

## *Luther in Danish*

by ANNA VIND

**M**artin Luther and his work have had tremendous importance in Denmark ever since King Christian III officially introduced the Reformation in 1536. How Luther's writings found their way into the Danish language between the sixteenth century and today can be sketched, but there is no complete list of Luther texts translated into Danish.<sup>1</sup> Geography, politics, nationality, and language all need to be considered. The borders with Germany and Sweden were fluid after the Reformation. The Danish-Swedish border was not established finally until the beginning of the eighteenth century. The border between Germany and Denmark was finally determined in 1920. Thus, the Danes read German and Swedish fluently and vice versa, which meant that to some extent they did not need translations of Luther's German texts and exchanged translations into Swedish and Danish freely. Linguistic relations to Norway and Iceland were even tighter. They both fell under the Danish crown, until 1814 and 1944 respectively. The linguistic continuity between Danish and Norwegian is so strong that several early modern translations into the Danish language actually count as Norwegian depending on the translator and place of printing. The linguistic difference between Icelandic and Danish on the contrary is marked. Iceland was clearly a bilingual area in which both Danish and Icelandic translations of Luther were in use in early modern times. Seen from a political perspective one could argue that the Faroe Islands and Greenland, which today are under the Danish realm with a home rule administration, should be treated in the present article, whereas seen from a national and language-history perspective they need their own articles about translations of Luther into the Faroese and Greenlandic languages. I write from that last perspective, examining translations into the Danish language independent of the place of printing and the nationality of the translator, and explicitly leave the topic of Norwegian translations of Luther after 1814 to one side.

## 1523–1536: Pre-Reformation Denmark

The year 1536, when the Reformation was formally instituted by Christian III, was preceded by a time of unrest and civil war. The turmoil began with the flight in 1523 of King Christian II, who had been sympathetic to church reform, and the transition of power to his uncle, the formally catholic Frederik I. Between 1523 and 1536 the question of confession was closely intertwined with high politics, and the influx of Luther's texts was dependent thereon.<sup>2</sup> The exiled King smuggled a Danish translation of the New Testament from 1524 into the country, even though strict censorship against all writings of a Lutheran stamp was official policy. The three translators were the King's well-educated secretary Christian Winther, Hans Mikkelsen (a former mayor of Malmø), and Henrik Smith (a humanist, also from Malmø), who had worked with Melchior Lotter in Leipzig 1517–18. The edition was partly based on Luther's German New Testament of 1522 and partly on Erasmus' Latin New Testament, most probably the second edition from 1519. In addition, it contained Danish versions of Luther's prefaces to the New Testament and its books.

In 1526 the Danish humanist Poul Helgesen had a translation of Luther's *Betbüchlein* (1522) printed in Rostock. In 1528 the first Danish missal was published in Malmø by Claus Mortensen, one of the leading Lutheran reformers in that city. He also published a hymnal in the same year, which is no longer preserved. In the missal were six of Luther's hymns.<sup>3</sup> In 1529 the important Danish reformer Jørgen Jensen Sadolin from Viborg published the confessional part of *Vom Abendmahl Christi. Bekenntnis* (1528) in Danish and a translation of *Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunsers für die einfältigen Laien* (1519). In 1530 he translated Luther's *Dass Eltern die Kinder zur Ehe nicht zwingen [ . . . ] sollen* (1524). In 1531 Danish humanist Christian Pedersen, a fellow exile and close friend of Christian II, published at Antwerp a series of quite freely translated Luther texts: Luther's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), *Sermon von der Betrachtung des heiligen Leidens Christi* (1519), Luther's *Sermon von Kreuz und Leiden [ . . . ]* delivered at Coburg in 1530, his *Sermon von dem ehelichen Stand* (1519), the writing *An die Ratsherren aller Städte deutschen Lands*,

*dass sie christliche Schulen aufrichten und halten soll* (1524) and finally another revised edition of the *Betbüchlein* (1522).

In 1532 the first translation of Luther's *Small Catechism* by Sadolin was printed in Copenhagen. In 1533 a Danish version of the *Sermon von der Bereitung zum Sterben* (1519) and of Luther's *Vermahnung an die Geistlichen, versammelt auf dem Reichstag zu Augsburg* (1530) appeared. In 1535 a translation was made of Luther's *Wie das Gesetz und Evangelium recht gründlich zu unterscheiden sind* [. . .] (1532); it bore a recommendation on the title page saying that this book was highly profitable for all Danish-speaking Christians and necessary for the sake of their salvation, since "the whole sum of our holy teaching is taught" there.<sup>4</sup>

#### 1536–1617: *The Reformation and its Establishment*

After the Reformation's formal introduction the Bishop of Sealand Peder Palladius stepped onto the scene as one of the most important translators of Luther.<sup>5</sup> As a student in Wittenberg he sat at the feet of both Melancthon and Luther. He retranslated Luther's *Small Catechism* and published it in 1537 (reprinted in 1587) and produced a more elaborate edition of it in 1538, intended as a handbook for pastors (reprinted in 1586). He also published in 1541 a *Short Interpretation of the Catechism for the Norwegian Parishes* in a Latin edition, which was translated into Danish in 1546 and was a combination of parts of Luther's *Large Catechism* and Melancthon's *Loci*.

In 1564 Peder Tidemand translated Luther's *Hauspostille* (1544); it was reprinted in 1577. In 1569 Hans Thomisson's hymnbook came out with several of Luther's hymns. Some of Luther's commentaries on Psalms were also translated and published (1565, 1578, 1580, 1598). The first of these, in 1565, was a translation of Luther's interpretation of Psalm 101 (1534), Luther's mirror for princes. Another, from 1580, was a translation of Luther's exposition of Psalm 90. Here the patron who had taken the initiative, the nobleman Mikkel Sehested, commented that it was meant to be of use to "Christians in Denmark and Norway, who cannot understand the Latin and German languages."<sup>6</sup>

After the reign of Frederik II (1559–1588), a theological shift took place. The theological climate had been marked by a “Wittenbergian” attitude, seeking to combine the influence of both Luther and Melancthon, but after about 1600 a stronger leaning toward Luther marked the scene. Confronted with the efficient pedagogy of the Jesuits and the rational clarity of the Calvinists, a range of controversies occupied the years before the Reformation jubilee in 1617. The professor at the University of Copenhagen and later Bishop of Sealand (from 1615) Hans Poulsen Resen took the lead. He arranged for several reprints of translations of Luther, both the *Small* and the *Large Catechism* as well as a new edition of Palladius’ second version of the *Small Catechism*, the handbook for pastors from 1538, now revised using a German edition of Luther’s work from Leipzig, 1544.<sup>7</sup> He also established a new translation of the *Confessio Augustana* (1618), which was of course not from Luther’s hand, but which was later reprinted together with the Smalcald Articles.

#### 1617–1700: Catechisms and Hymnbooks

Luther’s catechisms were of tremendous importance in Denmark as in the other Nordic countries.<sup>8</sup> In a 1628 edition of the *Small Catechism* Resen wrote that it was “the golden treasury of the good Luther”<sup>9</sup> and a vital key to true doctrine for individuals and society at large. King Christian IV mandated that young men who sought admission to the University needed to be familiar with Luther’s *Small* and then his *Large Catechism*. In 1629 the first complete edition of Luther’s *Large Catechism* was translated into Danish by the Pastor of Holmens Church in Copenhagen, Niels Mikkelsen Aalborg. *The Large Catechism* was never as important in Denmark as it was in Germany, since the *Book of Concord* was never accepted as confessionally binding in Denmark.

Some editions of the catechisms were adapted to specific contexts, such as Anders Matthiesens Hjørring’s “hospital catechism” of 1658, meant for the elderly, the sick, the poor, and the disabled.<sup>10</sup> In addition to the core Luther text it contained prayers and texts for use in infirmaries. Often the catechisms had commentaries added in order to facilitate understanding and prevent mindless memorization.

Hymnbooks were also of great importance in the seventeenth century, and Luther's hymns were old friends. Hans Thomissøn's hymnbook was printed for the last time in 1649 and quickly sold out, whereupon private hymn-collections and devotional handbooks containing hymns mushroomed.<sup>11</sup> When in 1699 the Danish hymn writer and Bishop of Funen Thomas Kingo published a national hymnbook, complete with the king's blessing, Luther's hymns were still indispensable classics.

### *1700–1800: Pietism and Enlightenment*

Luther's catechisms retained their significance in the eighteenth century and were consequently reprinted in different forms. Two different, intertwined currents, Pietism and Enlightenment, marked this century. Luther and his texts were popular with both, but in very different ways. The Pietists (a term which includes many different tendencies) generally saw themselves as very Lutheran, perhaps because the established theologians, influenced by Lutheran Orthodoxy, did *not* view them as such. It was important to the Pietists to prove their orthodoxy by reference to Luther's texts. They cultivated the catechism and stood behind the royal decision to make confirmation compulsory in Denmark in 1736. To this end the later Bishop of Bergen, Erik Pontoppidan, wrote his explanations to Luther's catechism, published in 1737, in a book of 759 questions to be rehearsed and memorized by the young Danes. Pontoppidan also edited a new hymnal, published in 1740, with thirty-one hymns of Luther, a majority of what Luther had written.

An important Pietist was Pastor Thomas Pedersen Horrebow, a teacher at the newly established orphanage (Vajsenhuset), before he became a pastor in Jutland.<sup>12</sup> He produced his own translations of Luther, for example, the commentary on Isaiah 53 published in Danish in 1755. Horrebow's primary effort, though, was the translation of *Lutherus redivivus* composed by the Danzig Pastor Martin Statius from 1626, published in Danish in 1761. This book was a collection of selected texts from Luther's hand, edited and deftly grouped by Statius.

Other translations from the mid-century are a selection of Luther's sermons, taken from both the *Church Postil* and the *House Postil*, and an interpretation of Genesis, both published together with Benjamin Lindner's biography by the German-born bookseller Christian Gottlob Mengel.<sup>13</sup> In 1743 the printer and publisher Andreas Hartvig Godiche released an edition of Luther's large *Lectures on Galatians* (1531/1535), over 500 pages translated into Danish from Walch's edition. A Danish version of Luther's commentary on Psalm 51 came out in 1752, translated by Oluf Schlichtkrull. A final example is the book *Dr. Martin Luther's pure and apostolic teaching about the three articles: original sin, justification in Christ and the true sanctification, drawn from all of Luther's writings, along with Luther's powerful sermon on the prophecy of Simeon*, translated into Danish and published in 1765 by the Norwegian-born Pastor at Frederik's Hospital in Copenhagen, Cornelius Normann. It is unclear whether this was based on an existent German collection drawn from Luther's writings.

Many of the prominent theologians of the eighteenth century marked by Enlightenment ideas were not as interested in Luther's texts as were the Pietists. Yet Nicolai E. Balle, a supranaturalist and professor at the University of Copenhagen from 1772 to 1783 and then Bishop of Sealand, was as fond of Luther's *Small Catechism* as ever, still seeing it as a "true treasure for our church" as he expressed in his 1786 annotated edition.<sup>14</sup> In this edition he kept the structure of the text as arranged by Luther, but when the new *Primer for the Evangelical-Christian Religion* came out in 1791, written by him together with Pastor Christian Bastholm to be introduced as the textbook in the school system, Balle changed and added to Luther's structure. He and Bastholm wanted to bring the catechism up to date, so they began with the teaching about God, his providence and deeds for the human being in Christ, after which they wrote the largest chapter dealing with virtue and duty.<sup>15</sup> This textbook was meant as a substitute for Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* of 1737 but the revivalist movements with roots among the Pietists were hostile to it, and some of them never accepted it. Similarly, Balle published a new hymnbook in 1798, intended to replace Kingo's hymnbook from 1699 and Pontoppidan's of 1740, the *Evangelical-Christian hymnbook to be used at church services and family prayers*. Only five hymns

written by Luther survived, and then only in an edited form. Balle and his fellows expunged the devil from *A Mighty Fortress is our God*. No mention of Satan, or a personified evil was allowed.<sup>16</sup>

### 1800–1900

Nineteenth-century Danish theology is famous for being the time of Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813–1855) and Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872). It was also the era of continuing influence from the revival movements. Acute conflicts developed between these, other groupings, and the state church in the first half of the century, until the Danish Constitution of 1849 finally established freedom of religion. Battles over what was truly Lutheran promoted continued interest in Luther's writings. Highly educated theologians did not need Danish translations of his works; in a list of books in Søren Kierkegaard's library we find Otto Gerlach's German edition of Luther's writings in ten volumes.<sup>17</sup> At the beginning of the century Luther was needed in Danish for the edification of the ordinary man, whereas after 1849, when freedom of religion opened the country for other confessions and religions, easier access to him was also needed in order to support the knowledge which still formed the indisputable basis of The Danish National Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Luther's catechisms continued to play a leading part. The Bishop of Sealand Frederik Münter asked the curate of Our Lady's Church in Copenhagen, Jakob Peter Mynster (later to become Münter's successor) to revise Balle's translation of the *Small Catechism* and bring it closer to Luther's own text.<sup>18</sup> Mynster's new edition came out in 1814 and was authorized to be used in schools, but in 1830 Pastor Jacob Christian Lindberg, a sharp polemicist opposing rationalist and liberal tendencies and defending a more Lutheran-orthodox point of view, published a revised edition in a critique of Mynster's version.<sup>19</sup> Lindberg argued intensely for establishing accurate editions of the confessional writings. In 1849 Pastor, later Bishop in Ribe, Carl Frederik Balslev published another translation, and his version, which included explanatory material, became the

most intensively used catechism far into the twentieth century. It ousted the enlightenment primer of Bishop Balle for good.

Jakob Peter Mynster's 1845 more literal translation of Luther's *A Mighty Fortress is our God* replaced Balle's version and is still in use in the authorized Danish Hymnbook of today.<sup>20</sup> During the nineteenth century Luther's hymns in general regained popularity. In *Psalmebog til Kirke- og Huus-Anadagt* (also known as *Roskilde Konvents Psalmebog*), the new authorized hymnbook from 1855, which was influenced by Grundtvig and a reaction to The Evangelical-Christian hymnbook of 1798, twelve of Luther's hymns were used. In 1863 the lawyer and landowner Frederik Ludvig Mynster, a very important translator of Luther in the century (not related to Jakob Peter Mynster), published his Danish version of *Luthers Psalmer*. In 1890 the schoolteacher Hans Rasmussen's *Psalmer og aandelige Sange* represented an attempt to collect all of Luther's hymns: it also included some of his thoughts on music, as expressed in his foreword to the 1524 hymnbook and the preface *Frau Musica* (1538) and indeed notes for Luther's own melodies. This book was reedited and reprinted for the Reformation jubilee in 1917. In the officially authorized hymnbook *Psalmebog for Kirke og hjem* of 1899, fifteen of Luther's hymns found a place.<sup>21</sup>

Among the revivalists the interest in promoting the church father Luther was immense.<sup>22</sup> They reprinted Danish editions of the *Large Catechism* (in 1839 in an edition of the 1629 translation, made by Ole Peter Holm Larsen of Skræppenborg; in 1859 in a different edition of the same translation, made by Mads Christensens and Jensen Jensen in Kragelund; in 1902 in a reprint of Larsen's 1839 version, now with a foreword by former Copenhagen Professor of Church History and current Bishop in Aalborg Frederik Nielsen) and of his *Lectures on Galatians* (1531/35) (in 1865 in the series *Indre Missions Forlagsskrifter*, and then in 1902 in a new translation of Walch's edition made by Evangelisk Luthersk Missionforening). Several smaller tracts from Luther's hand were also published within these circles: *Eine einfältige Weise zu beten* (1535) came out in 1865; *Dass eine christliche Versammlung oder Gemeinde Recht und macht habe . . . zu berufen* (1523) in 1880 and *Eine treue Vermahnung zu allen Christen, sich zu hüten vor Aufruhr und Empörung*, (1522) in 1885.<sup>23</sup>

After 1849 the interest in producing accessible Luther texts grew. Translator Frederik Ludvig Mynster published, besides Luther's hymns, *Luther's house postil, edited by Luther himself 1544* (1864); a selection of his letters (1869) and his sermons on the Gospel of John (1867).<sup>24</sup> The edition of the postil was the second of three in that century. In 1823–25 Pastor Jørgen Thisted had produced a collection of selected Luther sermons from both the house postil and the church postil based on the German edition of Benjamin Lindner. At the same time as Mynster's translation, Pastor and later Bishop Thomas Skat Rørdam reprinted—with slight language revisions—Peder Tidemand's 1564 translation of the house postil. In 1856 Pastor L. Schwartzbrem translated and published *Die Sieben Busspsalmen* (1517/1525) and had it reprinted in 1880 for the sake of the “admirers of devout reading.”<sup>25</sup>

At the Reformation jubilee of 1883 Copenhagen Professor of Church History Fredrik Nielsen's large edition (828 pages) of Luther texts saw the light of day. This was the first large collection of Luther's works in Danish: *Luthers reformatoriske skrifter i udvalg, oversat af adjunct Kaper med historiske indledninger af Dr. Fredrik Nielsen*. The aim was, as Nielsen wrote in the preface, to give laymen in Denmark and Norway an impression of Luther's output. This aim prevented the inclusion of several works which Nielsen regarded as too difficult for the uneducated: texts such as *De captivitate babilonica ecclesiae praeludium* (1520) and *Vom Kriege wider die Türken* (1529) and Luther's exegetical lectures. The book, Nielsen wrote, was a humble Danish counterpart to the decision in Germany to begin the Weimar Edition. It included thirty works, among them: The Ninety-Five Theses (1517); several early tracts on indulgences, preparation for death, baptism, the Lord's Supper, excommunication, and penance (1518–1519); the reforming treatises of 1520 (apart from *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*), *Eyn Kleyn Untericht* [. . .] from the *Church Postil* (1522), the Preface to the Epistle to the Romans (1522), *Von Ordnung Gottesdiens in der Gemeinde* [. . .] (1523), *Von Weltlicher Obrigkeit* [. . .] (1523), *An die Ratsherren* [. . .] (1524), the two answers to the Twelve Articles of the Peasants (1525), *Deutsche Messe* [. . .] (1526), and the *Small Catechism* (1529). The catechism was based on Palladius' Danish edition of 1538. Otherwise it

is uncertain which original German or Latin editions served as the bases for these translations.

In 1895 Peder Severinsen, a Grundtvigian pastor and energetic church historian with no affiliation to the university, published a translation of Luther's *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen* (1520).

### *The Twentieth Century*

Publications of collected works have marked the twentieth century, as has the tendency to publish bilingual editions. Three new versions of collected works have appeared after Fredrik Nielsen's volume. Between 1910 and 1914 Severinsen and translator N. Vognsbøl published *Martin Luthers Liv og Hovedværker*. The first volume was a biography written by Severinsen, the next four volumes contained Reformation writings, selected sermons and other writings with short introductions to each text. It was important to Severinsen to establish reliable translations and also to include previously untranslated texts such as *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. Occasionally they shortened a text and left out what they called parts with "lesser importance for today."<sup>26</sup> Selected sermons were also edited so that "parts of less practical importance for today" were omitted, "whereas they are of course never rearranged."<sup>27</sup> In addition to the sermons and *The Babylonian Captivity* this collection included: *The Ninety-Five Theses* (1517), *An den christlichen Adel [. . .]* (1520), *Von den guten Werken* (1520), *Tractatus de libertate Christiana* (now translated from the Latin text whereas Severinsen's translation of 1895 was from the German) (1520), both catechisms (1529), *Sermon von dem hochwürdigen Sakrament des heiligen wahren Leichnams Christi und von den Bruderschaften* (1519), Luther's *Vermahnung* (1530), parts of the large Lectures on Galatians (translated from Justus Menius' German edition from the sixteenth century) (1531/35) and *Deutsche Messe [. . .]* (1526).<sup>28</sup>

In 1917 the liberal theologian, professor of church history, and later Bishop Valdemar Ammundsen published *Lutherbogen*, an attempt to portray Luther and the Reformation events through selections of Luther texts based on the Erlangen edition and to some extent the Weimar edition. Both Luther's letters and the table talks were

prominent; excerpts from his other writings were added. The book came out in a new edition in 1967 revised by Pastor and Luther scholar Sven Lørfeldt. He added chapters about the church, since the agenda in the 1960s had shifted from Ammundsen's questions about personal conversion and certainty towards ecumenism.<sup>29</sup>

Within the Danish dialectical-theological tradition, more precisely among a circle of theologians around the journal *Tidhverv* (since 1926), Luther-translations were also produced: Christian Lindschrog's *Small Catechism* in 1936, a translation of the *Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunsers* [. . .] (1519) by K. Olesen Larsen in 1938, and a translation of Luther's late tracts against the Jews and the Turks [*Von den Juden und Ihre Lügen* (1543); *Vom Kriege wieder die Türken* (1529) and *Heerpredigt wider den Türken* (1530)] in 1999.

At the occasion of the 1936 jubilee of the implementation of the Reformation in Denmark, a volume of twenty-five sermons of Luther was published, translated by the Pastors Hans Thyge Jacobsen and Egede Schack. In 1938 they published a second volume with thirty-two sermons. Two versions of collected works were also published in response to two other jubilees, the 450th anniversary of the Ninety-Five Theses in 1967 and the 500th of Luther's birthday in 1983. In 1962–64 (reprinted in 1980 and 2017) four scholars (Professor of Church History in Copenhagen Torben Christensen, Pastor and Luther scholar Niels Nøjgaard, Professor of Christian Studies at the Danish College of Education Ebbe Thestrup Pedersen, and Professor of Dogmatics at Aarhus University Regin Prenter) jointly edited *Luthers skrifter i Udvalg* in four volumes comprising 1) Reformation writings, 2) writings on the church and worship, 3) Bible interpretation and sermons, and 4) the Gospel and societal life. This collection was the first to meet today's scholarly standards. The *Weimarer Ausgabe* was the point of departure, with some reference to the Clemens edition. To every text an introduction was written, and explanatory footnotes added. The translation sought to be true to Luther's original text while providing a readable Danish. New texts translated here were the Heidelberg Disputation (1518), *Grund und Ursach aller Artikel* [. . .] (1521), *Von den Konziliis und Kirchen* (1539), *Magnificat* [. . .] (1521), *Das schöne Confitemini* [. . .] (1530), *Ob Kriegsleute auch in Seligen Stande sein können* (1526),<sup>30</sup> and

*Von Kaufshandlung und Wucher* (the first part) (1524). In 1983 a fifth volume with *De Servo Arbitrio* was added, translated by classical philologist Ellen A. Madsen with the advice of Professor in Church History Steffen Kjeldgaard-Pedersen.

In the 1970s another circle of theologians affiliated with the independent theological schools *Menighedsfakultet* in Aarhus and *Dansk Bibel Institut* in Copenhagen also chose to produce an edition of collected works.<sup>31</sup> All previous editions were out of print and the wish to read Luther's own texts in translation was conspicuous, especially in these theological circles. The editors wanted to add translations of texts that had not been included in *Luthers Skrifter i Udvalg*. Led by a committee consisting of Kurt E. Christensen and Asger Christian Højlund (subsequently professors at *Menighedsfakultetet*), the principal at *Dansk Bibel Institut* Niels Ove Rasmussen Vigilius and Pastor Johannes Jensen, eight volumes were published between 1981 and 1996. This edition too met high scholarly standards, diligently working with and referring to the Weimar edition, offering introductions to the texts and adding footnotes. Here we find—among other texts—a full version of the *Lectures on Galatians* (1531/35), a first unabridged version of *The Babylonian Captivity* (1520), *Sermo de duplici iustitia* (1519), *Against the Antinomians* (1539), *Von der Wiedertaufe an zwei Pfarrherrn* (1528), *Vom Abendmahl Christi* [. . .] (1529), *Die Schmalkaldischen Artikel* (1536), and the tract *Against Latomus* (1521). One of the translators, Finn B. Andersen, is still a very active translator and has produced an enormous body of translated texts on the Internet,<sup>32</sup> texts available today as books printed on demand. Andersen's effort is immense and overwhelming, but scholarly evaluation of his efforts has lagged, and some caution is required from the reader.

Approximately five years before the jubilee in 2017 yet another group of scholars convened to establish a circle of translators for parts of the newly published bilingual *Martin Luther Lateinisch-Deutsche Studienausgabe*. The decision was made to translate Volume 3 about the church and the clerical offices, since these texts—besides *De Captivitate Babylonica* [. . .] and then *De Instituendis* (1523) and parts of the *Answer to Ambrosius Catharinus* (1521) on the homepages of Finn B. Andersen and Richard Riis—had not previously been

translated into Danish. The goal was to achieve a narrowly text-oriented version for the purpose of strengthening rigorous philological studies of Luther's texts. This work is still going on, led by Steffen Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, Associate Professor of Church History Anna Vind, and librarian Henrik Hovgaard Laursen, but can be expected to finish in 2021.

Two other bilingual publications have also appeared: *Tractatus de libertate christiana* translated from the Latin by the classical philologist Johannes Thomsen in 1984,<sup>33</sup> and *Vom Weltlicher Obrigkeit [ . . . ]* translated by Professor of Ethics and Philosophy of Religion at Aarhus University Svend Andersen in 2006, and introduced both by Svend Andersen and Associate Professor of Church History, also at Aarhus, Jens Thorkild Christensen Lyby.

Luther's letters came out in a new edition in 2017, translated and fully introduced by Steffen Kjeldgaard-Pedersen and former Bishop of Göteborg and Luther scholar Carl Axel Aurelius. This edition was based on the Weimar edition. A two-volume translation of Luther's letters from the Erlangen edition was published in 1921 and 1923 (Alfred Sveistrup Poulsen and Christen Jensen Holt). The 2017 work sought to display Luther's life in and through his many roles and relationships as a letter writer.

In *Den danske Folkekirke* of today, Luther's hymns have been restored to favor. In the authorized hymnbook from 1953, twenty-three of his hymns were present, and in the 2002 version there are twenty-two. The *Small Catechism* was for the first time inserted into the 1953 hymnbook in a somewhat abbreviated revision of Balslev's translation of 1849. In the 2002 hymnbook this translation was revised by Pastor Jørgen Børglum Larsen, former principal of Folkekirkens Pædagogiske Institut Jens Kr. Krarup, and former principal of Teologisk Pædagogisk Center Eberhard Harbsmeier in cooperation with the Danish bishops. Added here was an abbreviated version of Luther's passages on confession followed by the editor's argument that pastoral care plays an increasing role in today's church. Luther's preface, however, was not included, neither in 1953 nor in 2002. In 1955 the *Large Catechism* and the Danish confessional documents, which include the *Small Catechism*, were published together in an edition by Johannes Feveile and Max W. Olsen.<sup>34</sup> This edition was

followed by two volumes produced by Professor of Church History Leif Grane for the Danish Bible Society in 1976 (the *Large Catechism* in Grane's own translation) and in 1981 (the confessional documents, including the *Small Catechism* still in the revised translation made by Balslev, but now including the preface in Grane's translation). In 2015 as a prelude to the jubilee in 2017, warden Thomas Reinholdt Rasmussen translated the *Small Catechism* anew.

In conclusion to this overview, it can rightly be said that Luther and his writings have had immense importance in the Danish Church and society ever since the very early and quite unproblematic completion of the Lutheran Reformation in the sixteenth century. The elaborate commemoration of the Reformation Jubilee in 2017, which was celebrated not only in the church but also on a national governmental level, showed that as of today this interest has not died out.

#### NOTES

1. The article does not lay claim to completeness. It refers first and foremost to the following works: Niels Knud Andersen, *Confessio Hafniensis. Den Københavnske Bekendelse af 1530* (Copenhagen: C.E. Gads Forlag, 1954); Carsten Bach-Nielsen, *Fra Jubelfest til Kulturår. Danske Reformationsfejringer gennem 400 år* (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2015); Martin Schwarz Lausten, *Luther og Danmark i 500 år* (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2017); Anna Vind, "Lutherreception i 1500-tallets og 1600-tallets Danmark," in Ole Høiris and Per Ingeman, eds., *Reformationen. 1500-tallets Kulturrevolution* (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2017), vol. 2, 117–137. Important literature with further information is Charlotte Appel, *Læsning og Bogmarked i 1600-tallets Danmark*, vol. 1–2 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2001), Pål Dahlerup, *Litterær Reformation* (Copenhagen: U Press, 2016); Oluf Friis, *Den danske Litteraturs Historie I. Fra Oldtiden indtil Renæssancen (c. 1615)* (Copenhagen: Hirschprung, 1945); Jørgen Kærgaard and Ove Paulsen, eds., *Luthers salmer på dansk—Tekst, melodi, liturgi og teologi* (Copenhagen: Eksistensen, 2017).

All titles from Luther's text appear either (sometimes full, sometimes abridged) as they are listed in Kurt Aland, *Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium* (Bielefeld: Luther Verlag, 1996), 4. ed., or—in order to ease the readability of the text—in an English (also sometimes abridged) version referring to *Luther's Works*, the American Edition.

2. At the end of Andersen, *Confessio Hafniensis*, 439, one finds a list of translated writings from the Reformation up until 1536. Fundamental to research into the period up to 1600 is Lauritz Nielsen, *Dansk bibliografi 1482–1600 med særligt hensyn til dansk bogtrykkerkunstens historie*. 2nd edition, 4 vol., with supplementary volume by Erik Dal (Copenhagen: Det kongelige Bibliotek, Det danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab, 1996).

3. The Malmø missal was reprinted in 1529 and was the first in a number of Reformation missals (1535, 1539, 1573). Mortensen's lost hymnal is the first we know of, but it was succeeded by other hymnals (1529, 1533, 1536 and 1553) until the publication of Hans Thomisson's hymnal from 1569, which was the first to obtain official authorization. Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab recently completed a research project about these Danish Reformation hymnals and missals: [salmer.dsl.dk](http://salmer.dsl.dk): Here online access to texts, notes, and research articles is provided.

4. See Vind, "Lutherreception," 121 with reference to Andersen, *Confessio Hafniensis*, 462.

5. The following refers closely to Vind, "Lutherreception," 121ff.

6. Vind, "Lutherreception," 122 with reference to Morten Fink-Jensen, "Printing and Preaching after the Reformation: A Danish Pastor and his Audience," in Charlotte Appel and Morten Fink-Jensen, eds., *Religious Reading in the Lutheran North*. Studies in Early Modern Scandinavian Book Culture (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), 14–46; 28.

7. Vind, "Lutherreception," 122, with reference to Bjørn Kornerup, *Biskop Hans Poulsen Resen*, Studier over Kirke- og Skolehistorie i det 16. og 17. århundrede, vol. 1, (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gads Forlag, 1928), 357ff.

8. For the following, see Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 87ff.

9. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 89.

10. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 90.

11. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 102.

12. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 123.

13. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 122–123.

14. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 136.

15. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 136. Compare Michael Neiiendam, "Nicolaï Edinger Balle," in Svend Cedergreen Bech, ed., *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, 3. ed. (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1979–84).

16. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 137.

17. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 176.

18. Inspired by this work, Mynster later published a study on earlier examples of Danish editions of the *Small Catechism*: Jakob Peter Mynster, *Om de danske Udgaver af Luthers lille Katekismus* (Copenhagen: Den Gyldendahlske Boghandlings Forlag, 1835).

19. Compare Bach-Nielsen, *Fra Jubelfest til Kulturår*, 173–174.

20. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 169.

21. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 194.

22. The Danish revival movements were multifaceted and diverse, something which must be left aside in this context. For more details, see Flemming Kofoed-Svendsen, "Brugen af Luther i vækkelsesbevægelser, der præger hans navn," in Michael A. Mørch, Jonas Kjølner Rasmussen and Carsten Elmelund, eds., *Fra Wittenberg til verden. Martin Luther dengang og i dag* (Fredericia: Forlaget Kolon 2019), 131–162.

23. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 178–191.

24. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 190–191. Another translation of Luther's sermons on the Gospel of John 14–16 was L. Thurah's *Frelsens Olie. Herrens Afskedstale over Nadver-Bordet og ved Opbruddet til Getsemane. Johs 14, 15, 16. Trøsteligt udlagt og frimodigt prædiktet af Dr. Mortens Luther til Lys og Lærdom for Hjerterne, og til Værn mod falske Aander* (Odense, 1855).

25. Schwarz Lausten, *Luther i Danmark*, 191.
26. Peder Severinsen and N.Vognsbøl, *Martin Luthers liv og Hovedværker* (Copenhagen: Forlagsmagasinet, 1911), vol. 2: Reformatoriske Skrifter, 235.
27. Peder Severinsen and N.Vognsbøl, *Martin Luthers liv og Hovedværker* (Copenhagen: Forlagsmagasinet, 1911), vol. 3: Udvalgte Prædikener til Kirkeaaets Søn- og Helligdage, 7.
28. A list of all the included writings can be found at the back of volume five.
29. Sven Lerfeldt, *Lutherbogen. Luthers Liv og tanker belyst gennem citater fra hans værker* (Copenhagen: Lohses Forlag, 1967), 9.
30. This one also exists in a translation from the time of the war against the Germans of 1848–1850/51: *Luthers Skrivelse til Asa von Kram, om Krigsfolk ogsaa kunne blive salige*, (Copenhagen: Foreningen til christlige Opbyggelsesskrifters Udbredelse i Folket, 1849). Thank you to my colleague Associate Professor Lars Christian Vangselev for this reference and other assistance related to the completion of the present article.
31. Compare Kofoed- Svendsen, “Brugen af Luther;” 155–156.
32. [www.lutherdansk.dk](http://www.lutherdansk.dk). Another Danish Pastor, Richardt Riis, is also active in establishing Luther translations on the Internet: [www.martinluther.dk](http://www.martinluther.dk).
33. Other editions of *On the Freedom of a Christian* in the twentieth century are *Om et kristent Menneskes Frihed. Udgivet af Dr. Martin Luther i Aaret 1520*, published in 1924 in connection to Evangelisk Luthersk Missionsforening (Skjern, J. Strandbygaards Bogtrykkeri) (translator unknown) and *Om et kristemenneskes frihed. Åbent brev til Pave Leo X.*, translated and annotated by the religious historian Carl Frederik Wiwe (Aarhus: Systime, 2011).
34. For an overview of the translations of the confessional writings, including the Small Catechism, see <http://www.patristik.dk/B8/bOvers.htm>.