

Andrew Spicer, ed. *Lutheran Churches in Early Modern Europe*.

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Andrew Spicer, a forerunner in the emergent “spatial turn” within early modern European studies, has recently published a sweeping collection of sixteen essays by various scholars, specifically addressing Lutheran churches, with a concise “Afterword” by Susan C. Karant-Nunn. Although thematically focused, the volume’s geographic breadth is expansive, covering Germany, Transylvania, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, Poland, the Dutch Republic, and its overseas settlements in Batavia and Cape Town. The essays offer a capacious understanding of spatiality through their interdisciplinary explorations of material culture, theology, politics, and social context.

Communities favoring evangelical reform often transferred Catholic ecclesiastical properties to the polity. But as Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen and Hugo Johannsen show when discussing Lutheran Denmark, the state’s expropriation of church property could also involve campaigns to profane, and thereby discredit, Catholicism’s expansive material culture, from bells, images, and monstrances to the church buildings housing these objects. Reformers rejected the sacred power imputed to Catholic spaces and objects. Indeed, the Johannsens note that in 1529, twelve parish churches were demolished in Viborg. In areas influenced by the Swiss Reformation, similar anti-Catholic campaigns resulted in destructive iconoclastic revolts. Yet as many essays in this volume show, Lutheran polities began to steer a course between, on the one hand, the ubiquitous presence of the sacred in consecrated Catholic spaces and objects, and, on the other, Reformed evangelicals’ preference for austere

and sober churches that rejected the admixture of the sacred and material. The contributors argue that Lutherans forged this path in reaction to both Protestant and Catholic religious rivals as they shored up ambiguous confessional boundaries between the Augsburg Confession and its competitors.

The line between Lutheranism and Catholicism was fraught, for Lutherans often appropriated the material trappings of late-medieval Catholicism, from the very church buildings they inherited to many elements of Catholic material culture, including clerical vestments, artistic images of Mary and the saints, and ornamental furnishings such as candles, pulpits, altar cloths, chancel screens, and baptismal fonts. Far from marginalizing church art and ornaments, Lutheranism developed — often by borrowing from Catholic traditions — a vibrant material culture of its own, as seen in the chapters by Margit Thøfner, Evelin Wetter, Maria Deiters, Maria Craciun, Sven Rune Havsteen, Øystein Ekroll, Riitta Laitinen, Krista Kodres, Matthias Range, and Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen and Hugo Johannsen. Also borrowed from Catholicism was the practice of church consecration, discussed in the contributions of Vera Isaiasz, Thøfner, and Johannsen and Johannsen. Martin Luther himself consecrated the chapel of Castle Hartenfels, indicating that he and his followers imbued religious significance to places of worship, despite Luther's elaboration of the "invisible church."

However, traces of Catholic material culture in Lutheranism ought not imply a conservative cultural impulse to preserve old traditions. Instead, Lutheran communities dynamically reconfigured Catholic forms to accommodate their own theological, religious, and social requirements. Most authors in this volume agree that the formal theological meanings and the quotidian religious experiences attached to elements appropriated from Catholicism became thoroughly Lutheranized. This transformation from Catholic to Lutheran orthodoxy and orthopraxy was embedded in several processes: how Lutheran clergymen reorganized church space; how they used, interpreted, and viewed artwork, ornamentation, and furnishings; and how Lutheran religious rituals reframed, restaged, and thus reworked the religious implications of Lutheran church interiors. Consequently, Lutheran church spaces were not static and fixed, but were constructed through praxis, especially Lutheran versions of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and preaching. (On this point, see especially the essays by Thøfner and Laitinen.) Lutherans justified their material, visual, and aural culture because it highlighted the central sacraments; inspired pious reflections on sin and salvation; and taught, transmitted, and celebrated the Word of God.

While stabilizing the ambiguous boundary between themselves and Catholics, Lutherans also fell into a competitive relationship with Calvinism. Here, the Lutheran preservation of Catholic material culture led Calvinists to criticize Lutheran reformers for failing to reject Catholic errors fully. In turn, as several authors in this volume explain, such critiques inspired an intensified Lutheran use of elaborate material, visual, and musical products to distinguish the Augsburg Confession from Reformed rivals. However, as Spicer's essay notes, the exception to this intensification was the Lutheran Church in the Dutch Republic, where altars

and altarpieces were eliminated and religious art was generally deemphasized, reflecting Lutheran assimilation of Calvinist influences.

While many essays compare the differing ways Lutherans, Catholics, and Calvinists conceptualized and used church space, a few authors discuss situations of direct interaction, competition, and conflict between the confessions over specific church buildings, including Emily Fisher Grey's comprehensive chapter on the churches of biconfessional Augsburg, Agnieszka Madej-Anderson's exploration of the competing Catholic and Lutheran sacred landscapes of Cracow, Jan Harasimowicz's detailed analysis of Polish Lutheran places of worship, and Spicer's wide-ranging discussion of Lutheran worship in the largely Calvinist communities of the Dutch in Europe and overseas.

A few additional themes linking the essays should be noted. Many chapters emphasize the social contexts for church furnishings, often funded by wealthy burgers or even royal princes. Social hierarchies and status thus played a crucial role in how Lutheran churches looked (and sounded, in the case of donations made to purchase or renovate organs). A number of authors also examine the debates around defining *adiaphora*, thus illuminating the diversity of attitudes within the Lutheran Church concerning acceptable church rituals, ornaments, and furnishings. The *adiaphora* debates generated a lively dynamism in evangelical ideas and practices. As Susan Karant-Nunn astutely concludes, this collection offers a "mosaic [that] reveals a picture that its sparkling pieces, examined separately, cannot" (491). At times the central themes of the volume seem repetitive, but the common analytical ground built by the various contributors lays bare the shifting historical ground upon which the history of Lutheran churches must be located. Evangelical reform produced uncertainties requiring local improvisations and compromises, which influenced the appearance of Lutheran churches across Europe and beyond. As such, this collection is a welcome contribution to the historiography mapping Lutheranism's internal differentiation.

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