

The Early Modern Pastor between Ideal and Reality

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I The ministry in the Heinrichsagende

In the first Church Ordinance for the pastors of Albertine Saxony from 1539, there is an interesting preface stating the main characteristics of the new Protestant pastors – in contrast to the old Catholic priests. This ordinance, the so-called *Heinrichsagende*, was enforced by prince Heinrich, who succeeded his brother George as ruler in the Albertine part of Saxony that same year. Three years earlier, in 1536, he had allowed the city council in Freiberg, where he resided, to join the Reformation. Now, he wanted to take the opportunity to introduce the new religion in all of Albertine Saxony. Heinrich was a devout defender of Protestantism, and although his rule as prince was only to last for two years, he contributed in an important way to constructing the confessional profile of Saxonian Protestantism in the sixteenth century.¹ His Ordinance for the pastors – originally intended to be a just a preliminary regulation – continued to serve as official ordinance for Saxony for generations, and was reprinted several times until the early seventeenth century.²

- 1 An overview of this part of Saxonian Reformation History is offered in G. WARTENBERG, *Die Entstehung der sächsischen Landeskirche von 1539 bis 1559* (in: *Das Jahrhundert der Reformation in Sachsen*, hg. v. H. JUNGHANS, 2005, 69–92). See also G. WARTENBERG, *Landesherrschaft und Reformation*, 1988.
- 2 The text is available online in a version of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: *Kirchenordnungen zum anfang für die Pfarhern in Herzog Heinrichs zu Sachsen v. g. h. Fürstenthum*, Sign.: 4 Liturg. 193, URN: urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10164219-2, BVB-ID:BV001499727, Wit-

The most important practical tasks to be accomplished by a Lutheran pastor are prescribed by the main text of the Ordinance. These tasks include *Nottauf*, *Beichte*, *krankte Leute (berichten und trösten)*, *Kirchenordnung in Städten und Dörfern*, *Segen von Bräutigam und Braut* and finally *Begräbnis der Todten*. In addition, the role of the pastor is defined in theological or ideological terms in the extensive preface, signed by six of the more influential church leaders of Saxony at the time: Justus Jonas, Justus Menius, Georgius Spalatinus, Johannes Weber, Caspar Cruciger and Fridericus Myconius.

In this Vorrede, the frome Gottfürchtige Pfarherr who have replaced the ungelerten Papisten are addressed:

Und dieselbigen Gottfürchtigen und guten hertzen, die da recht erkennen, welch ein gros befelh, hohe ampt, trefflich, wichtig Titel das ist, wenn sich einer schreibt Seelhirt, Pfarher, in der stad NN in dem Dorff, und wie fur einen grossen Herrn und hohe Maies-tet, die jenige treten, die, wie Paulus sagt, fur Gottes augen, an Gottes stat predigen, leren, an Gottes stat die heiligen sacrament reichen, fur dem angesicht Christi und so vieler Engel, mit iren Pfarkindern beten, danck sagen, Psalmensingen etc.³

After having praised the dignity of the new Apostolic and Christian service and contrasting it to the idolatry of the papist Mass celebration, the text goes on:

Denn es ist recht geredt, wie die Collect lautet (so die Papisten offt selbs gebraucht): Deus, cui servire regnare est, Denn welcher Pfarher trewlich den namen und die gnade Christi prediget, die Tauff und Sacrament in rechtem brauch reicher, der ist freilich alle stunde ein gewaltig Siegman, ein König und Herrscher uber die grosse macht und schrecklichs Reich des Satans, der thut alle stunde dem Feind schaden, und vermehret das Reich Christi, wie auch der lxviii. Psalm, die Aposteln und Pfarher, Könige der Heerscharen nennet.

Es ligt ein trew Seelsorger alle stunde zu felde, im heer des HErrn Zebaoth, bewacht, errettet, und schützt seine PfarKinder, wider allerley list, verretey, wider so starcken streit und sturm des Teufels, Und ist ein Pfarher oder Prediger ampt, nicht ein müssig-gang oder schertzwesen, Wie denn Paulus Timotheum ein streiter und Kriegsmann Christi nennet, Aber davon wissen die Papisten eben so viel, als ein Kind.⁴

tenberg 1539 (<http://www.bsbmuenchendigital.de/~web/web1016/bsb10164219/images/index.html?l=de&digID=bsb10164219&v=100&nav=0>).

3 Heinrichsagende (see n. 2), ii.

4 Heinrichsagende (see n. 2), iii.

In the rhetoric of this preface, the Lutheran minister is first and foremost a warrior in Christ's army. In this capacity, he is a king and ruler (*ein gewaltig Siegmann, ein König und Herrscher*), representing Christ as the victor over Satan and his kingdom. »To serve God is to rule« (*Deus, cui servire regnare est*⁵): this traditional dictum did not only apply to the ministers of the old regime. It also applies to the Protestant minister. He must be *en garde* at any moment, protecting his flock from the endless assaults of Satan. This task has been totally neglected by the papists and their priests, but will be taken care of now by the new ministers.

Closely connected to these statements about the Protestant minister, the text also talks about the *Pfarhe*, the *Kirch*, or the *Christlich Predigstühl*: the place or the function where the gospel is to be preached and the sacraments are to be administered. This function is to be taken care of everywhere now, in cities, villages and houses: »*da gibt es bald den heiligen Geist, da thut er bald den gantzen Himmel auff, thut wunderwerck, gibt weisheit, Geist, zungen und sprachen*«. Whereas the papists neglected the presence and the continuous hard work of the priest in many cities and villages, the Protestant minister is to be present everywhere. No *Pfarhe* or *Christlich Predigstühl* without a minister. The ministry, the Pulpit and the kingdom of Heaven belonging to it may, according to the text, be called *eine Haushaltung* or *eine Oeconomia*: »*wie den die Schrift auch die Pfarher Oeconomus nennet, das ist, Haushalter uber die geistlichen und himlischen Schetze*«.

All orders of society are called upon to contribute to establishing the new ministries in every city and village: »Und wahrlich, Adel, Ritterschafft, Stedte, Dörfer, die Christen sein wollen, sollten wissen, und recht erkennen, dass Pfarhen un Christlich Predigtstühl gross zu achten, und zu ehren sind.« That is to say: ministries should not only be established, but also highly honoured.⁶

5 This phrase occurs (originally) in several medieval liturgical texts, *inter alia* in the post-communion prayer for the *Missa pro pace* in the Gelasian Sacramentary. (*Deus auctor pacis et amator quem nosse uiuere, qui servire regnare est...*). It is frequently quoted in sixteenth-century theological texts.

6 Heinrichsagende (see n. 2), v-vi.

It is evident that this preface goes quite far in praising not only the ministry of preaching the Gospel, but also the minister himself. There is, for instance, quite a distance between the rhetoric used to characterize the minister in Luther's preface to Melanchthon's *Unterricht der Visitatoren*, written ten years earlier, and also intended as an instruction for building up the church organization in Saxony, and this text from 1539. Where Luther has a main focus on the function of the ministry (»Dann wer kan erzelen, wie nütz und not solch ampt in der Christenheyt sey«⁷), the ordinance from 1539 has an additional focus on the minister as person. To the ministry belongs the minister, and both come together and are needed to open up to heaven on earth.

II Early Protestant Saxony and *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein*

Saxony was a Lutheran heartland, and offers an interesting case for discussing the Early Modern clergy. But even if one restricts oneself to Saxony and to the two or three first decades after the Reformation of Albertine Saxony, an overwhelming amount of interesting sources are available, many of which are now also digitally accessible to researchers on an open access basis.

My particular interest here is to try to say something more about the question of a *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein* which has been recognized as being present among the clergy in different parts of Germany, not least in the 1550s and 1560s, with a continuing influence at least until well into the seventeenth century⁸. It manifested itself very evidently also in the Lutheran heartlands of Saxony and Mitteldeutschland.

7 Quoted from M. LUTHER's preface to P. Melanchthon: *Unterricht der Visitatoren an die Pfarrherrn im Kurfürstenthum zu Sachsen*, version of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Sign.: 4 Liturg. 193, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00025123-1, Nürnberg 1528 (VD16 M 2598) (http://dfgviewer.de/show/?set%5Bimage%5D=1&set%5Bzoom%5D=default&set%5Bdebug%5D=0&set%5Bdouble%5D=0&set%5Bmets%5D=http%3A%2F%2Fdaten.digital-sammlungen.de%2F~db%2Fmets%2Fbsb00025123_mets.xml).

8 A recent important contribution is L. BERNDORFF, *Die Prediger der Grafschaft Mansfeld. Eine Untersuchung zum geistlichen Sonderbewusstsein in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 2010.

Quite extensive research has been going on the last couple of decades into the roles and functions of the Early Modern Protestant minister. Most of this research has been undertaken by historians, describing and analyzing the social, political, legal, and ecclesiastical functions of this new profession.⁹ Some of the observations and conclusions from this recent research can be summarized very briefly.

1. *Representing the authorities (Obrigkeit)*. The Protestant clergy was no longer part of the Roman hierarchy. Instead, it was closely connected to the state and the *weltliches Regiment*, sometimes – at least in the case of the superintendents – even by oath. To this extent, it represented the *Obrigkeit*.

2. *Included in civil society*. At the same time, it was in a fundamentally new way integrated into the local community, first of all because the Lutheran pastors now had their own families, wives and children. It is true enough, as Susan Karant Nunn and others have pointed out, that for practical purposes this was not quite new, since many fifteenth-century priests also had their families, even though this was against the rules.¹⁰ Still, the social role of the minister was redefined by the Reformation, and the clergy was integrated into civil society in new and closer ways. This was especially true for the first generation Protestant clergy, who were in these parts of Germany to a large extent recruited from craftsmen in the cities. Later on, a certain process of disintegration took place again, when the Protestant clergy to a greater degree was established as a self-recruiting group of civil servants.¹¹

9 A major contribution in this field was L. SCHORN-SCHÜTTE, *Evangelische Geistlichkeit in der Frühneuzeit. Deren Anteil an der Entfaltung frühmoderner Staatlichkeit und Gesellschaft. Dargestellt am Beispiel des Fürstentums Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, der Landgrafschaft Hessen-Kassel und der Stadt Braunschweig* (QFRG 62), 1996. Among her later most relevant publications are S. DIXON/L. SCHORN-SCHÜTTE (ed.), *The Protestant clergy of early modern Europe*, 2003; L. SCHORN-SCHÜTTE (Hg.), *Aspekte der politischen Kommunikation im Europa des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Politische Theologie – Res Publica-Verständnis – Konsensgestützte Herrschaft* (HZ.B. 39, 2004).

10 S. C. KARANT-NUNN, *The Clergyman between the Cultures of State and Parish* (in: *The Protestant* [see n. 9], 79–99).

11 BERNDORFF (see n. 8), 101.

3. *Representing Christ*. As we have seen in the preface to the *Heinrichslegende*, the clergy could also be regarded as a special part of the order of the *oeconomia*, representing and taking care of the heavenly goods within this context. This is an interesting statement. We are told here that the clergy – not as part of the *Obrigkeit* (*politia*), nor as a particular order of society (*ecclesia*), but as a specific part of civil society – had special responsibilities, representing the holy in society.

This last point touches upon the discussion about the so-called *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein* of the Protestant clergy. This concept has been introduced and developed not least by Luise Schorn-Schütte¹² and several of her pupils, and has served as a basis for defining the roles and functions of the clergy as something more than and other than an ordinary civil servant within the structure of the *Obrigkeit*. Much of the discussion concerning this *Sonderbewusstsein* has therefore had a focus on political questions, like the question of clerically initiated protests against the political rulers – which was also occurred in early Lutheran societies.

This *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein* is a quite complex phenomenon. It can be illustrated or exemplified by means of very diverse sources, and it can be interpreted in political, legal, cultural or more specifically religious terms. And it is not restricted to the subjective »Bewusstsein« of the clergy itself. It has to do with something closely integrated into the *role* and *the cultural function* of the early Lutheran clergy.¹³

I will look somewhat more closely at to the specifically *religious part* of this question. First, I will discuss one more specifically theological source which may contribute further to defining the religious role of the ministry in early Protestant Saxony, namely Erasmus Sarcerius' *Manuale*. Secondly, I will look at one specific priest who was active for a long time

¹² SCHORN-SCHÜTTE, *Evangelische Geistlichkeit* (see n. 9), 449–452.

¹³ BERNDORFF (see n. 8) offers a fundamental discussion of this concept, 101–105, and applies it as an important analytical tool throughout his book. He also introduces the concept of *geistliches Amtsbewusstsein* (chapter 3, 147–195) in order to further specify the contents and functions of the *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein*. I will restrict myself here to the latter concept.

within the context defined by the *Heinrichsagende*, Anton Lauterbach in Pirna, in order to see how his memory was celebrated after his death. Both these discussions contribute to a further illumination of the religious function of the early Protestant clergy in Saxony. Indirectly, they may also be of relevance to the discussion about the *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein*, to which I will return at the end.

III The Pastoral of Erasmus Sarcerius

Sarcerius was born in Annaberg in Albertine Saxony in 1501. He was a student first in Leipzig and later probably also in Wittenberg, and served as priest at the Tomaskirche in Leipzig and later on as superintendent in Mansfeld.¹⁴ After the death of Prince Moritz in 1553, he preached the funeral sermon. He died in Magdeburg in 1559, just a few months after arriving there as the minister in the Johanniskirche. In addition to these stations in Saxony and Mitteldeutschland, Sarcerius also spent a long time in the service of the count of Nassau-Dillenberg in Western Germany.

A considerable number of books and shorter texts survive from him, including the *Pastorale oder Hirtenbuch*, darin das gantz Ampt aller treuen Pastoren, Lehrer und Diener der Christlichen Kirchen beider ihr lehr unnd leben belangend beschrieben wird. This book was published for the first time in 1559, and reprinted several times after his death. Next to Niels Hemmingsen's *Pastor sive Pastoris optimus vivendi agendique modus*, which was published for the first time in 1565, this was the most influential handbook for pastors at the time.¹⁵

In the preface to the second edition of the book, edited by Sarcerius' son Wilhelm (who was also a pastor in Mansfeld/Eisleben)¹⁶, it is stated

14 Sarcerius and his texts play an important role in BERNDORFF (see n. 8). See also S. RHEIN/G. WARTENBERG, *Reformatoren im Mansfelder Land. Erasmus Sarcerius und Cyriacus Spangenberg* (Schriften der Lutherdenkstätten in Sachsen-Anhalt 4), 2006.

15 A. NELSON BURNETT has analyzed Sarcerius's *Pastorale* within the context of similar contemporary texts in her instructive article *The Evolution of the Lutheran Pastors' Manual in the Sixteenth Century* (Church History 73, 2004, 536–565).

16 The following quotations are all taken from the 1565 edition printed in Frankfurt, which is digitally available from the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel in the Post-Reformation Digital Library under: <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/68-2-quod-2f-1/start.htm>.

PASTORALE

Oder Hirtenbuch/ vom Ampt/

Besen/ vnd Disciplin der Pastorn/ vnd Kirchendi-

ner/ Vnd wie sie von jugend auff studieren sollen/ vnd hernach.

auch nützlich leren/ in irem gantzen Kirchenampt/ in Lere vnd

Leben sich vnuerweislich verhalten/ desgleichen in schwe-

ren/ vnd vngewöhnlichen fellen erzeigen/ welche sich

vmb/ vnd neben irem Ampte teglich zutragen.

Dienstlich die ware Religion rechten

anzustellen/ da sie nicht ist/

vnd zuerhalten/

da sie ist.



Durch Eras. Sarcerum Annemontanum der alten
vnd löblichen Graffschafft Mansfelt Superint. geschrieben.

Image 1: Frontispiece *Pastorale*

that three different kinds of people carry the title of Minister: The first are the excellent ones, the second the mediocre and the third those unfit for the task, paying more attention to the benefits than to the duties of their ministry. This classification is interesting in itself, and particularly interesting is the way in which the first class of ministers, the best ones, are described in the text. These people are

hohe, fůrtreffliche, verstendige, und von Gott sonderliche erleuchte, begabte, unnd zu solchem Ampte geschickte Menner, welche Tag unnd Nacht sich im Gesetze des Herzen uben, Gott umb den rechten verstand desselbigen und umb den heiligen Geist emb-sig anruffen, und mit heilsamer Leere unnd fruchtbarlichem leben den leuten fůrgehen und fůrstehen, als im ersten alter der Welt Enos, Enoch, Nohah, Loth, Abraham, Melchisedech. Und im anderen Alter der Welt Moyses, Aaron, Helias, Eliseus unnd die lieben Propheten. Unnd im letzten theil der Welt die lieben Aposteln, Augustinus, Ambrosius, D. Luther seliger, Brentius, Cordatus Amassdorffius, Spangenbergius, Illyricus und andere Patres und trewe Leerer mehr gewesen sind und noch gefunden werden.¹⁷

The book is a huge handbook, intended to be used by superintendents as well as by other ministers, prescribing in detail most of the regular liturgical practices of the clergy.

Sarcerius reveals a particularly strong interest in treating the topic of Ordination of the so called Kirchendiener, – first and foremost ministers. The historian (and pupil of Schorn-Schůtte) *Lothar Berndorff* has recently demonstrated how Sarcerius in his *Pastorale* as well as in other texts defines a quite strict, rigid and hierarchical order for the rule of the Protestant church. He draws heavily not only on Biblical sources, but also on Church Tradition, including councils and Church fathers, and even the *Decretum Gratiani* in order to support his construction of an ecclesiastical hierarchy.¹⁸

Within this hierarchy, the minister has a most prominent place. The role of the minister has roots back to the ministry of the Old covenant, going back to Levi and Moses. But at least as important are the Old Testament prophets and their words to the people of Israel.¹⁹ The ministers are the prophets of the contemporary church, and one of their most important

17 <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/68-2-quod-2f-1/start.htm?image=00000004>.

18 BERNDORFF (see n. 8), 150–158.

19 <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/68-2-quod-2f-1/start.htm?image=00000034>.

tasks is to call the congregation to repentance. These Old Testament role models are still relevant, although they are renewed through Christ and his kingdom.

The dignity of the ministry is explained thoroughly in the chapter *Von der Hoheit, Wirdigkeit und nötigkeit des Kirchenampts*:

So muss ja auch dass liebe Kirchenamt, ein hoch gross unnd wirdig Ampt sein, und dass auss folgenden ursachen, dass Gott hierzu seine sonderliche Gnad, Segen und gedeien gibt, dass es recht verwaltet wird, und dass dadurch frucht und nutz geschaffet. Denn solchs alles gibt Gott, und ist nicht Menschlicher kreffte und vermögens schuld. Und achtet nun Gott dass Kirchenamt also hoch, gross und wirdig, dass er i(h)m allein die ehre vorbehalten hat, dass er hierzu Segen und gedeien geben wil, dass es recht volzogen werde, und die Leute des, ewigen und zeitlichen nutzen haben mögen.²⁰

In the first part of his book, Sarcerius discusses very carefully the question how to identify, raise and educate the best among the youth for service as ministers. The obligation to find the right people for this task rests on every Christian community. Parents in particular should share this responsibility and pay attention: maybe their children are suited for this task. It was (i.e. in pre-Reformation times) and still is a special honor to raise children who can serve God through the ministry:

Daher viel Christlicher und Gottseliger Eltern zu allen zeiten, mit höchstem fleiss und ernst, ire Kinder dahin gezogen und gehalten, dass sie hernach dem Reich Christi haben dienen mögen, und in erweiterung desselbigen sich bearbeiten. Hierinnen auch unsere Voreltern (wiewol in grossem unverstande) an sich nichts haben erwinden lassen, welchen zugleich die höchste und grösste sorge für und für angehangen, damit sie ire Kinder zu Kirchendienern aufferzögen. Und ist solche sorg also hoch geachtet worden, dass man die Eltern dissfalls selig gepreiset hat. Und das nach dem gemeinen Sprichwort: Selig ist die Mutter, die einen Son zum Priester zeuhet.²¹

Within this context, the ordination is a big event. Here, the candidates chosen and educated for the ministry are introduced to the congregation, and reminded of the severe obligations, but also of the high rewards, connected to their work. They also are expected to live an exemplary life, suitable for imitation by the congregation. *Ir habt auch weiter verstanden, mit was Tugenden er in seinem leben sol gezieret und geschmücket sein,*

²⁰ <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/68-2-quod-2f-1/start.htm?image=00000037>.

²¹ <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/68-2-quod-2f-1/start.htm?image=00000008>.

euch zum Exempel der besserung und nachfolge. Und solch leben habt ihr von ihm freundlich zu fordern, ... (if not, it has to be reported to the superintendent).²²

This, then, are some brief excerpts on the role of the minister, drawn up in this famous handbook by the superintendent in Eisleben, where Luther had died little more than ten years earlier. I cannot discuss here the question of where and how Sarcerius differs from Luther (whom he certainly and explicitly wants to follow) in his presentation and praise of the Christian ministry. Rather, this text may serve to confirm some of the theological and religious aspects of the *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein* of precisely this generation of the German clergy.

And we see again, as we have seen in the *Heinrichsagende*, that the ministry is praised as the highest and most important role in Christian society, instituted by Christ himself, and defined within the solid context of an ecclesiastical hierarchy supported with references to the councils, the Church Fathers and even canon law. Within this framework, the good minister will be supported by the Spirit of God, which is accessible in a particular way precisely in the ministry. Here, he should not only preach the gospel to congregation, but also live a life worthy of imitation by other Christians.

This conclusion may be taken one step further by relating it to the frequently quoted article by Reinhard Schwarz from 1984, about *Sozialgeschichtliche und fundamentaltheologische Aspekte der protestantischen Drei-Stände-Lehre*.²³ In his third thesis in this article, Schwarz stated:

22 <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/68-2-quod-2f-1/start.htm?image=00000035>. In the Collect on the following page, the exemplarity of the minister, imitating Christ in words and deeds, is once again put forward as an example to be imitated by the congregation: »Barmhertziger Gott und Himmlischer Vatter, wir bitten dich [...], dass du diesem Ordinierten und bestetigtem Diener in seinem Ampt wöllest hülff und beistand erzeigen, und im deinem heiligen Geist übergeben, dass er das heilige Euangelium ohne forcht und schewe predige, [...] und zugleich nach dem Exempel deines lieben Sons, recht lehren und leben, dir zu lob, preiss und ehren, ihm selbt zum besten, und seinen Schöfflin zur seligen nachfolge, Amen«.

23 R. SCHWARZ, *Ecclesia, oeconomia, politia: sozialgeschichtliche und fundamental-ethische Aspekte der protestantischen Drei-Stände-Theorie* (in: Troeltsch-Studien 3: Protestantismus und Neuzeit, hg. v. H. RENZ/F. W. GRAF, 1984, 78–88).

Das soziale Ständegefüge erfährt in der protestantischen Gesellschaftsordnung eine sozialrechtliche Integration, da die Pfarrer dem weltlichen Recht unterstellt wurden. Auch die Funktion der Pfarrer wird durch die Reformation anders bestimmt: ihre höchste Aufgabe ist nicht mehr rein priesterlicher Gebetsdienst, sondern die Lehre.²⁴

In the resolutions to this thesis Schwarz went on to say:

Ein spezifisch priesterlich kultischer Gebetsdienst wurde ausgeschlossen; denn der protestantische Pfarrer betet mit der Gemeinde, und alle Glaubenden haben im Gebet gleichen Zugang zu Gott.²⁵

Sarcerius' instructions for the ministry are not quite in accordance with this conclusion, at least not with the part about equal access to God. Here, the ministry is, according to Sarcerius, definitely not equal to other *Berufe* in society. It is something special, with a special access to the Spirit of God.

IV Remembering the outstanding ministers 1: The Funeral Sermon on Erasmus Sarcerius

I shall now take a look at another group of sources relevant to the topic discussed here: namely funeral sermons. First, I will say something about the sermon at Sarcerius' own funeral, which was held by his Magdeburg colleague *Johannes Wigand* in 1560.²⁶ How was Sarcerius represented here for the purposes of ecclesiastical memory?

One important strategy of Lutheran sixteenth-century funeral sermons was to connect the biography of the deceased to a specific Biblical person, in order as far as possible to retell the biography of the dead person in terms of a biblical biography.²⁷ Funeral sermons for ministers some-

²⁴ Loc. cit., 80.

²⁵ Loc. cit., 80.

²⁶ Johannes Wigand, born in Mansfeld and known *inter alia* as one of the authors of the *Magdeburger Centurien*, was minister in Mansfeld since 1546 and superintendent in Magdeburg since 1553. The funeral sermon is digitally available from the SLUB, Dresden: http://digital.slubdresden.de/fileadmin/data/345763378/345763378_tif/jpegs/345763378.pdf.

²⁷ C.N. MOORE, *Patterned Lives. The Lutheran Funeral Biography in Early Modern Ger-*

times used Paul as a model, with conversion, fighting against idolatry and active preaching as important biographical elements. But Sarcerius is not mirrored in the image of Paul. Instead, Wigand has chosen an Old Testament text that is more closely connected to the pastoral ideals of the Old Testament prophets and holy men.

In addition to the quotation from Apoc. Xiiii on the front page of the sermon (*Selig sind die Todten, die in dem HErrn sterben*), he quotes Jes 57: 1–2 as his main source for a biblical identification of the deceased (*Esaia am LVI. Cap.*):

Der Gerechte kompt umb, und niemandt ist, der es zu hertzen neme, und heilige Leute werden auffgerafft, und niemandt achtet drauff. Denn die Gerechten werden weggerafft für dem Unglück, und die richtig für sich gewandelt haben, komen zu friede, und rügen in iren Kamern.²⁸

This text summarizes the role of Sarcerius, and how he should be remembered: as a righteous and holy man, who died too early, in the midst of his endeavors. In particular, the specific historical context is important: Sarcerius was called to his work in a very special time of history, a time comparable to the era of the Apostles:

Nach der Apostel zeit aber, halten viel gleubige, das kaumpt eine zeit auff Erden gewesen, da alle Artickel des Glaubens heller, reiner, deutlicher, und gewaltiger sein gelehret unnd geschrieben worden, als eben jtzt zu unserer zeit der Heimsuchung in Deudtschlandt, nun fast in die vierzig Jar, [...] Auch sind nach der Apostel zeit nicht auff ein mal so viel hoher gelerter, trewer Lehrer und Schreiber in einem Lande erfunden worden, als diese zeit bey den Deudtschen, das beweiset das wreck, und sonderlich das es mit Bücher in Deudtscher, Hebraischer, Bohemischer, Polonischer, Denischer, Schwedischer und dergleichen Sprachen in Deutschlandt, von dem lieben Worte Gottes, unnd allen Artickeln des Glaubens, heuffig bissher geregnet und geschneiet hat. Nicht allein welche die alten für viel hundert Jahren gemacht, sondern man hat bisshierher in Deudschlant mit frembden Sprachen also geredt und geschrieben, und noch Gott lob, das man wol möchte sagen, dass Cicero mit der Lateinische sprache, Item die Hebraische und gantz Griechenlandt, so zu reden, in Deudtschlandt gezogen. Denn wo Gottes Wort angeht, und der heilige Geist wohnet, da geusset also die gaben der mancherleien

many, 2006. See also S. ANGEL, *Preachers as Paul: Learning and Exemplarity in Lutheran Funeral Sermons*, forthcoming 2013, in RefoRC Oslo Conference volume.

²⁸ <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/ppn345763378/5>.

Sprachen, heuffig und überflüssig aus, wie auch im Pfingstag über die Apostel, und hernach über andere mehr geschehen.²⁹

The political aspects of Sarcerius' role as a holy man are also touched upon very explicitly in the text, expressing beyond any doubt the theological foundation for the *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein* in the interaction with political authorities:

Gottes Wort [...] sagt: Durch mich herschen die Könige. Der Herr setzet Könige ein und abe. Item Gottes wort ehret die Obrigkeit mit dem Namen Gottes selber, und zeigt an, das sie Gottes Ordnung, Stathalter und Diener sein. Nun ist das Reich Gottes auff Erden, darinnen Gott selber durch sein Wort, eine Kirche oder Hauffen der Leute samlet und heiligt, vergebung der Sünden und ewiges Leben mittheilet, gar viel hoher und herrlicher. Denn das Weltliche reich, ist gleich als eine Dinerin des Reichs Gottes, wie der ander Psalm leret: So lasset euch nun weisen ir Könige, und lasset euch züchtigen ir Richter auff Erden, dienet dem Herrn mit furcht.³⁰

And further:

Nun sind in diesem Geistlichen Reiche Gottes allhie auff Erden, die Lerer und Prediger, unsers lieben Gottes Diener und Knechte, welche an Gottes stat, sein Wort und willen (daran sie denn verbunden) den Menschen fürtragen, und die hochwirdigen Sacrament, nach Gottes einsetzung und ordnung reichen, und schreien, Thut Busse und gleubet dem Euangelio, Marci i. Und thut rechtschaffene früchte der Busse, Matth iii.³¹

V Remembering the outstanding ministers 2: The Epitaph and the Funeral Sermon on Anton Lauterbach (Pirna)

Another outstanding minister of the same generation, active in the same parts of Germany, was *Anton Lauterbach* in Pirna. He has been chosen as the second case here since he was one of the ministers recruited in the same year as the *Heinrichsagende* was published (1539) to help realize the aims and visions of this Ordinance throughout Albertine Saxony, and also since we have preserved not only his funeral sermon, but also a beautiful epitaph.

²⁹ <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/ppn345763378/15>.

³⁰ <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/ppn345763378/8>.

³¹ <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/ppn345763378/10>.

Lauterbach was born in 1502, one year after Sarcerius, and like Sarcerius, he also studied in Leipzig. He was there from 1517 to 1519, and then worked as a teacher in Freiberg in the early 1520s. In 1528, he came to Wittenberg for further studies and in order to join the Reformation movement. He lived there for five years, and for a long period he also lived in Luther's house.³²

To Luther scholars, he is known as one of the secretaries who recorded Luther's lectures (Isaiah and the Song of Songs), Sermons (on John 6–8, 1531–32) and his Table Talk. Like Luther, he married a former nun (whom he learned to know in Luther's house), and several letters from Luther as well as from Melancthon addressed to Lauterbach are still preserved. After his stay in Wittenberg, he was sent out to represent the Reformation Church, first as a deacon in Leising and in Wittenberg, and then as a Superintendent and pastor in Pirna.

He stayed there as the superintendent of the city for thirty years, until his death in 1569. Here he was responsible for finishing the beautiful *Marienkirche* in 1546, in accordance with Protestant iconographical ideals. This church was under construction when Lauterbach arrived in Pirna, and he put much effort into influencing the inner decorations according to the biblical teaching of the Lutheran movement.

Lauterbach also developed a local church ordinance for Pirna on the basis of the *Heinrichsagende*, differing from the latter most of all by prescribing a few more feast days, services and teaching obligations than the minimum mentioned in the *Heinrichsagende*.

Funeral sermon

Anton Lauterbach was buried on the 19th of July 1569, two days after his death. The Funeral Sermon was held by *Clemens Goldammer*, a Deacon at the Pirnaer Marienkirche, who had been working together with Lauterbach for several years.³³

32 For a short introduction to the life and work of Lauterbach, see W. LECHNER, Anton Lauterbach. Pirnas Reformator. Freund Luthers, 2004.

33 The text is available at the ThULB in Jena under the signature 4 Theol.XXXV,24(6).

On the title page of the printed sermon one can read: Der Todt seiner Heiligen ist wert gehalten fur dem HERREN. (Ps 115 = 116: 15)

In the preface to his sermon, which Goldammer supplied for the printed version, he makes the following statement about Lauterbach as a Protestant hero:

Sankt Paulus sagt zum Ephe. 4: Christus ist auffgefahren in die Höhe, und hat den Menschen Gaben gegeben. Und er hat etliche zu Aposteln gesetzt, etliche aber zu Propheten, etliche zu Euangelisten, etliche zu Hirten und Lernern, das die Heiligen zugerichtet werden zum Werck des Ampts, dadurch der Leib Christi erbawet werde, bis wir alle hinein komen zu einerley Glauben, und erkenntnis des Sons Gottes. Aus diesen Worten ist klar, das der einige ware Hohepriester Jesus Christus, zu allen zeiten Diener seines Worts erweckt und sendet in die örter der Welt, do er im eine Kirche samlet, und das er selbst das Predigamt bestelt und erhalt.

And further:

Also its widerumb ein sonderlich tröstlich Zeugnis Gottes güte unnd Barmhertzigkeit, Wenn Gott einer Stadt oder Landt Christliche Lerer zuschickt, welche in Stedten und Dörffern die gemeine Christi mit reiner gesunder Lere weiden, unnd sie mit Gottseligen Exmplen bessern.³⁴

Goldammer then goes on to prove how important this is by drawing the comparison between the ruler (Fürst) and the bishop: We all know, he says, what a great blessing of God it is to have worldly rulers who fear God and are wise, trustworthy and honest.

Aber viel ein grosser Schatz ist es, wenn Gott christliche Bischoffe ins ministerium setzt, die für ire befohlene herd vleissig wachen, sie trewlich weiden, trösten, für dem verderbnis warnen, und wol zusehen, das nicht Wolffe einbrechen, die Herde zerstreuen und zerreißen.³⁵

All this is written in order to introduce the funeral sermon about Pirna's first Protestant hero. And after talking about him in this way in the introduction, as a hero or a holy man to be *imitated*, most of the sermon itself is devoted to characterizing Lauterbach as a holy man to be *remembered*.

The key text is again precisely the same as in the funeral sermon for Sarcerius, from Isaiah 56 (57: 1–2):

³⁴ Ibid., Aii, r-v.

³⁵ Ibid., Aiii, r.

Der Gerechte kompt umb, und niemand ist, der es zu hertzen neme, und heilige leute werden auff geraffet, und niemandt achtet darauff. Denn die Gerechten werden weggeraffet fur dem unglück, unnd die richtig fur sich gewandelt haben, kommen zum friede, und rugen in iren Kamern.

There is no need to identify Lauterbach further as a holy man. Everyone present in the funeral knows that. The question is: what does it mean, when God removes the really holy from a community or from society? According to Goldammer, it is first and foremost a signal for penitence/Busse: *Das fromer Leute wegsterben, ein erinnerung und anzeigung sey, zukünfftiger straff und unglücks.*

Epitaph

Even more interesting than the funeral sermon is the epitaph. Restored in 2004, it stands at the left side of the main entrance just inside the church, close to the place where his grave was rediscovered in 1889. A first look at this epitaph shows that the deceased superintendent is present depicted as part of his family down left, half-way integrated into the biblical scene of the transfiguration of Christ, which is described in all the synoptic Gospels (e.g. Matthew 17). No fundamental distinction or border is drawn between Peter, James and John in the middle and Anton Lauterbach on the left side; they are all located in the same imaginary landscape looking up to Christ who reveals himself as divine light, with Moses and Elijah in conversation with Christ on his right and left hand. This landscape seems to have a greater resemblance to the steep mountains of the Saxonian Alps near Pirna than to the geography of the Holy Land. And while Peter says on a banner reaching up to Christ BONUM EST NOS HIC ESSE (*It is good for us to be here*), Lauterbach in a parallel banner says SIGNA LEGEM IN DISCIPULIS MEIS (*Write the Law on my disciples*). Above the whole scene are quoted the words from Matthew 17,5 HIC EST FILIUS MEUS DILECTUS IN QUO COMPLACUI. HUNC AUDITE. (*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*)

Lauterbach is not *quite* integrated into the biblical scene, though. He is also part of a family scene in the lower part of the image, together with his deceased first wife Agnes (who was probably a former nun of the same monastery as Luther's wife Catarina) and his two deceased daughters (next



Image 2: Epitaph Lauterbach

to the text in the middle of the image) and his deceased son in white behind him. All these are marked with crosses as signs of their status as dead. The last person, the woman with the black cap, has no such cross, and may either be his second wife – also named Agnes – who lived for a long time after his death, or his only child who reached adult age, a daughter who married in 1550.

Lauterbach is part of this family group. But his double identity, both as family man and as more distinctively integrated into the biblical scene as a colleague of Peter, James and John, is symbolized by his eyes. If one looks closely here (and one really has to go close to see it), it is difficult to escape the conclusion that his eyes are directed upwards, as is also the case with Peter and James. In this way, the superintendent and minister, in another way than his family, here takes part in the revelation of the divinity of Christ.

The inscription right in front of him confirms this interpretation:

GENS MIHI LAUTERBACHA
 I come from the Lauterbach-family
 PROFESSIO SACRA DOCERE
 My profession was to teach sacred things
 – LUTHERUS DOCTOR.
 Luther was (my) teacher
 SPES REQVIESQVE CHRISTUS
 Christ is (my) hope and rest.
 – QVAS PAVI VERBO CHRIST,
 (The sheep) that I fed with the word of Christ
 QVAS FIDUS AMAVI. –
 that I loved faithfully
 INTER EAS PASTOR SUM TVMVL TATVS OVES –
 Among those I, the pastor, am buried.
 GAVDIA SPECTABO CELESTA, GAVDIA CHRISTI
 I will see the joys of Heaven, the Joys of Christ
 – MORTE ET PROFVSO SANGVINE PARTA MIHI.
 given to me by [his] death and the blood that was shed

Around the frame: »Anno Domini 1539 25. Julii M. Antonius Lauterbach Pastor et Superatendens vocatus huic ecclesie, inservit Evangelio 1569. 18 Julii in Christo obdormivit in Pace et Quiescens.«



Image 3: Epitaph Lauterbach Detail

Small letters bottom lower part of frame: »Natus Anno Christi 1502
13. Januar: Vixit annos 67 Menses 7 Dies horas ferme 6. A creatore destina-
tos. Hiob 38.«

VI *The religious aspects of the geistliches Sonderbewusstsein*

In her interesting book on the clergy in Basel, Amy Nelson Burnett has reflected on the importance of paying attention to the phenomenon of *generations* in Reformation research. Especially when things change rapidly, the distinctions between generations become important.³⁶

I have discussed the huge topic of the Early Modern clergy by talking primarily about one specific generation of prominent ministers in the core

³⁶ A. NELSON BURNETT, *Teaching the Reformation: Ministers and their message in Basel, 1529–1629*, 2006.

area of the Reformation. This generation includes Sarcerius and Lauterbach, but to a certain degree also the authors of the *Heinrichsagende* (where Justus Jonas is generally held to have been the most influential). They were all devout adherents of the Reformation, contributing to defining the profile of the Lutheran ministry in the second generation. They all praise the ministry as the highest gift of God, and support it by arguments and authorities which in some cases go well beyond the classical definitions of the ministry in the texts of Luther or Melanchthon or in the CA.

The *political* role envisaged for the good minister in these texts corresponds quite well to the observations in recent historical research concerning a *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein* (Schorn-Schütte, Berndorff and others) among parts of the German Lutheran clergy during the 1550s and 1560s.

But the *religious* aspects of this specific profile of a clerical identity in this period deserve a closer inspection and further interpretation. One interesting perspective to apply here is the history of *Christian sanctity*. It may be a commonplace to suggest that certain Protestant pastors (and not only Luther himself) took over some of the functions of Late Medieval saints. But the texts (and the epitaph) we have been looking at give us the opportunity to corroborate theories of this kind. The first-class priests (according to Wilhelm Sarcerius' classification) were local or even regional heroes, characterized by their *heroic deeds*: one of the main requirements for acquiring status of sanctity in post-Tridentine Catholicism as well³⁷, after the revision of procedures of canonization on the basis not least of the experience with first-class saints like Teresa of Avila and Ignatius of Loyola, where miracles played a minor role.

The holy life of the Lutheran first-class pastors was possible because of their special access to the gifts of the Holy Spirit that were available in the ministry. And these gifts not only contributed to the right teaching of these men, they also contributed to their holy life. In the funeral sermons as well as in Sarcerius' handbook, these pastors were partly

37 For an overview, see the classical article by P. BURKE, How to be a Counter-Reformation Saint, first printed (in: *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800*, ed. by K. VAN GREYERZ, 1984, 45–55).

written into the religious roles of the Old Testament prophets and partly into the roles of the Apostles, and they were again and again characterized as holy men.

They were remembered in the funeral sermons through accounts that were not wholly unlike the Early Modern Catholic accounts of their Saints. And the epitaphs, which were so often put up in Lutheran churches in the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries and replaced the images and altars of the Medieval Saints, continued to take care of the religious function of remembering people of particular sanctity, even if no specific cultic activity was connected to these epitaphs.

The religious role and religious function of these early Lutheran pastors were not at all, then, restricted to teaching. This phenomenon goes well beyond the role of the *Lehramt*, although this is always also highly praised in the texts. In spite of the unquestioned theological priority attributed to the function of teaching in the Early Modern Lutheran ministry, the relationship between the Medieval and Early Protestant ministry seems to be rather more complex than the account given in the article of Schwarz from 1984, when he states that *der protestantische Pfarrer betet mit der Gemeinde, und alle Glaubenden haben im Gebet gleichen Zugang zu Gott*.³⁸ This is true about Luther, but does not seem to be a sufficient description of the generation of early Lutheran pastors at whom I have been looking today.

Two short remarks at the end: First about the generation question. According to the German historians who have studied the *geistliches Sonderbewusstsein*, this is not something which characterizes the Protestant clergy throughout the whole Early Modern period. Rather, it is a specific phenomenon of the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. In particular, it can be identified in the 1550s and the 1560s. Texts like the *Heinrichsagende* and the handbook of Sarcerius were in use and reprinted precisely in this same period. So, my contribution is restricted to illuminating this particular part of the history of the Early Modern Protestant clergy.

³⁸ SCHWARZ (see n. 23).

Secondly: I was asked to deal with the question of *ideal and reality*. Have I escaped this challenge by restricting myself to talking only about ideals – in church law, in handbooks and in sermons? My answer would be that I have been talking about both at the same time. The official definition of a new role for the clergy is not only an ideal, it is also a social reality. The same is true about the memorial monuments that were revered in the communities. Even though they idealize the person to be remembered, these memories are, as such, important parts of the cultural reality of a society.