movement that takes place from the bottom to the top of society. The confessionalization thesis deals with a period when the state was weak and when local representatives of the state were respected only if they acted in harmony with the wishes and expectations of parish and village. According to Schmidt, it was a time when the state was expressed by the subjects in various ways including estate assemblies and supplications from subjects and through various violent and non-violent actions by subjects. Rulers relied on a basic consensus in society. When laws were passed, it was as answers to challenges, and new laws therefore expressed a changed mentality in the population. More than the opposite, the state was an instrument for villagers. Schmidt claims that this may be studied in relatively small-scale surveys which thereby may falsify giant theories, such as that of confessionalization.²¹ Despite the harsh criticism, Schmidt still ends by giving Schilling credit for his modifications of the confessionalization thesis, in which Schilling emphasizes the importance of interplay between micro-historical perspectives and macro-historical perspectives in confessionalization studies.²²

Schmidt may be right when he claims that confessionalization was not accomplished with the state as its primary agent, since it is only towards the end of the seventeenth century that absolutism replaced a participatory form of government. The question, however, is not whether Schmidt correctly critiqued Schilling for misplacing the absolutist state. The important question is obviously what the word “state” may refer to in this period. As far as I can see, Schilling is trying to describe a process on the way to the state as we know it, without describing this state as realized in the era of confessionalization. When he labels the confessionalization period a *Vorsattelzeit der Moderne* (saddling up for modernity), it signifies a view of this epoch's trends as something that takes place on the way to the formation of the absolutist state.²³ More than seeing confessionalization as an expression of the state, he sees it as a time when processes and structures are formed that later become decisive for the modern state.

In the article to which Schmidt was responding, Schilling describes how the confessionalization thesis has been modified by research it has inspired. Here he promotes a dual perspective combining micro-history with macro-history and presents the confessionalization thesis not as a description of the state as an agent and an independent entity, but as a lengthy and differentiated happening following two movements. One movement takes place from above by state and church

²⁰ Schmidt, “Sozialdisziplinierung?,” 659–660.

²¹ Schmidt, “Sozialdisziplinierung?,” 665–668 and 678–679.

²² Schmidt, “Sozialdisziplinierung?,” 644–646 and 682.

²³ See Heinz Schilling, *Early Modern European Civilization and Its Political and Cultural Dynamism* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2008), 14.

authorities, while another takes place from below by families, neighbourhoods, brotherhoods and corporations. The state was a disciplining factor during this period, but it was not the only one. Self-control was another important force for disciplining, and often the objects of disciplining were also its subjects. Another major force from below in the era of confessionalization was resistance by villages and estates characteristic of the old European societies.²⁴

In addition to this description of disciplining as a pincer movement taking place from above as well as from below, Schilling also defines the concept of disciplining as signifying far more than traditional church discipline and punishment. It involves all discourses on morality and attitudes, thinking, faith, and emotions. With these modifications, Schilling argues that his critics criticize an *etatism* in the paradigm that no longer exists. Macro-historic proposals should still be attempted, Schilling claims, but they must be kept open for modifications by micro-historic studies that may analyze the interplay between different social actors and make individual strategies understandable. According to Schilling, this openness to micro-historic description is a major constituent of macro-historic paradigms.²⁵ He still maintains that overarching structures and tendencies described by macro-history are necessary for micro-historic studies to discuss an operational historical problem, a view Schmidt would share, since he sees micro-historic study as a means for falsifying macro-historic theses. For Schilling, the small studies must be part of a greater history, and he judges the quality of such studies on their ability to combine the two perspectives.²⁶

The perspectives from above and from below as combined in the confessionalization thesis are useful for describing how Lucas Osiander as a preacher was an agent both in theology and politics. In a way, the two perspectives meet in his work. He was an agent for the dukes' disciplining efforts and at the same time a representative of the faith shared by the subjects, which was required to be respected by them and protected by the duke. His communications were definitely part of a discourse on morality and attitudes, thinking, faith, and emotions. The role Osiander fulfilled as a preacher is a very describable meeting point for the two perspectives from above and below. Surrounded by expectations and embedded in a social and political system, Osiander's role as preacher placed him in

²⁴ Heinz Schilling, "Disziplinierung oder 'Selbstregulierung der Untertanen'? Ein Plädoyer für die Doppelperspektive von Makro- und Mikrohistorie bei der Erforschung der frühmodernen Kirchenzucht", in *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen zur europäischen Reformations- und Konfessionsgeschichte*, ed. Luise Schorn-Schütte and Olaf Mörke (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2002), 635–636. As I see it, this view is compatible with Luise Schorn-Schütte's view of pre-modern history's change towards modernization as an organic more than a functional change. See Schütte, *Evangelische Geistlichkeit in der Frühneuzeit*, 23 and 26.

²⁵ Schilling, "Disziplinierung oder 'Selbstregulierung der Untertanen'?", 637.

²⁶ Zeeden seems to advocate a similar view of how microhistorical studies may at the same time be studies of macro-history. See Zeeden, "Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung", 299.

a position where different interests in society met. The perspectives from above and below help position Osiander within a social and political system and enable an analysis of his sermons as theological and political actions.

Preachers played a special role in the processes that shaped unified territories subjected to a ruler and developing into early modern states. Since it could supply personnel, land, and legitimacy to the ruler, the role of the church was crucial when land was secularized, income was channeled more directly to rulers' treasuries, church laws were incorporated in secular laws within a common jurisdiction, and when the ruler wanted to establish a system of loyal servants that could help tie different parts of the territory to the central power. The clerical elite thereby gained a central significance for government. During these processes, the Lutheran clergy appeared as a third estate between ruler and nobility. They could help unite the ruler's power with that of the nobility, but they could also balance the ruler's power.²⁷ Several alliances were possible in which the clergy could find shared interests as well as conflicts. Their significance as theologians thus connected their activity as clerics to the political field.

This study presents a two-stage description of Lucas Osiander as a preacher. Part One describes him as court preacher in Württemberg and demonstrates how the perspectives from above and below meet in Osiander's dealings with duke, estates, colleagues, and subjects. In Part Two, on Osiander as a city preacher in Esslingen, the two perspectives meet in Osiander's dealings with city council, church organization, citizens, and foreign authorities. Osiander's theological background and contribution form an equally important framework as the political. He was a Lutheran theologian in the first generation after Luther, concerned with confirming Lutheran theology and accomplishing the institutional and religious consequences he believed should be implemented as a result of this confirmation. His theological thinking and argumentation followed its own logic, but it was also associated with historical change on a broader level.

Part One will show how Osiander's funeral preaching rested on and developed theological premises, especially an understanding of death and a practice for burial which enabled a new form of exemplarity and learning. They enabled descriptions of secular lives as examples of faith that had been hardly possible previously, and Osiander employed such descriptions far more boldly than Lutherans of previous generations. Osiander's style of preaching seems to have been characterized by this example rhetoric, and the sermon analyzes undertaken in this study will have a special focus on this rhetorical device. The way Osiander employed contemporary examples together with examples from the Bible lent his sermons a special dynamic. By investigating how the combination of contemporary and biblical examples was utilized in each specific situation, this study will trace the

²⁷ This theme will be discussed further in Part One, Chapter 2.5. For a comprehensive study of preachers' role in this era, see Schorn-Schütte, *Evangelische Geistlichkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit*.

speech-act his sermons would have employed in their original situations. This new form of preaching would have held a specific political utility. By reading the sermons with an eye for this utility, it is possible to study how different interests were supported and confronted in sermons presented at funerals. The proceedings surrounding the duke's death and the funeral sermons presented for him and for central persons in his court hold a central place in Part One's descriptions of Osiander as a court preacher. They will be read in order to investigate whose interests these sermon examples served. Did Osiander in his use of secular lives as examples of faith simply serve the duke's interests or was he promoting church doctrine and laying down religious premises for the duke's rule? Here theological and homiletic traditions become crucial for understanding the form of confessionalization that Osiander took part in with his preaching.

Part Two stresses how the Reformation's emphasis on faith and knowledge resulted in a new and energetic effort for reaching the population with religious education, and it places Lucas Osiander at the centre of this effort. The theology taught in his catechism sermons promoted a faith closely connected with civic morality. Protestant catechism teaching involved a change in religious education with theological roots, but it was a change which also held great political consequence, and the politics it influenced could in return influence the shape and content of religious education. In Osiander's teaching, youths were led into a coherent universe where civil society, political hierarchy and religious meaning were closely connected. They were connected by the same means as in Osiander's funeral sermons, namely by the use of examples. Here, the examples were not made up of the lives of recently departed members of the community, but by descriptions of people and situations in the young peoples' surroundings. The examples enabled Osiander to promote a religious universe where contemporary society was linked very clearly with an ordered cosmos. The comprehensive coherence of the religious universe Osiander promoted in his catechism sermons lent him a political role and could involve him in conflict. If youths were moved by his teaching to adopt this religious universe, their resulting loyalty to society and superiors would be loyalty over which the preacher held considerable influence. It appears that Osiander's political role and the message he promoted influenced each other. The study of this interplay, which will be undertaken in Part Two's sermon analysis, is therefore also a study of Osiander's role in the confessionalization process.

In both Parts One and Two, theological and political changes were connected with a redefinition of how secular life was connected with the truths of faith, and with how religious authority related to secular authority. This study traces how interplay between these two spheres continued as seen through the case of Lucas Osiander. In order to trace theological change with some level of precision, and thereby to better point out how the political is connected with the theological, Luther regularly appears as a contrasting figure in this study. In these instances,

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