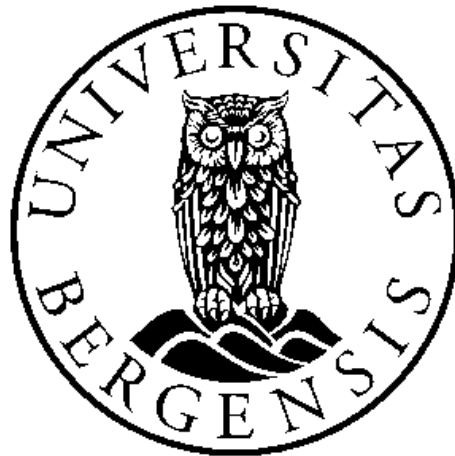


# **In Memory of Divine Providence**

*A Study of Centennial Commemoration in Eighteenth-Century  
Denmark-Norway (1717-1760)*

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### The topic of the study

In the year 1760, the Royal Danish Academy for Sciences and Letters published the first issue of its so-called *Danish Historical Almanac*.<sup>1</sup> Like most contemporary almanacs, this one contained astronomical information about the rise and fall of the sun and moon and solar eclipses, as well as useful tables to help calculate distances and measures. As its name indicates, the Danish Historical Almanac also included historical information in the form of lists of significant historical events that had happened on each day of each month. If a reader consulted the almanac on 3 April 1760, for instance, she would learn that, on that very day, Christian I had entered Rome (in 1474), king Frederik I had died in Gottorp (1533) and the construction of Charlottenborg castle had begun (1672). On the very first page of the almanac there was, moreover, a chronological table that showed how many years had passed since the most significant events in universal history and Danish-Norwegian national history. The list looked like this:

After the creation of the world: 5727

The Julian Period: 6473<sup>2</sup>

Since the Reformation: 243

Since the start of the government of the Oldenburg dynasty in these kingdoms: 311

Since the birth of our most merciful hereditary monarch king Frederik the Fifth: 37

Since the publication of king Christian the Fifth's Danish Law: 77

Since absolutism was introduced: 100.<sup>3</sup>

Between these short lines reads a narrative of the history of the entire world in general and of the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway in particular. In the eyes of the maker of the table and, we can suppose, most of the people that purchased and read the almanac, the world had been created by the

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<sup>1</sup> For a short history of the almanac, see Lomholt 1960: 119-129.

<sup>2</sup> Unlike the other entries on the list, the Julian Period does not refer to an historical event. It was a theoretical concept invented by Joseph Scaliger as a way of assigning a positive number to every year. The Julian period starts in 4713 BC (before the creation of the world) and lasts for 7980 years.

<sup>3</sup> «Efter Verdens Skabelse–5727/ Periodi Julinaæ–6473/ Siden Reformationen–243/ Siden den Oldenburgiske Regierings Anfang i disse Riger–311/ Siden Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konges Kong Friderich den Femtes Fødsel–37/ Fra Kong Christian den Femtes Fødsel–37/ Fra Kong Christian den Femtes Danske Lovs Publication–77/ Siden Souverainiteten blev indført–100». *Dansk historisk Almanak*. Kiøbenhavn 1760.

Lord in seven days no more than 5727 years before. Since everything described in the Bible was the literal and eternal truth, the beginning of time could be calculated with remarkable precision. The chronological table shows, moreover, that the Lutheran Reformation in 1517 was considered to be a pivotal historical event. Before this year, Christendom was enslaved in a spiritual darkness by the Roman papacy, but after Martin Luther published his 95 theses in Wittenberg in 1517 the light of the Gospels had become available to all. The remaining events in the chronology indicate the centrality of the institution of monarchy and the person of the monarch in Danish-Norwegian society, with their focus on the history of the royal dynasty and the deeds and lives of its kings. The very last event on the list, the introduction of the absolute monarchy in 1660, represented another watershed moment in the history of the kingdoms. Before this year, the elected kings of Denmark had shared power with the Danish nobility. After a devastating war against the Swedes (1657-1660) the lower estates decided to offer Frederik III and all his successors hereditary right to the Danish and Norwegian crowns, which ended the power of the nobility and facilitated the introduction of *the sovereignty* («*Souverainiteten*»), the Danish short-hand term for absolute monarchical power.

The distance in time between the world of the eighteenth and the early twentyfirst century accentuates the historical and cultural situatedness of the chronological table. If we take a look at a randomly selected Norwegian almanac from the nineteenth century (1881), we observe that the passing of more than a hundred years had already produced significant changes in the table. The Reformation was indeed still listed as a significant event, but thanks to advances in both the science of geology and biblical scholarship the precise date of the creation of the world had now been removed, and instead replaced with the more certain year of the birth of Jesus Christ. In the realm of human affairs, the introduction of absolutism had been replaced by something entirely different: «[67 years since] the introduction of the constitution and the union of Norway and Sweden under the same king.»<sup>4</sup> The constitutional revolution of 1814 had replaced the monarchical revolution of 1660 and the Bernadotte dynasty in Stockholm had taken the place of the Oldenburg dynasty in Copenhagen. From this observation we arrive at the conclusion that the narratives about the past

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<sup>4</sup> «Constitutionens Indførelse og Norges Forening med Sverige under fælles Konge-67de» *Almanak for Aaret efter Christi Fødsel 1881*. 1881; This sentence was itself a product of political contestation. The first time a reference to the constitution was inserted into the Norwegian almanacs was in the year 1828. The almanac then specified that the event had taken place on the 17th of May. This caused its author professor Cristopher Hansteen trouble with the *Stattholder* in Norway, Count von Platen, who saw this as an attempt to promote 17 May as the anniversary of the constitution, rather than the modified constitution of 4 November. The Swedish government had tried to promote the celebration of the latter at the expense of the former, and saw celebrations of 17 May as a provocation. In the following year, the sentence was modified to «the introduction of the constitution and the union of Norway and Sweden under the same king». Sommerfeldt 1944: 25-26.



inscribed in the chronological tables of the almanacs were closely bound to specific political regimes and therefore sensitive to political change. Radical rearrangements of political structures, territorial boundaries and dynastic possessions induced corresponding rearrangements of the past.

Most societies cultivate a timeline of historical events perceived to be of particular importance for their survival or development. In most cases, these events will also be the objects of various forms of collective remembrance that ensure and reinforce their continued importance for the community, potentially shaping the collective self-image of its members. Egyptologist Jan Assmann has termed such processes *cultural memory*. Assmann defines cultural memory as «the body of reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each epoch, whose “cultivation” serves to stabilize and convey that society’s self-image.»<sup>5</sup> The historical almanacs was one of the ways in which the Danish-Norwegian absolute monarchy could imprint in the minds of its subjects a basic historical framework founded upon on the core principles of dynasticism, Protestantism and royal absolutism. The almanac was not, however, the only medium available to serve this purpose. In the course of the first half of the eighteenth century, the royal government actively promoted its own vision of the past by arranging the celebration of four historical centenaries. In the same year as the publication of the first historical almanac, the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway celebrated the last in a series of so-called *jubel- og taksigelsfester*, or jubilee and thanksgiving celebrations. In 1717, the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway marked the bicentenary of Luther’s posting of the 95 theses, along with the majority of the Lutheran territories in Germany. The bicentenary in 1736 commemorated the two hundredth anniversary of the Danish Reformation in 1536. In 1749, the kingdoms celebrated the tercentenary of the ruling Oldenburg dynasty. The final jubilee in 1760 commemorated the introduction of royal absolutism in 1660.<sup>6</sup>

The four jubilees were celebrated in all the churches of Denmark and Norway, as well as in the German duchies, Iceland and on the Faroe Islands. On the first day of each of the jubilees, all of the king’s subjects were required to gather in their local houses of worship to hear specially composed church prayers and jubilee sermons based on prescribed Bible verses, and to thank God for his merciful protection of the Lutheran church, the royal dynasty, the monarchs and the kingdoms. For the majority of the populace in the rural areas of the kingdoms, the centenaries consisted only of these church services. For the inhabitants of the residential city of Copenhagen and

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<sup>5</sup> Assmann 1995: 132.

<sup>6</sup> These kingdoms also commemorated the bicentenary of the Augsburg Confession in 1730, but this day was only celebrated as a thanksgiving day, rather than a full-scale jubilee. For more about this distinction, and about the thanksgiving day itself, see page 82-83.

in the provincial market towns, the jubilees continued for several more days. At the university of Copenhagen, there were doctoral promotions and Latin orations held by university professors, while rectors, teachers and pupils delivered orations in Latin schools and other institutions of learning. In the streets and squares of the towns, the citizenry participated in the celebrations with various forms of festivities, such as dinner parties, processions, illuminations and fireworks. The jubilees were all designed and planned by the monarchs and some of their closest advisors. A small group of men—leading politicians, royal archivists and historiographers, university professors and bishops—assisted the kings in defining the objects of centennial celebration: the advent of the Oldenburg royal dynasty, the Protestant Reformation and the introduction of royal absolutism. In arranging the four jubilees, the government elevated certain historical persons and events into the public spotlight in order that they could be celebrated and revered by the subjects.

This thesis is an historical study of centennial commemoration in eighteenth century Denmark-Norway. The *first aim* of the study is to investigate how the Danish-Norwegian absolute monarchy attempted to shape the historical consciousness of its subjects by orchestrating the public celebration of key events in the history of the kingdoms. The centenaries have left much documentary evidence of how the absolute monarchy negotiated problematic aspects of its own past, and how it selected and defined its own moments of genesis. In addition, the abundance of texts written in connection with the jubilees—occasional poetry, speeches, short histories, sermons—are in themselves valuable evidence of how the events and personages in national history were interpreted and understood by a relatively broad segment of the population. Finally, the majority of the jubilee texts were intended for the eyes and ears of an even wider audience of readers and listeners. They are therefore rare sources to what a substantial part of the population were told about significant moments in the history of the kingdoms. The many surviving jubilee sermons are particularly interesting in this respect, as they were written for the edification of ordinary folk in Denmark and Norway.

Out of this large and varied corpus of material, I have primarily concentrated the analysis on two main categories of text. The first category consists of those texts (and objects) that were produced by the central government in Copenhagen and that were directly communicated to the population. This category predominantly consists of royal decrees, church prayers and medals. The second main category of sources consists of the printed and manuscript sermons that were written by the Lutheran clergy and delivered during the jubilee church services. In focusing on these two categories, the study analyzes not only the messages that the royal government intended the

centenaries to convey, but also how these official messages were interpreted and broadcast to the general population by the Danish and Norwegian clergy in the churches of the two kingdoms. It follows from this methodical differentiation that the clergymen in the two kingdoms are viewed as independent actors in their own right, rather than as mere conduits of information from the central government in Copenhagen. The clergy were expected to promote official information and stimulate support for the absolute monarchy with their preaching. However, they also put their own stamp on the message that reached their congregation. In this sense, every sermon can be read as an individual act of interpretation of the official messages crafted by the royal government. The thesis aims to explore how the Lutheran clergymen performed their role as intermediaries between central government and local society in the context of the jubilees.

The *second aim* of the study is to investigate the historical development of the practice of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway. The celebration of historical jubilees or centenaries is a specific way of engaging with the past that is highly familiar to most societies in our own era. Observing «the commemorative zeal of the past two or three decades» in France and elsewhere, Pierre Nora has indeed termed our own age «the Era of Commemoration».<sup>7</sup> In my own home country of Norway, for instance, the past ten years has seen three major state-sponsored centenaries or bicentenaries commemorating important events in the political history of the Norwegian nation-state.<sup>8</sup> In addition to these large-scale events, there have been also many smaller centenaries commemorating the birth of cultural figures or the founding of institutions. Similarly intensive programmes of national commemoration can also be found in other countries.<sup>9</sup> While our own epoch has certainly seen a marked increase in the frequency of centennial commemoration, the Danish-Norwegian jubilees and a large number of examples from other European countries show that centenaries have been a fixture of public life in many Western societies for much longer.

As I embarked on a study of centennial celebration in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, I gradually came to realize that eighteenth-century Europeans had not yet internalized the concept of the centenary and that, for them, a historical jubilee was neither a self-explanatory nor an inherently natural concept. Centenaries did not occur with the same frequency as they do today, and when they did take place, organizers would often consult the archives to find out how it had been

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<sup>7</sup> Nora 1998: 614.

<sup>8</sup> The centenary of the dissolution of the union with Sweden (2005), the centenary of universal suffrage (2013) and the bicentenary of the Norwegian Constitution (2014).

<sup>9</sup> See for example «the programme of commemorations relating to the significant events in Irish history that took place between 1912 and 1922» at <http://www.decadeofcentenaries.com>. Retrieved 17. 08. 2015.

done before. In fact, there seems to be some basis for claiming that the first half of the eighteenth century was a period during which the concept of the historical jubilee or centenary became established in Danish and Norwegian culture. At the same time, the centenaries celebrated in the eighteenth century differed in many ways from their modern counterparts. As we shall see, some aspects of the Danish-Norwegian centenaries point backwards in time towards a Protestant memory culture that grew out of the confessional struggles in the Holy Roman Empire in the late sixteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Other aspects were innovations, some of which seem to point towards the national celebrations taking place in the nineteenth century and beyond.

The thesis follows the gradual transformations of the practice of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway in an early but important stage of its development. Throughout the thesis, I shall pursue the question of what innovations took place in the ways in which centenaries were conceived and celebrated, and which older elements of the tradition were maintained in the period. Although the main focus of the study is the period that starts with the first (1717) and ends with the last (1760) centenary celebrated in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, I shall therefore occasionally move beyond these chronological boundaries in order to historicize the practice of centennial commemoration. In the conclusion, I shall also briefly venture beyond the eighteenth century to briefly consider the further evolution of the centenary in Denmark and Norway, and tentatively discuss the further trajectory of centennial commemoration in the nineteenth century. The purpose of this operation is both to clarify the underlying assumptions and rationale of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, and to establish what place the centenaries in this period has in a longer history of centennial commemoration.

The thesis will thus combine two approaches to the Danish-Norwegian centenaries. The first is a synchronic approach, the objective of which is to analyze the narratives about the past that the absolute monarchy and its servants conveyed to the population during the jubilees, and to explain the functions that these narratives performed in the present. The synchronic approach will be combined with a diachronic approach, the objective of which is to trace patterns of continuity and change that can help explain the historical relationship between these events and the centenaries celebrated in our own time. In what follows, I shall explain the method I have adopted in the study in more depth. Then I shall move on to a discussion relevant historiography. The introductory chapter ends with a presentation of the delimitations of the study, as well as a more detailed discussion of the sources on which it is based.

## Centennial commemoration in the age of absolute monarchy: methodical considerations

### The past according to the absolute monarchy

The memory theorist Aleida Assmann argues that the premodern period was characterized by an «identity of history and memory», a situation in which the central function of the writing of history was considered to be the preservation of the memory of dynasty, church or state. «Historiography, in this state», writes Assmann, «was fully adapted to the demands of the present; it served specific functions for the state or community such as justifying the institutions of ruling class, legitimizing the authority of traditions, and controlling the future».<sup>10</sup> In such societies, she continues, there were neither institutions nor media that could support and convey «independent accounts of the past», and censorship ensured the destruction of «rival media and carriers of counterhistories that threatened the stability of a uniform view and an authoritarian voice of history».<sup>11</sup> Although Aleida Assmann's general description in many ways seem relevant also in the specific context of eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway, it is painted in much too broad strokes to be entirely fitting when confronted with the Danish-Norwegian evidence.

Historiography was indeed closely regulated by the royal government, and had been so for centuries. According to historian Torben Damsholt, Scandinavia in the early modern period was marked by the «consolidation of the power state» and the military struggle between Sweden and Denmark-Norway over domination in the Baltic region. In this context, the need for «a historical writing that supported Denmark's aspirations and goals externally, against foreign countries, was closely linked with the need for a historical writings that legitimized the state internally, towards the subjects.» Consequently, the two centuries after the Reformation saw a close surveillance of historical writing, censorship of printed books and financial support of specially appointed historians.<sup>12</sup> In her doctoral thesis on two official Latin histories produced in the reign of Christian IV, Karen Skovgaard-Petersen shows that the authorities were concerned with producing Latin histories that could promote the interests and enhance the reputation of the Danish government abroad. The chancellor Christen Friis followed the work of the historians Johannes Pontanus and Johannes Meursius closely, and the government paid for the production of their respective works. In return, they got two histories that advocated the Danish position in the long-running conflict with Sweden

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<sup>10</sup> Assmann 2008a: 57.

<sup>11</sup> Assmann 2008a: 64.

<sup>12</sup> Damsholt 1992: 54.

and that stressed the hereditary nature of the Danish monarchy.<sup>13</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen has also shown how polemical historical writing was an extension of foreign policy in the territorial disputes between Denmark-Norway and Sweden in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>14</sup> More recently, Øystein Rian has considered the ways in which Danish historians were subject to extensive censorship and political control: all authors had to submit their texts to government-appointed censors for review before they could be published, but historians were more closely controlled than other writers. Due to the political sensitivity of the past, historical manuscripts had to be approved by high-ranking government officials from the Danish Chancery. The government, furthermore, was highly restrictive in giving access to government sources in the royal archive; only the royal historiographers were given complete access. Political control over the writing of history only intensified after the introduction of absolutism, with more restrictive censorship legislation and an increasing number of topics that were deemed to be sensitive by the government.<sup>15</sup>

Bearing in mind the royal government's interest in regulating and controlling historical writing according to its own purposes, it is hardly surprising that the absolute monarchy also had a virtual monopoly over monumental representations of the past in public spaces. Danish cultural historian Inge Adriansen has recently made a weighty contribution to the study of Danish memory culture with her work on «memory sites» in Denmark from the early modern period until the present day.<sup>16</sup> Adriansen dedicates one chapter of her book to memory sites in early modern Denmark. Interestingly, she finds that there were very few monuments constructed in this period: «[u]ntil the middle of the eighteenth century Copenhagen was virtually without memorials and monuments.» Adriansen claims that the erection of permanent manifestations of remarkable events and persons are a characteristic expression of modern societies' «need for historization» and that, rather than erecting historical monuments, the Danish monarchs built castles, churches and fountains to demonstrate their status, prestige and ambition.<sup>17</sup> Well into the eighteenth century, the only monuments in the residential city were the *Caritas fountain* built by Christian IV in 1609, a *pillar of shame* in memory of the nobleman and traitor Corfitz Ulfeldt, and an equestrian statue of king

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<sup>13</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2009. See also Skovgaard-Petersen 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Rian 2013; Rian 2014a; See also Ilsoe 1973.

<sup>16</sup> Adriansen's approach is inspired by Pierre Nora's concept of «lieux de mémoire», but she operates with a more concrete understanding of sites of memory than Nora. Whereas Nora sees them as both concrete and abstract entities, Adriansen defines a memory site exclusively as «concrete places in the form of monuments, memorials and meeting places, which in turn are inscribed with value and meaning by means of name-giving, identification and at times also in terms of memorial culture.» Her term «memorial culture» refers to recurring commemorative rituals. Adriansen's book is, in short, a study of physical monuments and memorials and their commemorative functions. Adriansen 2011: 486.

<sup>17</sup> «Frem til midten af 1700-tallet var København så godt som uden mindesmærker og monumenter.» Adriansen 2011:39.

Christian V (r. 1670-1699). Work on an additional monument commenced in the mid-eighteenth century, namely the equestrian statue of Frederik V (r. 1746-1766). The monuments of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century were exclusively commissioned by the Crown, only near the end of the eighteenth century did wealthy private citizens start erecting monuments on their own initiative.<sup>18</sup> The few existing monuments celebrating (or in the case of Ulfeldt, denouncing) historical events and persons were, in other words, erected by the monarchs themselves.

All of this does not necessarily mean, however, that the absolute monarchy had complete authority over representations of the past, at least not to such a degree that there were no room at all for alternative claims. One possible source of dissension came in the form of older historical works produced before the introduction of absolutism in 1660. The most famous example was the work of the nobleman historian Arild Huitfeldt (1546-1609). Huitfeldt's nine-volume *Chronicles*, charting the history of Denmark from the mythical king Dan to Christian III, was the first major history of Denmark written in the vernacular. The work was reprinted several times and was widely read in Denmark-Norway for generations.<sup>19</sup> Huitfeldt was a respected statesman and a member of the aristocratic Council of the Realm in a period when the monarch was an inexperienced teenager. This situation allowed Huitfeldt to write more freely about the Danish kings than most historians both before or after him.<sup>20</sup> According to Karen Skovgaard-Petersen, Huitfeldt's history had a didactic purpose aimed at teaching political lessons (all his prefaces were styled as advise to the young king), and the main political standpoint underlying his historical interpretations was a firm defence of the aristocratic constitution established in 1536.<sup>21</sup> As this was precisely the political system that had been replaced by the introduction of absolute monarchy in 1660, it follows that Huitfeldt's *Chronicles* contained claims that clashed with the official opinion in the post-1660 regime. Harald Ilsøe points out that Huitfeldt's historical works were in fact perceived as problematic and politically dubious in the early years of the absolute monarchy. A few generations later, however, «Huitfeldts's view of things had become so out of date, that his standpoints were neither exciting, nor provoking». Sometime between the reign of Christian V and Frederick V, Huitfeldt went from being dangerous, to becoming «the honorable and harmless old Huitfeldt.»<sup>22</sup> Although this is undoubtedly true, it is nonetheless also a fact that the *Chronicles*, which were still read and quoted in the eighteenth century,

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<sup>18</sup> For historical monuments in Stockholm, see Nordin 2009: 162-172.

<sup>19</sup> Ilsøe 1967: 23-24.

<sup>20</sup> Ilsøe 1973: 47.

<sup>21</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2002: 115.

<sup>22</sup> See Ilsøe 1967: 46-47.

in many respects presented a version of history that in many ways differed from the official standpoints of the absolute monarchy and its many supporters.

While the old and venerable Huitfeldt challenged the anti-aristocratic ideology of absolutism, an altogether different type of challenge came from abroad. Being arguably the most consistent absolute monarchy in Europe, Denmark-Norway drew criticism from foreigners claiming that the Danish kings were despots ruling their subjects as slaves. The most famous (or infamous, depending on one's perspective) of these critics was Robert Molesworth, the Anglo-Irishman who wrote the scathing *An Account of Denmark as it was in 1692* (1694) after a sojourn as ambassador in Copenhagen (1689-92).<sup>23</sup> In addition to Molesworth's general attacks on the Danish form of government and the Danish national character, chapter 7 of his work («*The manner how the Kingdom of Denmark became Hereditary and Absolute*»), presented an account of the introduction of absolutism in 1660 that on many counts differed radically from the Danish government's own official version of the same event. Like Huitfeldt's history, Molesworth's was widely known in Denmark-Norway, and even those readers who could not read the text in its original English (or in its French, Dutch or German translations), would be able to become familiar with some of his criticism in the Danish author Ludvig Holberg's extensive refutation of Molesworth in his *Description of Denmark and Norway* (1729).<sup>24</sup> Although Molesworth's attack seems to have been met with nothing but loyal indignation from Danish and Norwegian intellectuals in this period, his work did offer an alternative view on the past.

Another historiographical challenge came from Denmark-Norway's arch-rival, the neighbouring kingdom of Sweden. Like Denmark-Norway, Sweden had its own native tradition of politicized and patriotic historical writing in the service of royal dynasty and fatherland. From fifteenth-century works such as Ericus Olai's Latin chronicle *Chronica regni Gothorum* and the *Carl's Chronicle* in rhymed vernacular, to the Swedish royal historiographer Samuel Pufendorf's more recent *Continuirte Einleitung zu der Historie der vornehmsten Reiche und Staaten von Europa* (1686), the Swedish historiographical tradition boasted works with an often diametrically opposing version of the most controversial events in the history of Danish-Swedish relations. In the national histories of Ludvig Holberg, the most popular historian in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, the Swedish accusations and criticisms were directly countered and criticized.<sup>25</sup> To mention just one example, the *Carl's Chronicle* claims that the first Oldenburg king Christian I broke his promises of truce and even

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<sup>23</sup> See Olden-Jørgensen 2005.

<sup>24</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2005: 80-87.

<sup>25</sup> See Berndtsson 2014.



committed a massacre on the civil population during his invasion of Gotland in the summer of 1449.<sup>26</sup> The same battle, albeit without any mention of a massacre, is described in Pufendorf's history.<sup>27</sup> In volume one (1732) of Holberg's *History of the Kingdom of Denmark*, Holberg simply counters the claim in a footnote: «Some writers speak here of a great battle where 1800 Swedes were killed, but our good histories speak nothing of this.»<sup>28</sup> Again, it is true that foreign criticism of Denmark-Norway or its monarchs were generally countered by loyal Danes and Norwegians such as the historian Holberg. But once again it must also be stressed that many subjects of the absolute monarchs could not be completely unaware of these alternative versions of the past, versions that countered the contention that the Danish kings were always in the right. The past was never allowed to become completely one-dimensional, there were often different or even opposite versions in circulation available for those who cared to read them.

What the centenaries allow us to examine is the broader reception, adaptation and use of this historical tradition by contemporaries. Aleida Assmann has elaborated the concept of cultural memory with the complementary concepts *functional memory* («Funktionsgedächtnis») and *storage memory* («Speichergedächtnis»). The term *functional memory* denotes the active mode of cultural memory, in which elements of the past are chosen, appropriated, ordered in meaningful stories, and «inhabited», while *storage memory* denotes the passive mode, the mass of amorphous, unordered, unattached, unused and «uninhabited» mass of elements from the past that are found in books, documents, libraries, archives and museums. Both refer to ways of relating to the past, but while the former describes an active and selective engagement with the past, the latter describes the totality of the information about the past that survives and is passed on in objectified form. Assmann stresses that these should not be thought of as binary opposites, but rather «in terms of creating a perspective, separating a visible foreground from an invisible background.»<sup>29</sup> Storage memory offers a well of potential resources from which the functional memory can draw. Assmann describes it as a «repertoire of missed opportunities, alternative options, and unused material.»<sup>30</sup> In functional memory, on the other hand, «unstructured, unconnected fragments are invested with perspective and relevance; they enter into connections, configurations, compositions of *meaning*—a quality that is

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<sup>26</sup> Klemming (ed.) 1866: 266-271.

<sup>27</sup> Pufendorf 1686: 208-209.

<sup>28</sup> «Nogle Skribentere tale her om et stort Slag, hvorudi 1800 Svenske omkomme, men vore gode Historier tale intet derom.» See note n in Holberg 1732: 643.

<sup>29</sup> (Aleida) Assmann 2011: 126.

<sup>30</sup> (Aleida) Assmann 2011: 127.

totally absent from storage memory.»<sup>31</sup> Functional memory is dependent on individuals or groups that invest certain elements of the storage memory with meaning. The relationship between the two modes is dynamic and constantly changing, as new actors with their own agendas approach the remnants of the past that lie in storage in novel ways, constructing stories of the past that is more relevant to present needs. Assmann stresses that the dual structure of memory that she describes is only possible in cultures that uses writing, since the lack of techniques of storage prevents illiterate cultures from supporting any other memories of the past than that which «has the function of establishing the group's identity and ensuring it's survival.»<sup>32</sup> Storage memory, furthermore, can only exist in cultures that have institutions that support the conservation, circulation and retrieval of information, such as libraries, archives and museums.<sup>33</sup> The autonomy of the institutions of storage is in fact a prerequisite for the dialectical relationship that Assmann describes. Whenever access to the storage memory is restricted or closed, or the storage memory itself is destroyed, memory stagnates and resists change:

If the borders between functional memory and storage memory remain permeable, elements can be exchanged, patterns of meaning can be altered, and even the general framework can be restructured. Without this border traffic between the different realms of cultural memory, drawing upon a reservoir of unused possibilities, alternatives, contradictions, criticisms, and unremembered incidents, change would be excluded and memory would be fixed and made absolute.<sup>34</sup>

Assmann implies that in societies without domains that are detached «from the immediate purposes and needs of the present», such as archives and libraries, there can be no room for developing new, alternative readings of the past. If the modes were disconnected from each other, the consequence would be that the functional memory «degenerates into fantasy» and the archive becomes a «mass of meaningless information.»<sup>35</sup>

As Astrid Erll has pointed out, Aleida Assmann's elaboration of the concept cultural memory «entails an enormous expansion of the phenomena that can be studied from a memory studies perspective.»<sup>36</sup> It also represents an expansion of the concept of cultural memory as defined by Jan Assmann, namely as «the body of reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> (Aleida) Assmann 2011: 126.

<sup>33</sup> (Aleida) Assmann 2011: 130.

<sup>34</sup> (Aleida) Assmann 2011: 130.

<sup>35</sup> (Aleida) Assmann 2011: 132.

<sup>36</sup> Erll 2011b: 36.

epoch, whose “cultivation” serves to stabilize and convey that society’s self-image.»<sup>37</sup> In Aleida Assmann’s version of the concept, cultural memory encompasses both an *active* realm, or the highly selective and exclusive *canon* that defines and supports the cultural identity of a group, and a *passive* realm, or the *archive* that stores and preserves information in a latent, de-contextualized and inert state, information that may be activated in the future and transformed into new meaningful narratives that command reverence and attention. While the former preserve the *past as present*, writes Aleida Assmann, the latter preserve the *past as past*.<sup>38</sup> The active domain of cultural memory (canon) thus presents and cultivates a narrow selection of historical events, points of orientation in the past that commands the attention of the community and demands reverence, while the passive domain (archive) maintains and passes on a much greater mass of information about past events and persons that generally only command the attention of experts and specialists: «Emphatic reverence and specialized historical curiosity are the two poles between which the dynamics of cultural memory is played out.»<sup>39</sup> Since both poles of the cultural memory are dependent on the existence of media and institutions to carry out the work of remembrance, the specific aspects of the past that are allowed to transverse from one domain to the other will often be determined by the priorities and ideals of those groups that control the media and staff the institutions.

In studying the centennial commemorations in Denmark-Norway as manifestations of cultural memory, there seems therefore to be good reason to consider the entire scope of what Aleida Assmann calls «the dynamics of cultural memory between memory and forgetting». According to Assmann, there are both active and passive forms of remembering, or what we have described as canon (functional memory) and archive (storage memory). But there are also active and passive forms of forgetting: on the one hand, censorship and destruction of material vestiges and documents from the past and, on the other, «non-intentional acts» of forgetting that allows the objects and documents of the past to fall into disuse and become forgotten.<sup>40</sup> As deliberate and carefully orchestrated acts of commemoration, the centenaries were clearly instances of active remembering. The messages of the centenaries can only be understood in full, however, if one considers the backdrop of half-forgotten histories, counter-claims and discredited traditions that could conceivably have been known and available to eighteenth-century Danes and Norwegians.

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<sup>37</sup> Assmann 1995: 132.

<sup>38</sup> Assmann 2008b: 98.

<sup>39</sup> Assmann 2008b: 101.

<sup>40</sup> Assmann 2008b: 98.

The analysis of the centenaries shall first of all consider how the government selected its objects of commemoration or, to be more specific, why the centenaries were placed in the particular years and on the particular dates that they were celebrated. It might perhaps seem banal or even superfluous to ask why the royal government chose to celebrate the centenaries when they did, for is not a centenary simply celebrated on the round anniversary of a significant event? But it is not so simple. Out of the totality of the recorded past, the jubilee or anniversary marks out one historical event or person as significant and worthy of commemoration. Historical moments of origin or transition, however, rarely take place in the course of one single day. More often than not, they are rather long, drawn-out and complex processes consisting of a multitude of individual events and involving many actors that might be retrospectively defined as important.<sup>41</sup> When one single event is made to symbolize a complex whole, the specific values and ideas associated with the former is projected on to the entirety of the latter. The particular qualities of the date marked for commemoration promote a specific interpretation of the entire historical phenomenon in question.

We shall therefore pay particularly attention to the political significance of chronology. As we shall see, the royal government selected its dates with a keen eye to what general interpretations of the past it could promote, as well as the meanings that it cloaked. In some instances, dissension and disagreement among the king's advisors led to the explicit articulation of the principles and values that governed the selection of dates and formulation of the official narratives about the past. I have found most of the sources to the process of selection and preparation in the archives of the Danish Chancery (roughly equivalent to a «Department of the Interior») and the bishops of Zealand, the leading clergymen in the Danish church. I have also discovered a few case files in the Royal Library in Copenhagen and the Gunnerus Library in Trondheim that stem from the central administration and the *Royal Danish Academy for Sciences and Letters (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskaberne Selskab)*. These

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<sup>41</sup> The French Revolution, for example, has been commemorated in France every year on Bastille Day (14 July) since 1880. The purpose of creating a new national holiday was to emphasize the continuity between the French Revolution and the Third Republic. According to Christian Amalvi, however, the challenge for the Republicans was that the different phases of the Revolution appealed to different parts of the French political spectrum. Amalvi cites no less than eleven different dates as legitimate candidates for the role as a new national holiday, but most of them conjured up unappealing associations, or were too divisive. One crucial challenge was to find a date that avoided fanning the flames of controversy over the legacy of the Terror. Bastille Day did have the virtue of marking a clear rupture with the Ancien Régime. It also elevated the role of the people rather than the nobles and clergy that had played a part in the earliest stages of the Revolution. And, last but not the least, the elevation to prominence of Bastille Day erased the more problematic aspects of the chronology of the Revolution: «The sacred date did not just symbolize the dawn of the Revolution; it summed up the entire revolutionary process in such a way as to transcend the series of dramatic events that occurs between 1789 and 1794 and in particular to cloak the “bad years” 1793 and 1794» Amalvi 1998: 122.

documents have provided additional valuable information about the deliberations that preceded the centenaries.<sup>42</sup>

The fruits of the government's labours were a collection of texts and objects: royal decrees, instructional booklets for the clergy that contained church prayers, verses and psalms, and commemorative medals. Whereas the deliberations that preceded the commemorations were generally carried out with some candour, these texts and objects were carefully designed to present an idealized version of the history of the kingdoms to the subjects. It is here that we find the clearest expression of what the royal government wanted to communicate to the subjects about the history of the kingdoms.

### The past according to the Lutheran clergy

The church was not only one of the central social arenas in the everyday life of early modern Danes and Norwegians, it was also a setting where the authorities could reach a more or less captive audience every week of the year with information about new laws and regulations, victories and losses in war, and royal marriages, births and deaths. The regularity of church services and the moral authority of the church also made it a particularly suitable instrument for exerting a stable and long-term influence on people's attitudes and values, not least with regards to the worldly authorities.

Cultural historian Arne Bugge Amundsen has pointed out the central importance of the church as an arena for the construction of memory and identity in the early modern period.<sup>43</sup> He argues that the church building itself normally contained several types of references to or narratives about historical events. At a fundamental level, the church interiors referred to the universal and sacred history of Christianity, in the form of altarpieces and other images. These biblical references connected the individual viewer to the universal history of salvation. The churches often contained references, moreover, to a «more concrete institutional history», which placed the church room and the congregation in relation to the context of a state church. This category included references both to local history, such as images or texts depicting the series of Lutheran ministers in the parish (*series pastorum*), and to national history, in the form of royal monograms and images of the Oldenburg

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<sup>42</sup> *Jubilaums Taler, Projecter og Efterretninger 1736*, (Ledreborg 406 folio); *Collectaena om Jubelfæsterne 1717 og 1736* (Thott 813 folio).

<sup>43</sup> Amundsen writes about Norway, but his arguments are valid also for the kingdom of Denmark. See Amundsen 2001.

kings. Such texts or imagery, writes Amundsen, gave the readers and viewers «connection to a combination of local and state history, and placed this combination in a religious perspective».<sup>44</sup>

The centenaries celebrated in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century not only took place in the type of setting described by Amundsen, but they also manifest a similar amalgam of religious and worldly narratives. As royal officials, the clergy were obliged to perform tasks that have been described by Norwegian historian Anne-Hilde Nagel as «propaganda functions».<sup>45</sup> This included an obligation to instil a sense of loyalty to the regime in the subjects, formulated in the Danish and Norwegian law code (1683/1687) as a duty to «exhort their audience to fear God and honour the King».<sup>46</sup> The surviving jubilee sermons are evidence that the royal government also required the Lutheran clergy to act as mediators of knowledge about the national history of the kingdoms.<sup>47</sup> The Danish Lutheran clergy have previously been described as «intermediaries» between the state and the general populace and their sermons as a «a channel of information» about political thought.<sup>48</sup> The Danish historian Peter Henningsen has described the clergy as *cultural brokers* in rural society, as «bridgebuilders between the spheres of elite culture and peasant culture».<sup>49</sup> In the context of the jubilees, we may narrow this concept and define the ministers as *memory brokers*. Erica Kuijpers has used this term to describe Dutch local historians in the seventeenth century that attempted to merge local oral traditions of the Dutch revolt against the Habsburgs with the canonized history of national deliverance, the «patriotic scripture» that had been developed in the preceding decades. These authors, writes Kuijpers, «seem to have functioned as brokers between overlapping yet distinctive mnemonic communities.»<sup>50</sup> In their jubilee sermons, the ministers popularized works of national history and introduced them into the horizon of their congregations. The Danish and Norwegian clergymen were therefore memory brokers in the sense that they selected and compiled historical narratives from the pages of national histories, which they then presented to their congregations in an appropriate and relatively simple and abbreviated form.

Despite the fact that the clergyman was the only royal official with which the commoners had regular day-to-day contact, and despite the overwhelming amount of source material in the form of

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<sup>44</sup> «[...] tekster, monogrammer eller portrettserier som har gitt betrakterne og leserne en forbindelse til en kombinasjon av lokal og statlig historie, og satt denne kombinasjonen inn i et religiøst perspektiv.» Amundsen 2001: 47-48. See also Johansen 2014: 253-254, 258-265.

<sup>45</sup> Nagel 1997: 110

<sup>46</sup> NL 2-4-6

<sup>47</sup> Slettebø 2014a: 419.

<sup>48</sup> See English abstract in Bregnsbo 1997a.

<sup>49</sup> Henningsen 2006: 434-438.

<sup>50</sup> Kuijpers 2013: 186.

printed and manuscript sermons that would allow the study of how the shaping of values and attitudes worked in practice, Scandinavian historians have traditionally not devoted much attention to the political functions of the Lutheran state church. As Norwegian historian Øystein Idsø Viken has recently pointed out, the church has not been considered as «an arena for political culture», and the book *Political Interaction in the Old Regime* (1994) which summed up the findings of a large Nordic research project on the interaction between the authorities and the subjects («Central Power and Local Society») does not devote much space to the clergy's role as royal officials.<sup>51</sup> Only in quite recent years have Scandinavian historians begun to consider the church as one of the central channels of political communication in the eighteenth century, and to analyse the sermon as a political medium.<sup>52</sup> The increased interest among Scandinavian scholars in the politics of the pulpit corresponds with similar trends in international early modern scholarship. Joris van Eijnatten points out that research on early modern sermons has gone from being a «somewhat narrow specialism within church history and literary history» to becoming a major subject of interdisciplinary research. «Sermons», writes Eijnatten, «are now widely recognized as an indispensable historical source, because of their importance as a means of communication, the wealth of subjects they broach and the sheer quantities in which they appeared in print.»<sup>53</sup>

Although the jubilee sermons have received some scholarly attention, they have not yet been the object of a detailed study. In addition, only a very small proportion of the extant jubilee sermons have so far been used. Danish historian Michael Bregnsbo considers some of the sermons in his doctoral thesis on the political views of the Danish clergy, but only a relatively small amount due to his methodological approach: Bregnsbo only studies the Danish clergy, which means that he does not consider sermons delivered in Norway. In addition, the chronological boundaries of his study (1750-1848) means that only one of the centenaries (1760) is included in the period he examines. Finally, Bregnsbo only uses printed sermons, which means that he does not examine the substantial corpus of manuscript sermons collected by the bishops of Zealand. Although the jubilee sermons thus do not figure prominently in Bregnsbo's study, his findings do provide highly relevant information about the clergy's ideological outlook and their role in disseminating political arguments to the population in this period. Apart from a section about the clergy's claims about the origins of

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<sup>51</sup> Viken claims that the work «does not mention the clergy at all» («nevner [...] ikkje presteskaptet i det heile»), but this is not entirely correct. Harald Gustafsson does indeed briefly discuss the administrative functions of the local clergymen in the Scandinavian countries, but the topic is in no way exhaustively treated. Gustafsson 1994: 59; Viken 2014: 26; For more about the research project «Central Power and Local Society», see Gustafsson 1994: 173-180.

<sup>52</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a; Ihalainen 2005; Forssberg 2005; Ericsson (ed.) 2007; Viken 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Van Eijnatten 2009a: vii.

the absolute monarchy, however, Bregnsbo does not discuss the clergy's views on and presentations of national history.<sup>54</sup>

Øystein Idsø Viken uses jubilee sermons more extensively in his doctoral thesis on «the pulpit as a political instrument» in Norway in the long eighteenth century. Like Bregnsbo, however, Viken's methodology excludes a substantial part of the surviving jubilee sermons from his study. Viken focuses primarily on printed sermons delivered in Norway in the period 1720-1814, in addition to some collections of manuscript sermons. This means that he has not included those printed sermons that were delivered in Denmark or the corpus of Danish manuscript sermons. Jubilee sermons still make out an important part of Viken's analysis, however, and he also considers the guidelines that the Danish Chancery issued to the clergy for the events.<sup>55</sup> The strength of Viken's study is its broad and long-term perspective, a perspective in which the jubilee sermons are considered as part of the clergy's continuous ideological indoctrination of the Norwegian populace in the period. Viken's approach sheds light on the everyday operation of the system of communication in which the jubilees took place, as well as the developing long-term trends in the political discourse in sermons.

This thesis contributes to the burgeoning field of sermon studies by examining how the Danish and Norwegian clergy preached to their congregations about the history of the kingdoms in the context of centennial commemoration. The clergy's primary task during the jubilees was to lead their congregations in giving thanks to the Lord for the blessings he had shown them and their ancestors, but this task inevitably also required some elemental historical education. In their jubilee sermons, they were expected to educate their congregation about the events of the past in an easily understandable and emotionally appealing way, while at the same time avoiding touching upon historical controversies and problematic topics. By virtue of their education, the clergy were thus given the task of preparing and vetting information about the past and presenting it to their flock in the controlled setting of the church service. This interaction will be of primary interest in this study: how did the clergy carry out this challenging task in their sermons?

The method I have adopted when analyzing these sermons is as follows: after identifying the major themes and arguments in the guidelines issued by the government, I have read through the body of sermons from each jubilee, taking notes and organizing the findings in general categories. After reading through all of the sermons in this manner one time, I have thus been able to identify

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<sup>54</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a.

<sup>55</sup> Viken 2014.



some of the major themes and preoccupations that reoccur in the majority of the sermons. In the case of the dynastic jubilee in 1749, for instance, the initial reading formed the basis of a discussion of how the ministers went about presenting the history of the royal dynasty as a narrative of divine election, dynastic continuity and stability, quite in line with the official instructions issued by the royal government. During the first reading, I have come across various more or less unexpected points of interest that has led me to re-read the sermons at least one more time to see if could find more traces of the same in other texts. When reading the sermons from the Reformation bicentenary 1736, for instance, I discovered that some of the ministers presented a much more critical and pessimistic view of the success of the Danish Reformation than both the government texts and most of their colleagues. Sensitive to this phenomenon (which I describe in chapter 5 as expressions of «Pietist perceptions of the past»), I re-read the bulk of sermons from this jubilee, searching for signs of corresponding lines of argument in other texts. In similar fashion, while working with the sermons from the dynastic tercentenary in 1749 I noticed that many ministers discussed king Christian II (r. 1513-23) in less enthusiastic and more guarded fashion than they did the other Oldenburg kings. Aware that this monarch has long had a controversial reputation in Danish historiography, I searched through all the sermons looking for mention of Christian II. Once the amount of interesting findings reached a critical mass, I decided to write a subchapter on this issue. I have followed this basic hermeneutical procedure several times, until I have reached the point where I have felt satisfied that I have been able to describe with some accuracy both how the ministers discussed the uncontroversial themes and grand narratives of the centenaries, as well as how they handled more problematic or controversial topics.

### **Popular reception of centennial commemoration**

Scholars studying commemoration in modern societies have warned against supposing that ordinary people actually shared the publicly articulated memories of the past and accepted the grand narratives of public commemoration. Danish historian Anette Warring points out that the problem is seldom addressed in studies of mnemopolitics, much less studied empirically. «Perceptions of the past are real and have sociocultural and political consequences», writes Warring, «and implications for power relations in the extent that people believe in them and act accordingly.» She writes, however, that the effects of collective remembrance is more often a theoretical supposition than it is empirically

proven.<sup>56</sup> For the student of early modern commemoration, the problem is compounded by the acute scarcity of reliable sources that could provide information about such matters. In an article on the first Reformation jubilee in Germany in 1617, cultural historian Charles Zika clearly demarcates the boundaries of what the available sources allow the researcher to reconstruct about this event. The sources, writes Zika, are for the most part either prescriptive in nature or propaganda written by organisers and supporters. Despite the considerable amount of sources that purport to say something about the jubilee, argues Zika, «we are left with little idea of actual responses to the celebrations».<sup>57</sup>

Much the same can be said about the centenaries in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway, where newspaper reports and other printed accounts told stories of nothing but massive popular participation, loyal outbursts of support for the absolute monarchy and joyous celebrations. The impression conveyed by the majority of these texts is one of a well-functioning and harmonious society gathered together in celebration and a shared love and appreciation for their absolute monarch. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the Danish-Norwegian public sphere was to a large extent geared towards representing royal power and constantly staging the closely regulated social hierarchy that culminated in the elevated person of the absolute monarch. Art and architecture, print media, public ceremonies and spectacles displayed the king's greatness, while casting the subjects as passive and obedient spectators.<sup>58</sup> The eighteenth century has indeed been described as the «age of panegyrics»: panegyric praise filled streets, newspapers, periodicals and books.<sup>59</sup> This culture of flattery was in large measure a product of the strongly hierarchical social structure, with the king on top controlling the appointment to all offices as well all promotions in the fine-meshed system of rank that had been established in the wake of the introduction of absolutism. To get ahead one needed powerful patrons, and a socially acceptable way to achieve this was through self-effacing praise and flattery of social superiors. In this culture, public forms of expression did not have to express authentic and personal feelings. One could therefore praise the king's or a high patron's excellent qualities without there necessarily being any confluence between the ideal image of the panegyrics and the panegyrist's emotions and opinions, on the one hand, or between the ideal image

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<sup>56</sup> «Forestillinger om fortiden er virkelige og har sociokulturelle virkninger og magtmæssig betydning i den udstrækning, mennesker tror på dem og handler derefter. Men kollektive erindrings eller erindringsfælleskabers handlingsregulerende betydning udgør oftest mer en teoretisk forudsætning end påvises empirisk.» Warring 2011: 17.

<sup>57</sup> Zika 2003: 212.

<sup>58</sup> Krefting, Nøding & Ringvej 2014: 47; Johansen 2014: 30-34.

<sup>59</sup> Krefting, Nøding & Ringvej 2014: 150.

and the person that it described, on the other.<sup>60</sup> The editors of a recent volume on eighteenth-century periodicals suggest that the people expressing themselves in public in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway played their roles according to well-defined rules. The question one should ask is not whether these people believed in the praise of the absolute monarch, but rather how they chose to play the part of the subject: «It was the actions, not the intentions behind them, that were important. If you praise the king, you have played your part right.»<sup>61</sup> On the restrictive side, government censorship regulated the publication of printed texts, making it obligatory to receive a stamp of approval by the authorities in advance of publication. Harsh legislation also made it a criminal offense to publicly challenge or criticize the king and his policies. The government thus attempted to ensure that only ideologically acceptable publications were available to the public.

Due to these factors, the idealized accounts of the Danish-Norwegian jubilees must be treated with a healthy dose of scepticism: we can be certain that they would never have reported any mishaps, dissatisfaction or other problematic or unsuccessful aspects of the commemorations, had there been any. There are also few sources that say anything about whether ordinary people understood, reflected upon or cared about the message of the jubilees. In other words, this study cannot give any answers about the degree to which the subjects actually subscribed to or internalized the narratives they were served about the history of their monarchs and kingdoms, or whether different social groups responded to them in different ways. It can only provide information about the narratives and arguments about the past to which they were exposed.

## Historiography

### Commemoration: a product of modernity?

«Centenaries are an invention of the late nineteenth century. Some time between the centennial of the American Revolution (1876) and that of the French Revolution (1889)—both celebrated with the usual international expositions—the educated citizens of the western world became conscious of the fact that this world, born between the Declaration of Independence, the construction of the world's first iron bridge and the storming of the Bastille, was now a century old.»<sup>62</sup>

Thus begins the first chapter of Eric Hobsbawm's *The Age of Empire 1875-1914*. The paragraph serves as an introduction to Hobsbawm's sweeping presentation of how the world had changed –

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<sup>60</sup> Bliksrud 1999: 83 ff.

<sup>61</sup> «Det var handlingene, ikke intensjonene bak, som var viktige. Lovpriser du kongen, har du spilt rollen din riktig.» Krefting, Nøding & Ringvej 2014: 290.

<sup>62</sup> Hobsbawm 2003: 13.

economically, demographically, culturally and politically – in the century after the democratic revolutions of the late eighteenth century. There is one problem with the introductory paragraph, however– the opening statement is erroneous. The late nineteenth century was in fact not the first time Europeans looked back on the past and decided to celebrate formative events that had happened a hundred years before. The world’s first official centenary took place as early as 1617, when the majority of the Protestant territories of Europe commemorated Martin Luther’s nailing of the 95 theses on a church door in Wittenberg.<sup>63</sup> The event was succeeded by scores of similar celebrations in the centuries that followed. The largest of them, in 1717 and 1817, celebrated Martin Luther and the 95 theses, but in the course of the eighteenth century there came also a deluge of minor, more local, centenaries commemorating a variety of events not directly connected to the history of Martin Luther and the emergence of Protestantism: the birth of royal dynasties, the invention of printing, the Peace of Westphalia, the founding of schools, universities, civic associations, and so on. German historian Wolfgang Flügel mentions no less than eight major centenaries celebrated in the German state of Electoral Saxony in the period 1617-1830, not counting smaller jubilees celebrated on a regional or local level.<sup>64</sup>

Hobsbawm never intended to write a history of centennial commemoration, so it might seem pedantic to dwell on a minor factual error in his book. The reason the paragraph is highlighted here is that it exemplifies a widespread view– among historians of the modern world, at least– that commemoration is a product or a symptom of modernity: only with the accelerating pace of societal change in the nineteenth century did Westerners become acutely aware of the passing of time and consequently able and eager to commemorate formative moments in the past of their societies.

A corollary of this «modernist» thesis is the connections frequently drawn between the supposed advent of commemoration in the nineteenth century, on the one hand, and the emergence of modern phenomena such as nationalist ideologies or the academic discipline of history, on the other. One interpretation that incorporates all of these elements is found in the work of an influential modern theorist of collective memory, the French historian Pierre Nora. Nora was the editor of the multivolume collaborative work *Les lieux de mémoire* (1984-1992) a historical study of French *sites of memory*. The concept of sites of memory is not easy to explain in one simple sentence, but they may

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<sup>63</sup> Sherlock 2010:40, Zika 2003, Schönstadt 1978.

<sup>64</sup> The centenary commemorating Luther’s 95 theses (1617), the centenary for the Augsburg confession (1630), the centenary of the Peace of Augsburg (1655), the 150th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation (1667), the bicentenary of the Lutheran Reformation (1730), the bicentenary of the Peace of Augsburg (1755), the tercentenary of the Lutheran Reformation (1817) and the tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession (1830). Flügel 2005.

be understood as physical or symbolical focal points for collective remembrance. Nora himself defines a site of memory as «any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community.»<sup>65</sup>

Nora's theory is based on the explicit premise that memory has died and disappeared from modern societies: «Memory is constantly on our lips because it no longer exists.»<sup>66</sup> Nora posits what he calls an «acceleration of history», in which the constant societal changes of modernity creates a rupture with the past and the destruction of what he calls «real memory» of premodern societies. In the words of Nora,

[t]he “acceleration of history” thus brings us face to face with the enormous distance that separates real memory—the kind of inviolate social memory that primitive and archaic societies embodied, and whose secret died with them— from history, which is how modern societies organize a past they are condemned to forget because they are driven by change; the distance between an integrated memory, all-powerful, sweeping, un-self-conscious, and inherently present-minded—a memory without a past that eternally recycles a heritage, relegating ancestral yesterdays to the undifferentiated time of heroes, inceptions and myth—and our form of memory, which is nothing but history, a matter of sifting and sorting.<sup>67</sup>

The arrival of modernity has destroyed the so-called *milieux de mémoire* of the pre-modern era, which according to Nora were «settings in which memory is a real part of everyday experience.»<sup>68</sup> All that is left of memory in the modern world are the so-called *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory. These are mere remnants of the real memory, symbolical locations kept artificially alive by active commemoration and willed remembrance: «Lieux de mémoire arise out of a sense that there is no such thing as spontaneous memory, hence that we must create archives, mark anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and authenticate documents because such things no longer happen as a matter of course.»<sup>69</sup>

As sociologist Barry Schwarz has perceptively pointed out, Nora's complex theory is actually based on a relatively simple tripartite temporal periodization of memory, «the triptych premodern-modern-postmodern».<sup>70</sup> Memory in the premodern phase is described with words such as «real», «intimate» and «spontaneous». In the predominantly rural world of premodern societies, people

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<sup>65</sup> Nora 1996a: xvii.

<sup>66</sup> Nora 1996b: 1.

<sup>67</sup> Nora 1996b: 2.

<sup>68</sup> Nora 1996b: 1.

<sup>69</sup> Nora 1996b: 7.

<sup>70</sup> Schwarz 2010: 57.

supposedly inhabited environments of real memory, unselfconsciously immersed in a world of myth and tradition. This begun to change with the onset of modernity, which inaugurated the phase of the «memory-nation.» In this phase, beginning with the French Revolution and culminating in the era of the Third Republic, mediated and institutionalized forms of memory replaced the real memory of premodernity. This second phase saw the genesis of the *lieux de mémoire*, which served as artificial replacements for the lost environments of memory. Professional historians produced grand narratives about the national past that were disseminated by institutions such as schools, churches and universities. Although artificial and constructed, the lieux de mémoire of the memory-nation still functioned as «a return to the source», an approximation to living memory.<sup>71</sup> In nineteenth-century France, writes Nora, «history, memory, and the nation enjoyed an unusually intimate communion, a symbiotic complementarity at every level—scientific and pedagogical, theoretical and practical.»<sup>72</sup> At the same time, the lieux de mémoire of the modern epoch contained the forces of their own destruction. In Schwarz' words, «[t]he mediations by which modern memory was articulated—the dependence on the written word and its archives—worked to deepen the gap between memory and human experience: in consequence [...] memory was always in danger of losing any real connection to the past, driven instead exclusively by the concerns of the present.»<sup>73</sup> In the postmodern phase (beginning around 1970), any residual remnants of «real» memory disappeared and the lieux de mémoire became fully artificial and without any connection to the present: «[p]recisely because the past has no hold on the present the compulsion to commemorate is everywhere. Memory itself generates only a vortex of empty signifiers in which nothing can be signified. The “fetishism of signs” is complete, and all are “enslaved to memory.”»<sup>74</sup>

The basic structure of Nora's historical schema is echoed by historian John R. Gillis in his article «Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship», where he paints a history of commemoration in broad strokes. For Gillis, the accelerating pace of political and economic change in modernity is similarly understood to be the driving force behind the impulse to commemorate the past. Although Gillis is evidently aware of early modern instances of public commemoration, he sees these merely as the preoccupation of a small political and cultural elite, which «hardly penetrated the consciousness of more than a small part of the population.» The great majority of the population instead relied on a «popular memory» that was nonlinear, local and episodic, as opposed to the

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<sup>71</sup> Nora 1996: 7.

<sup>72</sup> Nora 1996: 5.

<sup>73</sup> Schwarz 2010: 54.

<sup>74</sup> Schwarz 2010: 56.

increasingly linear, nationally oriented and comprehensive memory of the elites.<sup>75</sup> Gillis' concept of «popular memory» closely resembles the «real memory» that Nora describes as the defining characteristic of memory in the premodern epoch. Not until the late eighteenth century, as a result of the «simultaneous political and economic revolutions», did this begin to change: «The demand for commemoration was then taken up by the urban middle and working classes, gradually expanding until, today, everyone is obsessed with recording, preserving, and remembering.»<sup>76</sup> At around the same time as commemoration was democratized, there arose an increasing need for expert knowledge of the past, as

[c]hanges occurring at the economic as well as the political level created such a sense of distance between now and then that people found it impossible to remember what life had been like only a few decades earlier. The past went blank and had to be filled in, a task taken up with great fervor by professional historians from the early nineteenth century onward.<sup>77</sup>

There was thus a parallel development of democratization of commemoration, on the one hand, and the ascendancy of the professional historian as hegemonic interpreter of the past, on the other. These were among the most important hallmarks of what Gillis calls «the national phase of commemoration», which lasted until around 1960 when it was effaced by de-colonization, globalization and the emergence of new media. Gillis' national phase is a parallel in Nora's concept of the «memory-nation» of the French Third Republic, when «the nationalistic definition of the present cried out for justification through a high-lighting of the past», a task carried out by the French academic historians. Finally, as Gillis describes it, memory in the post-war period has become simultaneously more individualized, localized and compulsive.<sup>78</sup>

In the article «Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914», Eric Hobsbawm argues that the fifty-year period before World War I saw an increased proliferation of so-called *invented traditions*, defined as sets of practices «normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms or behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.»<sup>79</sup> Again, it is the accelerating pace of social and political change that is presented as the catalyst for the invention of, among other things, centennial commemoration. New social groups appeared, while old social groups found themselves facing

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<sup>75</sup> Gillis 1994: 6-7.

<sup>76</sup> Gillis 1994: 7.

<sup>77</sup> Gillis 1994: 7-8.

<sup>78</sup> Gillis 1994: 13-16.

<sup>79</sup> The definition is from the introductory article of the book *The Invention of Tradition*. Hobsbawm 2012:1.

radically changed conditions. Old forms of cementing social bonds, structuring social relations and establishing legitimacy had become obsolete and there was a need for «new methods of ruling or establishing bonds of loyalty.»<sup>80</sup> According to Hobsbawm, the period 1870-1914 saw, among many other things, «the happy discovery-or perhaps it would be better to say invention-of the jubilee or ceremonial anniversary.»<sup>81</sup> Hobsbawm claims that there is no sign before the later nineteenth century that «centenaries [...] were the occasion for public celebration» and supports this conjecture by pointing out that the novelty of the «jubilee» in the sense of an historical or centennial celebration is remarked upon in the *New English Dictionary* (1901).<sup>82</sup> As we have seen, the assertion is incorrect, since centenaries had in fact already been marked with public celebration for centuries. In the case of England, to mention just one example, the centenary of the Glorious Revolution was celebrated in 1788.<sup>83</sup> Pierre Nora makes a similar claim for the French cultural sphere, when he argues that «the word *centenaire* did not come into use in French until the early years of the Third Republic» and that three events—the centenary of American Independence (1876), the centenary of the French Revolution (1889) and the centenary of the nineteenth century (1900)—established it once and for all.<sup>84</sup> While it might be correct that centenaries were not celebrated in France before the nineteenth century, this does not necessarily mean that Frenchmen were not aware of the practice long before. In eighteenth-century sources, Frenchmen used the terms «celebration de l'époque séculaire», «Jubilé séculaire» or simply «le Jubilé» to describe one of the centenaries celebrated in Denmark-Norway.<sup>85</sup>

A weak point in these macronarratives is that their claims about the changes in memory caused by modernity rest on over-simplified conceptions of early modernity: they do not account for what we know about the complex social and cultural dynamics in early modern societies. In all three narratives, the empirical basis of their explicit claims or implicit assumptions about the early modern period appears to be rather slim, resulting in simplified representations that support the postulated novelty of modern practices. In the case of Pierre Nora, for instance, one may ask whether the *milieux de mémoire* has ever existed in such a pure, natural, unadulterated form as he postulates. According to cultural historian Anne Eriksen, Nora falls in «the romantic trap» of theorists of modernity, who represents the pre-modern as «a golden age of innocence, naturalness, organic

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<sup>80</sup> Hobsbawm 2012: 263.

<sup>81</sup> Hobsbawm 2012: 281.

<sup>82</sup> Hobsbawm 2012: 281.

<sup>83</sup> Louis Schwoerer who has written about this event, makes a similar mistake in claiming that this event was the «first organized public centennial celebration of any historical event in history». Schwoerer 1990: 2.

<sup>84</sup> Nora 1998: 613.

<sup>85</sup> See note 5 in Bost, Lauriol & De La Beaumelle 2007: 50; Dussieux & Soulié 1862: 463; *Le Nouvelliste Suisse* 1749: 181; *Mercure Historique et Politique* 1749: 540.



cohesion, tight social relations, stable religious conditions, unproblematic traditions, etc. etc.—in short, everything one believes that the modern lacks (whether one likes it or not)».<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Gillis' sharp division between a «popular memory» and an «elite memory» rests on another pair of uncertain assumptions, namely that there was little cultural transfer between the social elites and the common people and, even more doubtfully, that «[i]nstitutionalized forms of memory were too precious to be wasted on the common people».<sup>87</sup> In Hobsbawm's case, the assumptions about the premodern period are implicit—the supposed invention of commemoration in the period 1870-1914 implies that the need for commemoration was simply not there before the end of the nineteenth century, and that the rapid cultural, social and political changes of the late nineteenth century were a necessary catalyst for creating the conditions to which commemoration arose as a response.

### The forgotten world of early modern commemoration

Many of these assumptions are clearly unsatisfactory to early modern historians, and they have indeed begun to be questioned and nuanced in empirical studies of memory practices in early modern Europe. A current project at the University of Leiden is studying private and public commemoration of the Dutch revolt against the Habsburg rulers in the late sixteenth century. In an outline of the project's main theoretical and methodological approaches, under the headline «Modernity», the research team point out that «the idea that 'modernity' has had an impact on memory remains widespread». Prevalent interpretations that have identified mass communication and state formation as «the catalysts for profound changes in collective memory» rests on «assumptions about early modern European culture, such as an alleged lack of a public sphere, its poorly developed notion of the 'self', or its deficient historical consciousness, that have already been challenged by historians of the early modern period.» The project therefore defines it as one of its tasks to «develop a better-founded understanding of the distinctive features of early modern social memory».<sup>88</sup>

In the introduction to one of the project's publications, Judith Pollmann and Erika Kujipers argue that what has been taken to be innovative memory practices created in the modern or

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<sup>86</sup> «Det førmoderne blir fremstilt som en gullalder av uskyld, naturlighet, organisk samhörighet, tette sosiale relasjoner osv. osv.—kort sagt alt det som man nettopp mener at det moderne ikke har (enten man nå liker det eller ikke)» Eriksen 1999: 88; See also Eriksen 2009: 8-9.

<sup>87</sup> Gillis 1994: 7.

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.hum.leiden.edu/history/talesoftherevolt/approach/approach-1.html>. Retrieved 26. 08. 2014.

postmodern world were actually developed already in the early modern period. They focus specifically on three themes that have been central in the field of memory studies, namely the politics of memory, mediality and personal memory, and argue that, in each of these three areas, «early modern practices shed an unexpected light on many scholarly assumptions about the modernity of modern memory».<sup>89</sup> Due to the perspective in the present study, we shall here focus on their discussion of memory politics and the mediality of memory. In the case of the former, Pollmann and Kuijpers question the notion that nationalism, democracy or mass media are requisite conditions for memory to become a political issue. Both religious and secular forms of commemoration were widespread in early modern cities and states. The past was an important resource of legitimation on every level of society, and was used in everything from conflicts about village grazing rights to making claims about the ancient lineage of a royal dynasty or noble house. The omnipresence of various forms of memory politics was in large measure due to the great importance attributed to the past as a source of legitimacy and authority in early modern Europe, where every claim to or challenge against authority had to be based on a recourse to the past. Despite the distinctively early modern reverence for the past, claims Pollmann and Kuijpers, early modern memory politics bears more resemblance to its modern version than what has been acknowledged:

They were the elaborate, ubiquitous, and highly flexible product of many agents and enjoyed importance on all levels of society. The political importance of particular memories might be limited to the local or regional levels, to a corporation or a minority, but there are also many examples of powerful ‘national’ memory cultures emerging, with or without central state intervention.<sup>90</sup>

With regards to the mediality of memory, the two historians also argue that there is perhaps more historical continuity than has been acknowledged. They claim that the difference that the emergence of modern mass media has had on memory is primarily one of quantity rather than quality. Although modern states do indeed have better opportunities of reaching their citizens with their own official visions of the past thanks to new media, «it seems fair to say that early modern societies had both the means and the motives to shape and celebrate collective memories and did so with enthusiasm.»<sup>91</sup>

British historian Peter Sherlock has likewise challenged some of the assumptions of modern memory studies, not least the idealized construct of the «natural» or «living» memory that supposedly characterized the way people related to the past in early modern societies. Sherlock argues that «[i]n

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<sup>89</sup> Pollmann & Kuijpers 2013: 5.

<sup>90</sup> Pollmann & Kuijpers 2013: 10.

<sup>91</sup> Pollmann & Kuijpers 2013: 14.

pre-Enlightenment Europe, [...] memory was far from natural.»<sup>92</sup> In the wake of the Protestant Reformation, European religious and secular authorities spent much energy on promulgating versions of the past that could foster political loyalty and confessional unity: «Early modern Europe was replete with deliberately created memories and invented commemorations, designed as responses to the Reformation with its attendant loss of an established narrative for the past and to the beginnings of the disenchantment of the world.»<sup>93</sup>

Sherlock's argument about the pivotal role of the Reformation in stimulating new forms of commemoration is supported by the findings in David Cressy's classic study *Bonfires and Bells* (1989), which charts the development of a Protestant calendar in England in the Tudor and Stuart periods, centred on national commemorations of important events such as the Gunpowder Plot and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. In the immediate wake of the Reformation, the amount of annual religious holidays and festivals in England were drastically reduced, leaving only a limited number days centred on the commemoration of the life of Christ. The latter half of the sixteenth century, however, saw instead the development of a «calendar of English Protestant thankfulness, watchfulness, and commemoration.»<sup>94</sup> Fateful moments in the recent past, such as the defeat of the Spanish Armada, were «memorialized and commemorated as signs of God's interest in his Protestant nation.»<sup>95</sup> Cressy shows that there was not only an increasing amount of national commemorations taking place annually in this period, but that they also found a receptive audience in large segments of the English population. Although the annual commemorations were defined and initiated by the English political elites, they were also «adopted and internalized by the people at large.» The elites' «manipulation of memory» could not, furthermore, have been successful without «a receptive environment [...]». Cressy concludes that «[t]he myriad local modifications of the common national commemorations point to a restless popular creativity operating in counterpoint with a divided elite.»<sup>96</sup>

Cressy's study of sixteenth-century England suggests a close connection between collective remembrance and religious thanksgiving in early modern Europe. It should be stressed, however, that the religious framing of collective remembrance was not only a Protestant phenomenon. Examples of civic and national commemorations of military victories and moments of deliverance are

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<sup>92</sup> Sherlock 2010: 40.

<sup>93</sup> Sherlock 2010: 40.

<sup>94</sup> Cressy 2004: xii.

<sup>95</sup> Cressy 2004: xiii.

<sup>96</sup> Cressy 1994: 71.

also found in abundance in the Catholic states of southern and central Europe. According to Johannes Feichtinger, Latin Christendom inherited an early medieval Byzantine tradition of Marian devotion that focused on the role of Mary as a helper of Christians («Hilfe der Christen/ *auxilium Christianorum*») and victorious general («siegreiche Heerführerin»). In the era of the Counter-Reformation, the cult of Mary was directed interchangeably against Protestant heretics and Ottoman invaders, and military victories against both enemies were commemorated with the institution of new Marian feasts, annual processions, the erection of victory columns and the building or renovation of votive churches.<sup>97</sup>

The history of centennial commemoration is another case in point, and one that is especially relevant in our context. In contrast to the modernist assertion that the centenary was invented some time in the course of the nineteenth century, historians of early modern Europe have amply documented that centenaries have in fact existed for centuries.<sup>98</sup> In the article «Das historische Jubiläum. Zur Geschichtlichkeit einer Zeitkonstruktion» (2003), historian Winfried Müller traces the origins of the practice of centennial commemoration back to the Lutheran universities in Germany in the second half of the sixteenth century. I shall return to the history of the genesis and development of the centenary in early modern Europe in more detail later on (see chapter 2), here it shall suffice to describe Müller's argument in broad terms.<sup>99</sup>

Müller argues that centennial commemoration was a product of the confessional struggles of the post-Reformation era. While it did build on even earlier traditions, the centenary as a form of historical commemoration was first invented by German Lutherans as a way of stabilizing their identity in the face of challenging confessions. Not only had the purification of the liturgical year created a theologically based «Festvakuum» in the Protestant churches, but Protestantism was under a constant pressure to assert and delimit their own faith against competing faiths. The celebration of important moments in the history of the confessional community (Luther's 95 Theses, the Augsburg Confession, the Peace of Augsburg) became a central solution to these challenges.<sup>100</sup> The Evangelical centenaries functioned both as a way of marking the boundaries with confessional adversaries, and as way for the territorial princes to mobilize their subjects and create cohesion in their respective

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<sup>97</sup> Feichtinger 2013.

<sup>98</sup> See for instance Schönstadt 1978; Schönstadt 1982; Lenhammar 1993; Aurelius 1994; Flügel 2005; Cordes 2006.

<sup>99</sup> Müller's article introduces the book Winfried Müller (ed.) *Das Historische Jubiläum. Genese Ordnungsleistung und Inszenierungsgeschichte eines institutionelles Mechanismus* (2004). The book is the product of a workshop organized by a research project of the same title, which is part of the Dresdner Sonderforschungsbereich 537 'Institutionalität und Geschichtlichkeit'.

<sup>100</sup> Müller 2004: 25.

churches. In the century following the first centenary in 1617, there was an intensification of the jubilee culture («Intensivierung der Jubiläumskultur») in Protestant Germany, as new events were celebrated and the frequency of celebration increased. Catholics responded not long after with celebrating historical jubilees of their own: the first recorded instance is the centenary of the Jesuit order in 1640, followed by centenaries celebrating the foundation of convents, bishoprics and universities in the Holy Roman Empire later in the century.<sup>101</sup> According to Müller, historical jubilees generally thrive on competition and draw much of their dynamic from the rivalization of different institutions. He sees the sharp confessional competition in the early modern period between Lutheranism, Catholicism and Calvinism as a key contribution to the emergence of a modern culture of centennial commemoration. The confessional divide in the Holy Roman Empire, writes Müller, spurred on the establishment of competing and parallel memory cultures.<sup>102</sup>

Müller follows the development of the centenary all the way up till our own times. A key moment in his account is the celebration of the first bookprinting jubilee in Leipzig in 1640, which was initiated by the city's printers. With this event, the historical jubilee not only made the first transition from a religious to a profane sphere, but it was also the first time a jubilee was organised by a professional group from the burgher estate, rather than by churches or universities. The printing jubilee in 1640 is thus an exceptionally early example of what Müller sees as the two key characteristics in the evolution of the centenary in the nineteenth century, namely profanation and pluralisation («Profanierung und Pluralisierung»). The Leipzig jubilee was, moreover, an early instance of a centenary with a «patriotic-national» dimension, which was also to become a key aspect of centenaries in the nineteenth century.<sup>103</sup>

Müller goes on to describe out a whole range of developments taking place in the nineteenth century that goes a long way in explaining why this century has come to be regarded by many scholars as the seedbed of novel memory practices. There was indeed a «jubilee boom» in this century, not least due to the fact that democratization led new groups and institutions to arrange jubilees alongside traditional institutions such as the church. Müller points out a number of cultural and political factors that contributed to the expansion of the historical jubilee. One factor, familiar from the accounts of Nora, Gillis and Hobsbawm, were the violent upheavals and the experience of

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<sup>101</sup> Müller 2004: 27-31.

<sup>102</sup> «Zugespitzt formuliert: Die im alten Reich gegebene konfessionelle Spaltung spornte die Etablierung konkurrierender und paralleler Erinnerungskulturen in einer Weise an, die, so hat es den Anschein, Deutschland, in Sonderheit die protestantischen Territorien, zur Wiege der modernen Jubiläumskultur hat werden lassen.» Müller 2004: 59.

<sup>103</sup> Müller 2004: 32-35.

accelerating change in the nineteenth century, which led both conservative and revolutionary political movements to reach back to the past as a source of legitimacy. Another factor was what Müller calls the intensification of the experience and perception of time («Intensivierung von Zeiterfahrung und -wahrnehmung»)<sup>104</sup> The same century also saw a diversification of venues and commemorative practices, as historical jubilees were increasingly celebrated with processions, speeches and mass rallies in streets and squares, and became integrated in a modern consumer culture.<sup>105</sup>

Judging by Winfried Müller's account, there were thus significant qualitative changes to the ways in which centenaries were celebrated in the nineteenth century. To identify such changes is something different, however, than postulating that the practice of celebrating centenaries itself was invented in the same period.<sup>106</sup> The existence of organized, mediated and politicized memory practices in early modern Europe seems, in other words, to fit uneasily with macrohistorical narratives of memory that interpret such forms of collective remembrance as a symptom or product of the rapid cultural, political, economical and technological changes in modern or postmodern societies, and the sense of rootlessness, nostalgia and yearning for stability and identity that have followed in their wake. Neither does it harmonize well with theories that link the genesis of public commemoration to the emergence of the modern nation-state, or to modern phenomena such as nationalism, new mass media or the advent of history as an academic discipline.

On the basis of the discussion so far, there seems to be good reason to argue that more research on the memory practices of early modern Europe is required. In the words of Pollmann and Kujipers, «a better knowledge of pre-modern memory practices can help modernists rethink some of their explanations for modern and postmodern memory practices and help further to 'provincialize (modern) Europe'».<sup>107</sup> The study of the origins and development of one particular form of public remembrance (the centenary) in one specific historical context (Denmark-Norway) in an extended

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<sup>104</sup> Müller 2004: 50-53.

<sup>105</sup> Müller 2004: 54-55.

<sup>106</sup> The sheer increase of centennial commemoration in the nineteenth century seems to have the effect of making scholars draw unwarranted conclusions about the nature, scope and amount of early modern centenaries. In an article on «The Nature and Purpose of Centennial Celebrations», Terry McDonald and Mélanie Méthot indeed refer to early modern examples, but still choose to make the nineteenth century their point of departure: «Historical records indicate that centennials and sesquicentennials have been celebrated around the world for centuries. Apart from a few isolated incidents, they were usually low-profile, parochial affairs. If we accept the link made by a number of scholars between centennial celebrations and the desire to nurture nationalism, then the belief that they are mainly an American phenomenon of the late 19th century becomes appealing, because of the plethora of such centennials at that time [...]». After a brief review of a few early modern examples, they conclude that «although the organisers of the events thought it was worth remembering the past and celebrating achievements, the scope of the events was rather limited in the 17th and 18th centuries». As we shall see later on, none of these assertions are correct. See McDonald & Méthot 2006: 308, 310.

<sup>107</sup> Pollmann & Kujipers 2013: 23.

period of time (1717-1760) can contribute to our understanding of the history of a memory practice that has now become familiar and important parts of public life in modern societies. Winfried Müller, writing about the state of research in Germany, argues that most existing studies of historical jubilees or centenaries have adopted a «methodical pointillism» («methodischen Pointilismus»), where individual centennial celebrations have been subjected to close scrutiny, while the phenomena of centennial celebration itself has more or less been taken for granted. Müller argues instead for the merit of systematic and diachronic studies of the history of the centenary itself: when it was invented, how it spread, how and when it became a culturally self-evident phenomenon.<sup>108</sup>

One important study in this vein has recently been conducted by historian Wolfgang Flügel, who analyses the institutionalization of Lutheran commemorative culture («Institutionalisierung der lutherischen Gedenkkultur») in Electoral Saxony in the early modern period. Flügel argues that the genesis of large-scale publicly celebrated Lutheran centenaries in Germany in the early seventeenth century is a crucial moment in the history of centennial commemoration, marking the start of a development that culminated in the «jubilee boom» («Jubiläumsboom») in the nineteenth century, which is still ongoing.<sup>109</sup> Flügel's study is a diachronic analysis of all the jubilees celebrated in Electoral Saxony in the period 1617 to 1830, the purpose of which is to explore the historicity of the historical jubilee. Flügel focuses on continuity and change in the staging of the jubilees, their participants and organizers («Trägergruppen») and the changing functionality and meaning of the historical actualization of the Reformation («Reformationsvergegenwärtigung») in the course of three centuries.<sup>110</sup> He divides the history of the historical jubilee in Electoral Saxony into three distinct periods or «jubilee intervals». Due to the boundaries of the present study, we shall here focus on the two first intervals.<sup>111</sup> The first interval (1617-1717) was characterized by the establishment of the Lutheran confessional jubilees in Saxony. The first large centenary in 1617, and the Augsburg Confession centenary that followed it thirteen years later, familiarized the public with a form of celebration that had previously lived its life in the relatively secluded environment of academic elites. The same period also demonstrates the flexibility of the practice of centennial commemoration: like Müller, Flügel points out that Protestants in this period began celebrating other types of events than

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<sup>108</sup> Müller 2004: 7-8; In an article from 1988, Johannes Burkhardt similarly pointed out the lack of studies of the historical development of the Lutheran jubilee culture: «Was fehlt, ist eine historische Theorie des Festcharakters, eine entwicklungsgeschichtliche Strukturierung der reformatorischen Jubiläumskultur selbst.» Burkhardt 1988: 212-213; See also Flügel 2005: 13.

<sup>109</sup> Flügel 2005: 12-13.

<sup>110</sup> Flügel 2005: 13.

<sup>111</sup> Flügel defines the last interval as the years 1817-1830.

those that had to do strictly with pivotal events in the history of Lutherdom, and that historical jubilees crossed the confessional boundary and began to be celebrated by Catholics from 1640. In the period following the Thirty Years War and the end of a long crisis period for Protestantism, Flügel also finds that the jubilees were charged with new meaning as they increasingly became instrumentalized by the territorial princes and used for the representation of princely power. Finally, Flügel argues that the period saw a transition from theological models of conceptualizing time, based on the immanent end of the world, to a more modern view of time as linear and unlimited. This enabled the expansion of the jubilees' temporal horizons of expectation, a development that continued in the course of the next century.<sup>112</sup>

In the second jubilee interval (1717-1817), Flügel identifies a continuation of the now-established tradition of centennial commemoration, a further intensification of Protestant jubilee culture and a widening of the «jubilee canon» («Jubiläumskanon»). At the same time, political circumstances particular to Electoral Saxony meant that the celebration of centenaries could no longer be taken for granted: on the one hand, the conversion of the Electors to Catholicism meant that they no longer had any interest in commemorating the Reformation while, on the other hand, the celebration of the centenaries in the churches depended on princely approval. Consequently, every centenary in this period had to be negotiated in this context of confessional conflicts of interest. One consequence of the royal dynasty's conversion was that new groups and institutions became initiators of jubilees in the period, such as the Saxon Lutheran clergy or the Corpus Evangelicorum. The Elector Frederick Augustus I participated in the planning and organization of jubilees in his reign, but solely for strategic political reasons. Frederick's successor Frederick August II, also a Roman Catholic, was not interested in the Protestant jubilees at all, and the initiative for celebrating jubilees consequently came increasingly from below, from local superintendents and ministers. The venue of the jubilees also gradually changed, from the inside of the churches to the streets and squares of the towns. Parallell with this development was the rise of new forms of representation and staging originally stemming from the festival culture of baroque courts, such as illuminations and fireworks. Finally, the temporal horizon of the jubilees became increasingly positive and oriented towards a remote future. This was in part stimulated by the accumulated experience of two hundred years of Lutheran history and the parallel history of Protestant centennial commemoration. Many observers anticipated the renewed celebration of centenaries after the passing of yet another century, a prediction underpinned by the continuing survival of Lutheranism

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<sup>112</sup> Flügel 2005: 123-124.



and the absence of any direct threats. In part, writes Flügel, this development was also stimulated by the growing influence of the idea of progress in the eighteenth century, which conceptualized the future as open-ended and infinite.<sup>113</sup>

### Centenaries in early modern Denmark-Norway

The centenaries celebrated in Denmark-Norway in the early modern period have not yet been the subject of such a comprehensive study. This does not mean that these events have been completely ignored by scholars. There are in fact several studies both of and older and a more recent extraction, all of which have been most useful for my own work. My point is rather that the jubilees have yet to be the subject of a study in which the practice of centennial commemoration itself is the object of research. Most existing works have either attempted to give a more or less thorough account of the celebration of one particular centenary, or they have focused on one specific aspect of one or a few of the centenaries.

The oldest studies of the Danish-Norwegian centenaries are accounts of individual jubilees, giving a general presentation of their planning and execution. The first Reformation jubilee in 1617 has received the most extensive treatment in this respect: Bjørn Kornerup published a lengthy article about the jubilee in the 1930s, and later wrote a chapter on the event in the second volume of his biography of the bishop of Zealand, Hans Poulsen Resen.<sup>114</sup> Kornerup's two accounts are both primarily focused on the celebrations in Copenhagen, although the jubilee was in fact celebrated in both Denmark and Norway. The limited focus is probably partly due to Kornerup's focus on Resen, but it might also be a consequence of the limited amount of source material that has survived from this jubilee. Kornerup does, however, consider the centenary in 1617 in its European context and relates it to the celebrations that took place in Electoral Saxony and other German states at the same time. Kornerup's analysis is still the authoritative account of this jubilee: later accounts seem to be based primarily on his study of the primary sources.<sup>115</sup>

The same can be said about historian Hans Olrik's article (1890) about the Reformation bicentenary in 1717, which remains the only existing study of this event. Olrik has written an informative account of the planning and celebrations in Copenhagen, as well as a brief overview of most of the texts published for the jubilee.<sup>116</sup> Like Kornerup, Olrik concentrates primarily on the

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<sup>113</sup> Flügel 2005: 214-216.

<sup>114</sup> The Resen biography was published posthumously. Kornerup 1936-1938; Kornerup 1968: 146-171.

<sup>115</sup> For instance in Scocozza 1987: 126-128.; Rian 2014a: 373-375.

<sup>116</sup> Olrik has not, however, used archival sources. Olrik 1890.

celebrations in the capital city of Copenhagen. The reasons for the narrow focus might well be the same in this case, namely that there appear to be few sources to describe what took place elsewhere. He does relate the bicentenary in 1717 to the first Reformation in 1617, but does not discuss how it relates to the continuing practice of centennial commemoration later in the eighteenth century.

The church historian J. Oskar Andersen studied the planning and execution of the Reformation bicentenary in 1736 in an article from 1935. The stated purpose of Andersen's article was to use the example of this jubilee to inspire renewal in the Danish church as the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Danish Reformation approached. The ambition is reflected in Andersen's long introductory discussion where he seeks to demonstrate the validity of the classical sentence, «Historia Magistræ Vitæ». Due to this perspective, Andersen is therefore particularly concerned with demonstrating how the Reformation bicentenary in 1736 was accompanied by new church legislation that aimed at improving the state of the Danish church. Andersen's article gives a relatively thorough account of the government's preparations for the bicentenary and of the celebrations taking place in Copenhagen. As was the case with Kornerup and Olrik, Andersen does not consider the bicentenary in 1736 in light of or in connection with the other centenaries celebrated in Denmark-Norway in the early modern period. The relevant context for Andersen is the still living tradition of centenaries commemorating the Danish Reformation (1736-1836-1936), rather than the early modern practice of celebrating centenaries for all sorts of important events in the history of the kingdoms (1617-1717-1736-1749-1760).<sup>117</sup>

In later years the Danish-Norwegian centenaries in the eighteenth century have been the subject of a handful of more specialized studies, focusing on specific aspects of one or two of the jubilees. Art historian Birgitte Bøggild-Johannsen studied the dynastic tercentenary in 1749 and the centenary of the introduction of absolutism in 1760 in an article (1985) on royal festival culture in the reign of Frederick V. She considers the jubilees as part of a programme of glorification of kingship common to most states in early modern Europe and argues that the reign of Frederik V represented a zenith in this respect, with a relatively large number of royal celebrations. Bøggild-Johannsen's analysis of the centenaries focuses on the architectural composition of, and the symbolic programmes on, the temporary decorations in the city of Copenhagen.<sup>118</sup> The same two centenaries were treated from a similar perspective in a museum exhibit at *The Danish Museum of Decorative Art* in Copenhagen in 1999. The exhibit commemorated the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the city

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<sup>117</sup> Andersen 1935

<sup>118</sup> Johannsen 1985.

quarter *Frederiksstaden*, the construction of which commenced during the tercentenary in 1749. The exhibit contextualized the jubilees in 1749 and 1760 as part of a «cult of royalty» that «found expressions on all major official occasions.»<sup>119</sup>

In an article from 2000, historian Lars N. Henningsen considers the jubilees in 1749 and 1760 as «state patriotic festivals» and as an «apex of the Danish absolute monarchy's education of its citizens.»<sup>120</sup> For Henningsen, the point of departure is the strong loyalty to the Oldenburg monarchs exhibited by the inhabitants of Schleswig during the political turmoil in the mid-nineteenth century, and his main question is how this loyalty had been inculcated in the population during the preceding century. Henningsen finds one central part of the answer in the sustained celebration of and thanksgiving for the monarchy that took place in the churches of Schleswig throughout the century. Every Sunday the population prayed for the royal family, and on special occasions (royal birthdays, baptisms, funerals, anointments), special church prayers were read out in the churches. In many cases, the citizenry participated with processions in the streets, illuminations and parties. Such celebrations, argue Henningsen, made the population familiar with the king as the unifying symbol of the state. Henningsen treats the jubilees in 1749 and 1760 as particularly ostentatious and elaborate instances of the political education that went on throughout the eighteenth century.

The existing research on these jubilees has so far not examined centennial commemoration as a phenomenon in its own right. In few of the existing studies is there any reference to the centenaries being instances of a novel practice that had only recently emerged in Protestant Europe. Neither has the earlier studies considered the Danish-Norwegian jubilees together, as part of the same phenomenon. The studies focusing on the later centenaries (1749, 1760) do not connect them with earlier Reformation jubilees and, conversely, the studies of the Reformation jubilees (1617, 1717, 1736) do not take into account that these events were emulated later in the century, only to commemorate different categories of events. One important exception must be mentioned in this regard: in a recent article (2013), Birgitte Bøggild-Johannsen analyzes two of the Danish-Norwegian centenaries (in 1749 and 1760) as «ritual re-enactments» of two late medieval or early modern rituals of state. Although Bøggild Johannsen is thus primarily interested in the two last centenaries celebrated in the eighteenth century, she does include a discussion of the earlier jubilees and argues that they should be seen as «precedents or even paradigms» of the later events.<sup>121</sup> Apart from this, the centenaries in Denmark-Norway have yet to be explored from a long-term diachronic perspective

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<sup>119</sup> Erichsen (ed.) 1999: 133.

<sup>120</sup> Henningsen 2000: 24.

<sup>121</sup> Johannsen 2013: 206-213.

that follows the development of the concept and practices of centennial commemoration. This thesis aims to fill this gap in the research.

A second perspective that has not yet been investigated is a joint Dano-Norwegian perspective: the fact that the centenaries were celebrated at the same time and for the same reasons in both kingdoms, Denmark and Norway, is hardly mentioned, let alone reflected upon. Among the Danish scholars who have written about the jubilees, there has been a tendency to focus solely on the celebrations in Denmark (or Schleswig), and particularly the celebrations in the capital city of Copenhagen. For Øystein Idsø Viken, the only Norwegian scholar that has studied any of the sources from these events, the sermons delivered in Norway are the main point of interest. He does analyse the official texts that were fashioned in Copenhagen, but not the deliberations that preceded them.<sup>122</sup> What disappears from sight by methodologically separating the two largest parts of the Oldenburg monarchy is, I would argue, is the government's deliberate attempts at creating a shared history for the two kingdoms. Norwegian historian Øystein Rian has noted the centenaries' general tendency to suppress or ignore the history of the kingdom of Norway, but he has not studied in detail how this was carried out.<sup>123</sup> In studying the government's deliberations, as well as how the centenaries were celebrated in both kingdoms, this thesis throws light on the royal government's attitudes to the Norwegian past.

Finally, as I have mentioned earlier, there are few studies that have considered the most substantial category of sources in purely quantitative terms, namely the jubilee sermons. Consequently, little is still known about the texts that were addressed to the majority of the population, the rural commoners. Øystein Idsø Viken's doctoral thesis is an important exception in this respect too, but there is still a large amount of jubilee sermons that have not yet been studied.

## Sources and delimitations

From the outset, my ambition has been to study how *all four* of the centenaries in the eighteenth century were celebrated in *all parts of both* kingdoms, Denmark and Norway. This preliminary delimitation excluded the other territories ruled by the Oldenburg kings where the jubilees were also celebrated, namely the German Duchies and Iceland. The exclusion of these areas has primarily been motivated by practical reasons. The Oldenburg state was a conglomerate state, the parts of which

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<sup>122</sup> Viken 2014; A few jubilee sermons are also analyzed in Hagesæther 1973, from a homiletical perspective.

<sup>123</sup> See Rian 2014a: 444-447.

were united in the person of the absolute monarch (who was also duke in Schleswig and Holstein). While there are therefore no inherent reasons why one should exclude the Duchies or Iceland from a study of a phenomenon that took place in all territories of the Oldenburg king, I have found that it would be too time-consuming to incorporate these areas in the study.<sup>124</sup>

Further delimitations have followed in the course of the working process. My reconstruction of the planning, organization and execution of the jubilees is chiefly based on archival sources from the Regional State Archives in Bergen, Oslo and Trondheim (Norway) and the Danish National Archives in Copenhagen (Denmark). In addition, I have consulted the Copenhagen City Archives. Consequently, I have been able to uncover a great deal of sources about the celebrations in Copenhagen, in the diocese of Zealand in Denmark, and in three of four Norwegian dioceses (Trondheim, Akershus, Bergen). Although fairly large areas of the Oldenburg conglomerate state have thus been covered, there are still some blank spots on the map. Apart from the Duchies and the overseas territories, the most glaring omission is the dioceses on the Danish island of Jutland, the celebrations in which I have very little specific information other than what was mentioned in printed accounts and newspapers. This *de facto* delimitation of the area of study is in part a matter of limited time and resources. After having collected archival sources from the areas mentioned, however, it also became clear to me that these texts were more than sufficient to answer the research questions of the study.

I have tried to unearth all manuscripts and printed publications that were written in connection with the four centenaries. The printed material predominantly consists of sermons, poems and speeches, but I have also found some examples of texts from other genres (songs, fictional dialogues, genealogies, short historical works). In addition, I have used microfilm copies of domestic newspapers and periodicals from the period 1717 to 1760 to find what they wrote about the events. The majority of these sources are kept in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, the National Library in Oslo, the Special Collections at the University Library in Trondheim and the Department of Special Collections at the University Library in Bergen. I have also studied German-language newspapers and periodicals to find out how the events were reported abroad. I have found all of the foreign sources in digitalized format either on Google Books or in the digital collections of German university libraries.

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<sup>124</sup> As previously mentioned, the celebrations in Schleswig of the jubilees in 1749 and 1760 have been studied by Lars N. Henningsen in Henningsen 2000.

The amount of sermons is very unevenly distributed among the four jubilees. I have found only four printed sermons from the 1717 centenary, all of which were written by the same author and bound together in one volume.<sup>125</sup> I have found only one printed sermon from the centenary in 1736.<sup>126</sup> In 1749, 38 sermons were published, exactly half of them delivered in Norway and half in Denmark. In 1760, the number shrinks again to eleven, five from Norway and six from Denmark. The total amount, however, is evened out somewhat if we include manuscript sources. These are found in various locations. I have found a few sermon manuscripts and handwritten speeches in the Royal library in Copenhagen and the Special Collections at the University Library in Trondheim. The Regional State Archives in Oslo has a collection of thirty-nine sermon manuscripts from the Reformation centenary in 1736 from Akershus diocese.<sup>127</sup> Two similar collections of sermons from Zealand from the centenaries in 1749 and 1760 have survived in the Zealand county archive.<sup>128</sup> If we add the surviving sermon manuscripts, the total amounts of sermons from the individual jubilees look like this: 1717: 4, 1736: 41, 1749: 95, 1760: 86. In total, it appears that the greatest amount of sermons have survived from the tercentenary in 1749, followed by the centenary in 1760. Thanks to the collection of sermon manuscripts in Oslo, the bicentenary in 1736 is third on the list, followed by the bicentenary in 1717. The varying amount of sources from each jubilee has had consequences for the design of the study. The relative scarcity of printed and manuscript sermons from the first event has led me to concentrate primarily on the three jubilees that produced the most substantial amounts of sermons, namely the jubilees in 1736, 1749 and 1760. I shall therefore treat each of these events in detail in their own separate chapters. The first jubilee, on the other hand, will receive a shorter treatment in chapter two, where it is integrated in a discussion of the history of Protestant commemoration in Europe and in Denmark-Norway.

Finally, a few words should be mentioned about those aspects of the centenaries that I have *not* included in the thesis. The most important omission is that I have not studied the academic celebrations that took place at the University of Copenhagen. The academic programmes consisted mainly of doctoral promotions and Latin orations about topics related to the objects of celebration. Although these parts of the centenaries could have been relevant to include in the study, including as they did the participation of the intellectual and political elites of the kingdoms, I have excluded

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<sup>125</sup> Trojel 1718

<sup>126</sup> Hagerup 1736

<sup>127</sup> Statsarkivet i Oslo. (SAK) Oslo Bispedømme. Ministerielle forretninger. Prekensamlinger 1717-1938. Prekener ved Reformasjonsjubileet 30.10.1733 [the date is wrong, correct year is 1736].

<sup>128</sup> Landsarkivet for Sjælland (LAS) EA-001. D1-67. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel og ordinationsprædikener. 1749. LAS. EA-001. D1-69. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel-og ordinationsprædikener. 1760.

them from the analysis, for two reasons. The first has to do with my own research interests. The Latin orations at the University were directed at a select audience of higher officials, university academics, foreign ambassadors and the royal family. I am primarily interested, however, in the information that was broadcast to the general population through the mass media of the period, from the pulpits, in the newspapers and periodicals, and in the street and plazas of the towns. The second reason is my lack of command of Latin. Although I have managed to interpret and translate shorter portions of Latin text where it has been necessary, I have unfortunately not been able to read the much longer orations delivered as part of the academic celebrations. I can therefore only encourage future researchers with the required competency in Latin to examine the fairly substantial corpus of Latin jubilee texts.

### The structure of the study

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter two describes the genesis of the centenary in early modern Europe and its subsequent development in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The chapter starts out with an account of the conditions that led to the emergence of this novel form of historical commemoration in the second half of the sixteenth century. The next important stage in the history of centennial commemoration was the celebration of the great Reformation centenary in 1617, which became the model for later jubilees celebrated in Germany and elsewhere. In the wake of this large-scale event, centenaries were celebrated with greater intensity in Northern Europe, and to commemorate a greater variety of events. Although others have written parts of this history before, it will be briefly recounted in this chapter to provide the immediate historical context for the emergence of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway. The bulk of the chapter, however, is dedicated to an account of the introduction and initial development of this specific form of commemoration in the kingdoms. Particular attention will be paid to the Reformation bicentenary in 1717, which was the event that revived the practice of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway after a hiatus of one hundred years.

The third chapter is dedicated to an analysis of the annual commemorations that were celebrated in the churches of Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. These *thanksgiving days* or *thanksgiving and prayer days* are relevant to consider in the context of centennial commemoration for several reasons. Most importantly, they were very similar in form to the church services that took

place during the jubilees and had the same basic rationale, namely to give thanks to God for his blessings towards the kingdoms. For this reason, I will argue, they played a key part in accustoming the population to the idea of commemorating significant moments in the past. No less important was the role they played in establishing and fixing stable patterns of historical interpretation. When the clergy delivered their jubilee sermons, they could therefore build on ideas and motives already familiar to their congregations.

Chapter four presents the primary media of centennial commemoration in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway. The chapter focuses on four media in particular: commemorative medals, sermons, illuminations and newspapers. The primary purpose of the chapter is first of all to describe the characteristics of each of these media, and the circumstances surrounding their production. I will use primary sources such as correspondence, account books and eyewitness accounts to find out more about the circumstances surrounding their production and use. In addition, the chapter will also establish the degree of control the absolute monarchy had on various aspects of public commemoration, and the extent to which the government attempted or managed to orchestrate the celebration of the jubilees.

Chapters five, six and seven are dedicated to the detailed analysis of three individual centenaries: the bicentenary of the Danish Reformation (1736), the tercentenary of the Oldenburg dynasty (1749) and the centenary of the introduction of absolutism (1760). The three chapters have a similar structure. After introducing each chapter with a general description of the situation in the kingdoms at the time the centenary was celebrated, I proceed with analysing the preparatory phase. In this section, I try to establish the purpose of the jubilee, as envisioned by king and government, and how these intentions were expressed in the instructions and texts that were distributed to lower officials. After this, I will treat the actual realization of the jubilees. This involves an analysis of how clergymen and other writers or public speakers discussed the topic at hand. In this section I identify some key questions and recurring motives in these texts, and relate them to the message in the prescriptive texts issued by the government. In the ninth and last chapter, I will summarize my findings and draw some general conclusions.



## Chapter 2: The genesis of centennial commemoration: the Protestant jubilee

The purpose of the following chapter is first of all to give an account of the genesis and historical development of centennial commemoration in early modern Europe. As will become clear, the idea of a «Jubel-fest» or *jubilee* as a specific form of celebration did not originate in Denmark-Norway. The direct antecedent of the Danish jubilees in the eighteenth century and subsequent centennial commemorations was the great Reformation jubilee in 1617 that celebrated Luther's publication of the Ninety Five Theses on 31 October 1517. This centenary was celebrated in most of the Protestant states in the Holy Roman Empire, as well as in Denmark-Norway, on the eve of the Thirty Years War. Although the Reformation jubilee in 1617 in many ways represented an innovative form of celebration, it derived its name and some of its features from older traditions, most notably the Jewish jubilees described in the Old Testament and the Roman jubilees inaugurated by pope Bonifacius VIII in 1300. As we shall see, the most important innovation of the Protestant jubilee was the incorporation of a historical dimension, specifically the idea that one should celebrate a past event after the passage of a specific number of years. After the first great Reformation centenary, the practice of celebrating historical events with religious ceremonies and academic festivities rapidly caught on in the Protestant territories of Europe, and the concept of the jubilee gradually evolved in new ways. In what follows, I shall attempt to place the centenaries celebrated in Denmark-Norway in this broader context of this European history of commemoration. This involves looking into how the Danish government was influenced by centennial celebrations in other Lutheran countries, and examining how imported commemorative practices were adapted to and transformed in the Danish-Norwegian context.

### The genesis of the Protestant jubilee: the first Reformation centenary (1617) and its antecedents

The scriptural basis for celebrating a *jubilee* is found in the Old Testament, in Leviticus 25, where God speaks to Moses from Mount Sinai and prescribes that every 50 years should be a holy Year:

And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family (Leviticus 25:10)

The Holy Year was based on an analogy with the Sabbath; just as the seventh day of each week was a Sabbath day, every seventh year was a Sabbath year. After a cycle of seven Sabbath years (49 years) followed a jubilee year.<sup>129</sup> The Old Testament jubilee was a year of land redistribution and restoration of social and economic equilibrium: God demanded that the Jews return all land to its original owners, lay down their work, let workers find new employers, free slaves and remit all debt. According to theologian John Bergsma, the jubilee as it was prescribed in Leviticus 25 was originally a law code with origins in early Israelite tribal society, which allowed indentured servants «to return to their clan and familial inheritance.»<sup>130</sup> In the course of Israel's history the jubilee fell out of practice as law as changing socio-economic and political conditions rendered it irrelevant. By the time of the post-exilic period, however, the jubilee legislation was reinterpreted typologically as an eschatological event. The indentured servants of Leviticus 25 was seen as a symbol of the people of Israel, «who had fallen into debt with the LORD by failing to observe the law, and so had become enslaved to various foreign powers and alienated from their ancestral land.»<sup>131</sup> The jubilee thus remained part of the Jewish religious tradition, reinterpreted as a time of liberation for the Jewish people.

In the Middle Ages, the papacy introduced the concept of the *anno santo*, or Holy Year. The Church was of course familiar with the jubilee legislation in Leviticus 25, but the Roman jubilee inaugurated by pope Bonifacius VIII in 1300 nonetheless represented a significant departure from the meaning of the original Jewish jubilees.<sup>132</sup> The Roman jubilee was essentially a new form of pilgrimage, in which pilgrims who travelled to Rome in the course of a prescribed period were granted plenary indulgence by the pope.<sup>133</sup> The inauguration of the jubilee rested on the pope's power to sacralize time, enabling him to mark the year 1300 itself as holy.<sup>134</sup> The immediate background of the jubilee seems to have a surge of popular anticipation and enthusiasm in connection with the approaching new century, which led to an increase of pilgrims travelling to

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<sup>129</sup> Müller 1998: 80-81.

<sup>130</sup> Bergsma 2007: 295.

<sup>131</sup> Bergsma 2007: 299.

<sup>132</sup> According to Gary Dickson, the jubilee was inspired by the New Testament rather than the Old: «[...] the Roman Jubilee was Christocentric, focused upon the Year of the Lord (A.D.) and the new Christian century. The inspiration of the New Testament, not the Old, shaped the first papal Holy Year. The Hebraic term 'Jubilee' does not even appear in Boniface VIII bull proclaiming the *anno santo*». Dickson 1999: 285.

<sup>133</sup> Dickson 1999: 285.

<sup>134</sup> Dickson 1999: 281.

Rome in expectation of full indulgences from the Pope, who legitimated this popular movement by inaugurating the jubilee.<sup>135</sup> Dickson describes the jubilees as «one of the greatest papally-instigated, popular revivals in the Middle Ages» and claims that with it, its creator, pope Bonifacius, «founded a religious institution remarkable for its vigour and longevity».<sup>136</sup> The Roman jubilees became a permanent fixture of late medieval Christianity and remained an important celebration throughout the early modern period. In 1470, pope Paul II increased the frequency of the jubilees to a 25-year cycle, instead of the original centennial cycle, to ensure that every generation of Christians could experience at least one jubilee in their lifetime.<sup>137</sup>

As historian Winfried Müller points out, the medieval Holy Year was not an *historical* jubilee in the sense that we are familiar with today, although the name and the rhythm of a specific time-interval provided a basic pattern that was copied by the later Protestant jubilees.<sup>138</sup> The development towards the centenary as a form of historical commemoration involved a transition in the concept of the jubilee, from the conveying of salvation («heilsvermittelnden Aspekten») to the remembrance of historical events, or from salvation history to worldly history. According to Müller, the universities of late medieval and early modern Europe played a key role in this development.<sup>139</sup> As early as 1492, the rector of the University of Erfurt reflected on the fact that the institution had been founded a hundred years before. In Reformed Basel (in 1560) and Catholic Ingolstadt (in 1562) as well, there were clear signs of conscious reflection on the hundredth anniversary of the institutions. These anniversaries were not, however, celebrated officially in any way, since the religious connotations of the jubilee year prevented a profane secular celebration from taking place in a Catholic context.<sup>140</sup> For the same reason, it was the Protestant Universities of Tübingen, Heidelberg and Wittenberg that first celebrated their anniversaries with festivities. These university jubilees were fashioned in direct opposition to the Catholic Church, in an effort to disassociate the concept of the jubilee from the papal Holy Year. In their speeches delivered at these events, the Protestant theologians legitimized their own celebrations by constructing a sharp dichotomy between the papal jubilee year, which they

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<sup>135</sup> Dickson 1999: 292.

<sup>136</sup> Dickson 1999: 280, 307.

<sup>137</sup> Zika 2003: 206, 208; Mitterauer 1997: 51.

<sup>138</sup> Müller 1998:81; See also Michael Mitterauer: «Von der Grundkonzeption des Jubeljahrs her gesehen als einer heiligen Zeit, innerhalb derer ein vollkommener Ablass gewonnen werden kann, ergibt sich keinerlei Bezug zu spezifischen Formen des historischen Gedenkens.» Mitterauer 1997: 51.

<sup>139</sup> Müller 1998: 82..

<sup>140</sup> In the case of Basel, there must be another explanation why the centenary was not celebrated. Müller speculates that the reason might be a lack of imagination or of the necessary «Theoriepotential». Müller 2004: 22.

claimed were designed simply to earn more money from indulgences, and the Protestant jubilees, which they described as true Christian celebrations.<sup>141</sup>

The Protestant jubilee introduced a completely novel element that had been part of neither the Jewish jubilee nor the Roman jubilee: the celebration of a past event after the passage of a specific amount of time. Michael Mitterauer claims that this innovation was occasioned by key transitions in the historical and temporal consciousness («Zeit und Geschichts-bewußtseins») of early modern Europeans. The most significant of these changes, argues Mitterauer, was the growing importance of the decimal system after the adaptation of the so-called Arabic numerals, which included the number zero. The practice of calculation using the decimal system gave the numbers 10 and 100 a new significance in different areas of life, and gradually came to affect also the calculation of time: «100 Jahre al seine Einheit zu fassen», writes Mitterauer, «ist eine Vorstellung, die sich erst in der Neuzeit durchsetzte».<sup>142</sup> In mid-sixteenth century Germany, the old Latin words «saeculum» and «centuria» acquired the new meaning of referring to a period of 100 years, while in the mid-seventeenth century, the word «Jahrhundert» appeared for the first time in German. The concept of the century as a unit of time also influenced the historical consciousness of early modern Europeans. A decisive moment in this development was the publication in 1559 of the so-called *Magdeburg Centuries*, a Protestant work of ecclesiastical history that was the first history ever to use the century as its central principle of periodization.<sup>143</sup> The broad contemporary impact of the *Magdeburg Centuries* had the dual effect of promoting the century as a historical principle of periodization, and strengthening the cultural importance attributed to the century as a particularly significant unit of time. According to Mitterauer, the historical anniversary («Anniversarium») has much older roots than the historical jubilee («Jubiläum»). The emergence of an historical consciousness that placed a higher premium on the century as a unit of time, however, was a necessary prerequisite for a form of commemoration based on the passage of centuries, analogous to the annually recurring celebration of a specific date.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Müller 1998: 82-82; Müller 2004: 23.

<sup>142</sup> Mitterauer 1997: 64.

<sup>143</sup> This principle of periodization did not have any sacred meaning for the historians that produced the work. According to their leader, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, it was solely adopted for practical reasons, since it allowed the presentation of different thematical areas in regularly divided units of time. Mitterauer 1997: 65.

<sup>144</sup> Mitterauer 1997: 67; Charles Zika similarly argues that the *Magdeburg Centuries* was «probably critical for the adoption of centennial celebrations as ways of commemorating the past in the seventeenth century.» Zika 2003: 208.

## The Reformation jubilee in 1617

The Protestant jubilee originated in the culture of the German universities in the late sixteenth century, but it did not take long before it reached the international stage of confessional politics. A key moment in the history of centennial commemoration occurred in 1617, with the first centenary of the Protestant Reformation. In a Europe increasingly polarized by the mutual antagonism between Protestants and Counter-Reformation Catholics, the political leaders of the Protestant states of Germany decided to celebrate the centenary of Luther's posting of his 95 Theses in Wittenberg in 1517. The first initiative came from the Calvinist Elector Frederick V of the Rhine Palatinate, who at a meeting in Heilbronn suggested to the fellow members of the Protestant Union that they commemorate this event.<sup>145</sup> According to Charles Zika, one of the immediate motivations behind the initiative was an attempt on the part of the Reformed Protestants to use the commemoration to bridge the gaps and overcome disagreements between Lutherans and Calvinists in the Holy Roman Empire. In this situation, Frederick V attempted to overcome the confessional breach within the Protestant camp by suggesting that the Calvinists and Lutherans celebrate their common roots. He wanted to use the jubilee to stress the Calvinists' claim to equal rights with Lutherans, denied to them by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, and to demonstrate publicly the confessional unity within the Protestant Union.<sup>146</sup> Despite resistance from Lutherans sceptical of the Elector's motives, the Union managed to agree on a common day of commemoration, 2 November 1617. However, it was up to the individual Estate of the Union how they would arrange the concrete celebration of the jubilee.<sup>147</sup>

Almost at the exact same time that the Protestant Union in Heilbronn reached an agreement about the centenary, the Theological Faculty at the University of Wittenberg presented a similar idea to Elector Johann Georg II of Electoral Saxony, asking him for permission to celebrate a jubilee on 31 October in memory of Martin Luther, and also for such a Christian intention to be publicly announced to other congregations. The Elector supported the idea, and ordered the leading churchmen to write a guideline for a celebration in all of Electoral Saxony. The instruction, printed on 12 August 1617, stated that there would be a three-day celebration in all Albertine lands from 31 October to 2 November. Attendance in church on the jubilee days was mandatory, and all work forbidden. The instruction prescribed certain Bible verses for the services, selected for their special relevance to an Orthodox interpretation of the Reformation, and a special prayer written for the

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<sup>145</sup> Zika 2003: 203.

<sup>146</sup> Zika 2003: 204; Schönstadt 1982: 6.

<sup>147</sup> Schönstadt 1986: 7.

occasion. As well as the church services in all congregations in Electoral Saxony, the jubilee would be celebrated in the universities of Leipzig and Wittenberg with disputations, doctoral promotions and orations.

According to Charles Zika, Electoral Saxony used the 1617 commemoration to «bolster and further establish its leadership role as an orthodox Lutheran state among the confessionally diverse Protestant territories.»<sup>148</sup> Although Electoral Saxony had long had a leading position in German Lutheranism, the Habsburg-friendly policies of the Elector had alienated the other Protestant states. The jubilee could therefore be a way of regaining the Elector's position as protector of Lutheranism, without changing the course in foreign policy.<sup>149</sup> The date, Bible verses and prayer for the jubilee in Electoral Saxony were indeed communicated to those Protestant territories that subscribed to the Formula of Concord. Schönstadt has shown in detail how most of the Protestant territories followed either one of the two main proposals. Most of the Estates of the Protestant Union followed the Elector Palatine's proposal and celebrated their jubilee on 2 November, while most of the others followed the Elector of Saxony's instruction and celebrated it in on 31 October. Despite the variations as to how and when the jubilee was celebrated, Schönstadt argues that the decrees of the territorial rulers give a unified impression of the motivation and content of the celebrations:

sie erinnerten an die durch Luthers Thesenveröffentlichung ausgelöste Reformation, dankten ihrem göttlichen Urheber für deren Durchführung vor allem durch das Wirken Luthers und den Schutz des reformatorischen Bekenntnisses und baten um die Erhaltung der in der Reformation erneuert geglaubten Lehre und Kirche.<sup>150</sup>

Despite their differences, moreover, the Protestant leaders also shared an understanding of the jubilee as a countermeasure against the increased militancy of the Catholic states within the empire. This helps to explain why they adopted the terminology of a Catholic holiday. Zika claims that this should be seen as a deliberate act of appropriation, «a strategy on the part of the Protestants to appropriate for themselves the Roman Church's jubilee and adapt it to the liturgies and rituals of evangelical churches and states.»<sup>151</sup>

The Reformation centenary in 1617 was shaped by the political and religious tensions in the Holy Roman Empire and functioned as a way of outwardly demarcating confessional identity against rival states. At the same time, however, the jubilee had the no less important function of rallying the

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<sup>148</sup> Zika 2003: 205.

<sup>149</sup> Flügel 2004: 81-82.

<sup>150</sup> Schönstadt 1982: 20; See also Zika 2003: 222.

<sup>151</sup> Zika 2003: 206.

subjects within the individual Protestant territories to the Lutheran confession. The message of the centenary, writes Charles Zika, «was as much directed to the local population as to the broader imperial political context and the confessional conflicts of theologians». <sup>152</sup> The secular and ecclesiastical authorities used a broad variety of media, notably sermons, prayers, broadsheets and commemorative medals, to convey their interpretations of the Reformation to the general population. In some areas, the authorities even composed plays that «combined burlesque with didacticism», and which were «directed towards a much broader audience». <sup>153</sup> Much of this was aimed specifically at children, who were in some cases were given small jubilee medals as keepsakes or were told to learn the jubilee church prayers by heart. <sup>154</sup>

The authorities invested a great deal of effort and ingenuity in order to reach out to as a broad a part of the population as possible with their message. Despite local variations, writes Charles Zika, the centenary essentially expressed three core themes that can be found throughout the jubilee literature: it presented Luther as a «divine instrument and Reformation hero», it cast the Reformation as a great liberation from papal tyranny and spiritual darkness, and it emphasized the role of the secular authorities in protecting and securing the Reformation in the past, present and future. <sup>155</sup> These were all themes that suited well the aims and ambitions of the secular rulers of Protestant Germany and the preachers and theologians in their territorial churches. The jubilee, writes Zika, stressed obedience and promoted an ideal image of Protestant religious life as «inscribed and formulated by theologians and preachers, and condoned and protected by secular authorities». <sup>156</sup>

The emphasis on obedience and uniformity would also form a central part of the first Reformation centenary as it was devised in the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway, where the staunchly Lutheran Orthodox Zealand bishop Hans Poulsen Resen was the central ideological and practical driving force behind the jubilee. <sup>157</sup> According to bishop Resen's biographer Bjørn Kornerup, it is difficult to establish with certainty whether Resen came up with the idea for a centenary himself, or if he was influenced by similar ideas abroad. Most likely he had received information about the centenary in Electoral Saxony from his friends in Wittenberg, since the celebrations in Denmark closely resembled the celebrations there. <sup>158</sup> The centenary was celebrated in the kingdoms for eight

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<sup>152</sup> Zika 2003: 236.

<sup>153</sup> Zika 2003: 216.

<sup>154</sup> Zika 2003: 216-217, 219.

<sup>155</sup> Zika 2003: 222-233.

<sup>156</sup> Zika 2003: 236.

<sup>157</sup> «[Resen] er Sjælen i Arbejdet for at fremhæve 1617 som et Mindeaar». Kornerup 1936-1938: 37-38.

<sup>158</sup> Kornerup 1936-1938: 38-39; Kornerup 1968: 149-150.

whole days, from 31 October to 7 November 1617. A month before the jubilee, Resen sent out a pastoral letter to the bishops in Denmark and Norway, instructing them to celebrate a thanksgiving day on the two first days of November, to commemorate that «God's pure and unadulterated word has been so mercifully and miraculously preserved in one whole century.»<sup>159</sup> In addition to the pastoral letter, the clergy received a printed booklet containing the prayers and psalms they were to use during the church services.<sup>160</sup>

Apart from the jubilee church services, which took place in all churches in the kingdoms, the Duchies and the overseas territories, the celebrations consisted of an academic programme of celebrations at the University of Copenhagen. At 12 o'clock on the first day, the precise moment Luther had nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg, professor Cort Aslaksson delivered a Latin speech at the University on the history of the Reformation in Denmark. In the afternoon, the professors and students listened to a sermon on the same topic (based on Psalm 66) and sung the *Te Deum*. On 1 October, the main day of the jubilee, the king and the Council of the Realm walked in procession from Copenhagen Castle to Vor Frue church, led by a group of schoolchildren singing psalms. In the church, they all listened to bishop Resen deliver a sermon on Matthew 5, 1-10. The service ended with Resen reading a long prayer that he had composed specially for the occasion, thanking the Lord for having saved the kingdoms from the «papist prison and darkness». After the *Te Deum* had been sung and the king and the noble Council of the Realm had received communion, the procession returned to the castle. Jubilee church services were held in the evening (Revelation 7, 1-13) and on the following day (Matth. 22 1 ff. and Ephes. 5, 15-20), and the programme on the remaining days of the jubilee took place at the University, where the professors delivered speeches on a variety of topics connected with the Protestant Reformation. The jubilee ended on 8 November, with a sermon on Psalm 100 and the *Te Deum*.<sup>161</sup>

As Martin Schwarz Lausten points out, the centenary in 1617 crowned Resen's success in shoring up the perceived threat of both Catholics and Calvinists in Denmark-Norway. In the years before 1617, he had managed to ensure that several clergymen and academicians fired from their positions for holding Calvinist beliefs. A string of new legislation in the first two decades of the seventeenth century made conditions increasingly difficult for Catholics in Denmark. Danish students that had studied in foreign Jesuit schools were barred from church offices and educational

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<sup>159</sup> «at Guds rene og uforfalskede Ord saa naadigt og saa underfuldt var blevet bevaret i et helt saadant Aarhundrede.» Quoted from Kornerup 1936-1938: 43; Kornerup 1968: 153.

<sup>160</sup> Kornerup 1936-1938: 43.

<sup>161</sup> Kornerup 1936-1938: 46-48.



positions from 1604. From 1613 Catholics were not allowed to hold public office and no longer allowed to even reside in Denmark. At the same time, the Danish school system was reformed to prevent parents from sending their children to Catholic institutions of learning abroad. During the jubilee, writes Schwarz Lausten, Resen ensured «through the sermons, prayers, psalms and lectures of the celebration of the Reformation that it was Resen’s own version of orthodox Lutheranism that was the only true variety of Christianity in Denmark».<sup>162</sup> The jubilee was also accompanied by legislation that was designed to secure the religious orthodoxy and moral purity of the kingdoms. King Christian IV saw it as one of his central tasks as monarch to purify his kingdoms from immorality and evil in order to avert the wrath of the Lord—a project expressed clearly in his royal motto, *Regna firmit pietas*, or «piety strengthens the kingdoms».<sup>163</sup> The jubilee year was introduced by a decree on 23 January that prohibited the import of Danish books from abroad, the purpose of which was to stop the spread of errant religious beliefs.<sup>164</sup> Only a few weeks before the first day of the centenary, on 12 October 1617, king Christian IV signed three new decrees: a decree restricting the use of luxurious clothing, a decree against witchcraft and a decree that sharpened punishments against sex outside of marriage («lejermål»)<sup>165</sup> The three decrees were part of a sustained offensive in Christian’s reign against the sinfulness and vice of the population, which the king perceived to be steadily on the increase. They were followed in the years to come by a series of decrees intended to eradicate the immoral behaviour of the subjects and stimulate piety through collective penance.<sup>166</sup>

The jubilee in 1617 was the first large-scale, supra-national centennial commemoration in Protestant Europe. In the decades after this event followed many smaller, local or regional centenaries in the Holy Roman Empire. Due to fear of reprisals from the Emperor and the Catholic Estates, these were relatively subdued in the decades of the Thirty Years War. Still, some German cities and territories commemorated the centenary for the Augsburg confessions in 1630. Other events celebrated in the latter half included the centenary of the Peace of Augsburg (1655), the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation (in Electoral Saxony in 1667) and the centenary for the signing of the Formula of Concord in Halberstadt (1675) and Torgau (1676).<sup>167</sup> Winfried Müller refers to the proliferation of centennial celebrations as an elaboration of the jubilee calendar («Verdichtung des Jubiläumskalenders»). The concentration process shortened the intervals between the jubilees and

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<sup>162</sup> Lausten 2002: 129-130; Amundsen 2005a: 216.

<sup>163</sup> Amundsen 2005a: 213-217.

<sup>164</sup> Kornerup 1936-1938: 53; Rian 2014a: 148.

<sup>165</sup> Scocozza 1987: 130-135; For the decree against sex outside of marriage, see Koefoed 2008: 95-99.

<sup>166</sup> Amundsen 2005a: 213-227; Rian 2014a: 375.

<sup>167</sup> Schönstadt 1982: 60-61; Zika 2003: 201-202.

increased the number of events that were commemorated. Müller identifies two reasons for this development: First, Protestant leaders wanted to maximize the stabilizing and identity-constituting effects of the jubilee. Second, a rhythm based on hundred-year intervals meant that the jubilees became one-time events, at the most. By shortening the intervals between them, it became possible for every generation to celebrate at least one jubilee.<sup>168</sup>

In his study of the institutionalization of Lutheran memorial culture («Gedenkkultur») in Saxony in the early modern period, Wolfgang Flügel argues that the seventeenth century was characterized by the establishment of the Lutheran confessional jubilees in Saxony. The importance of the jubilees in 1617 and 1630 was that they familiarized the public with the Protestant jubilee, which had previously only been celebrated in academic institutions. In 1655, there was a further expansion and consolidation of the practice when Electoral Saxony and other territories in Germany celebrated the centenary of the Augsburg peace. Flügel argues, moreover, that the «flexibility of the jubilee mechanism» (die Flexibilität des Jubiläumsmechanismus) already in the first half of the seventeenth century is evident also in the fact that jubilees began to be celebrated in Protestant areas to mark new types of events, such as professional jubilees, wedding anniversaries and the invention of printing. A second development that occurred after the end of the crisis for Protestantism in 1648 was that the jubilees increasingly became instrumentalized by Lutheran princes and utilized as a form of representation of power.<sup>169</sup>

In Denmark-Norway, the seventeenth century did not see a similar intensification of centennial commemoration. The kingdoms would in fact not celebrate another jubilee before the Reformation bicentenary in 1717. As we shall see, however, a development similar to that described by Flügel occurred also in Denmark-Norway in the wake of this event, in which the frequency of centenaries increased and new categories of historical events became the object of commemoration. It is challenging to give a satisfactory explanation for the long delay in centennial commemoration Denmark-Norway in the seventeenth century. Almost none of the previous studies of the Dano-Norwegian jubilees have attempted to explain this hiatus. Only J.Oskar Andresen speculates briefly why there was no jubilee to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Danish Reformation in 1636. He argues that it might in part have been due to a sense of shame for the poor state of the Danish church at the time, and in part because the centenary in 1617 had been celebrated with much fanfare nineteen years before and also that the local Reformation was perceived as a subordinate and

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<sup>168</sup> Müller 2004: 28.

<sup>169</sup> Flügel 2005: 123-124.

dependent part of a larger movement.<sup>170</sup> I would argue, however, that the celebration of a jubilee in memory of the Danish and Norwegian Reformation in 1636 would have been less self-explanatory than Andersen suggests. In 1636, the kingdom of Sweden was the only country so far that had celebrated the local introduction of the Reformation.<sup>171</sup> Flügel describes the bicentenary of the Reformation in Albertine Saxony in 1739 as the first jubilee celebrating a purely local event in Saxony, as opposed to a foundational event in the history of Lutheranism («ein Gründungsereignis des Lutherthums»), as had been the case with previous jubilees.<sup>172</sup> While a Danish jubilee in 1636 could therefore have been within the realm of possibility, the scarcity of foreign precedents before 1636 indicates that one should not necessarily interpret the absence of a jubilee in that year as a conscious decision. With regards to the other events that were celebrated in Germany in the period (the Augsburg Confession, the Peace of Augsburg, the Formula of Concord and the Book of Concord), the Augsburg Confession stands out as the most directly relevant for Denmark-Norway. As kingdoms independent of the Holy Roman Empire, the Peace of Augsburg was of less direct importance to Denmark-Norway than it was for a German state such as Electoral Saxony. Since Frederik II had expressly forbidden the Book of Concord in his kingdoms, a celebration of the same in the latter half of the seventeenth century would have been out of the question.<sup>173</sup> This leaves only the question of why the kingdoms did not celebrate the Augsburg Confession in 1630. A probable explanation is that the tense political situation at the time, only one year following Denmark's exit from the king's unsuccessful campaign in Germany, was antithetical to a large-scale celebration in a manner similar to the jubilee in 1617. In any case, it is certain that another century would pass before the practice of centennial commemoration would resurface in Denmark-Norway and become a more regular occurrence in the kingdoms. We shall return to this development later in this chapter.

## The Reformation bicentenary in 1717

Hans-Jürgen Schönstadt sees the plethora of official jubilee celebrations in the century following the first centenary as a testimony to the continued strong awareness of the importance of events from

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<sup>170</sup> Andersen 1935: 19-20.

<sup>171</sup> See Aurelius 1994.

<sup>172</sup> Flügel mentions, however, several towns in Germany that had celebrated centenaries in memory of the local Reformation before: Berlin (1639), Braunschweig (1724), Hannover (1633/1733), Osnabrück (1643), Stralsund (1723), Magdeburg and Stargard (1724), Bern (1724), Görlitz (1725) and Güstrow (1733). Flügel 2005: 173-174.

<sup>173</sup> See Lausten 2002: 122.

the first Reformation century. It is therefore hardly surprising, writes Schönstadt, that the first efforts to organize a bicentenary of Luther's 95 theses began already a year before 1717.<sup>174</sup> The organisation of a bicentenary proved to be difficult in practice, however. Harm Cordes argues that the religious situation in the Holy Roman Empire in 1717 had changed so radically in the hundred years that had passed since the previous jubilee that the conditions that had led to a more or less joint celebration in Protestant Germany had now disappeared. Both the Elector Palatine and the Saxon Elector, the ancestors of whom had been the main initiators of the celebrations in 1617, were now Catholic rulers. Calvinism had achieved equal status to Catholicism and Lutheranism within the Holy Roman Empire, which meant that the Calvinist Imperial Estates was now more eager to mark their independence from Lutheranism than celebrating the shared roots of the two confessions. Finally, the Peace of Westphalia and other subsequent religious settlements committed the confessions to mutual restraint and religious tolerance.<sup>175</sup>

According to Cordes, the different planning initiatives for the celebration of the bicentenary reflect the internal divisions in German Protestantism at the time.<sup>176</sup> Despite several efforts to create a joint celebration in all German Protestant territories, such a celebration never materialized. In the end of 1716 and the early months of 1717, various German princes started making independent plans for a bicentennial celebration. In January 1717, king Frederick Wilhelm I of Prussia issued orders for a thanksgiving in his kingdoms on 31 October, after a suggestion to this effect from the consistory in Magdeburg. Duke Christian of Sachsen-Weißenfels tried to convince the consistory in Dresden, over which he had the supervisory authority, that it would be appropriate to celebrate a centenary in Electoral Saxony. The consistory, however, was less than enthusiastic due to the confessional tensions in Electorate at the time. Landgrave Ernst Ludwig of Hessen-Darmstadt brought the idea of a jubilee to the attention of all the Lutheran Imperial Estates in December 1716, when he instructed his envoy to the Reichstag in Regensburg to distribute a proposal for a joint bicentennial celebration. By February 1717, the other Lutheran Estates had agreed to celebrate a Reformation bicentenary, but there was no agreement on how it should be done. Ernst Ludwig tried to make this a uniform and concerted celebration, but Frederick Wilhelm I thwarted his efforts by refusing to change the plans already made for the jubilee in his kingdom. The Prussian monarch was so influential among the Protestant Estates that his refusal prevented any joint efforts. On 8 April, the Estates in Regensburg made a final decision that they would make no common preparations for a

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<sup>174</sup> Schönstadt 1982: 59-61.

<sup>175</sup> Cordes 2006: 22-23.

<sup>176</sup> Cordes 2006: 23.

jubilee but that they approved celebrations in the individual territories.<sup>177</sup> As late as July 1717, Elector Augustus the Strong of Saxony got involved in the preparations as well. His son and successor Frederick Augustus II had secretly converted to Catholicism in 1712 in order to qualify for the Polish crown. Since the conversion was about to be announced to the public, the Elector's support for a jubilee was intended to signify that the religious freedom and rights of his Protestant subjects would be respected in the future. This plan came too late to convince the other Protestant Estates to make plans for joint celebrations. Cordes concludes that the Lutheran Estates made their own plans for a celebration of the jubilee independent of each other, without waiting for the results of the negotiations at Regensburg. The individual territories found material from the centenary in 1617 in the archives and used these as a starting point in the planning for the bicentenary. The negotiations at Regensburg had the effect, however, of giving the individual territories an impulse to celebrate the bicentenary.<sup>178</sup>

### The Danish Reformation bicentenary in 1717

The plans for a bicentenary in Denmark were directly influenced by the discussions in the Holy Roman Empire. The first mention of a jubilee in Denmark came on 2 April 1717 when the bishop of Zealand, Christen Worm, wrote a petition to the Danish Chancery suggesting that a jubilee year could be celebrated like it had been done in the kingdoms a hundred years previous.<sup>179</sup> Worm referred to the other Lutheran territories, where Evangelical universities and congregations were already planning to mark the occasion with thanksgiving and a special holiday.<sup>180</sup> The bishop did not refer to any specific plans, but evidence suggests that the primary influence came from the theologian Ernst Salomon Cyprian, *konstistorialrat* in Gotha.

Cyprian had been instructed by his master Duke Friedrich II of Sachsen-Gotha to make preparations for the celebration of a jubilee in his territories. In late March 1717 Cyprian wrote a preliminary version of the plans that was printed and published in the form of a short booklet titled *Vorläufiger Bericht welcher gestalt das Evangelische Jubel=Fest Anno 1717. in denen Fürstl. Gothaischen Landen*

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<sup>177</sup> Cordes 2006: 22-31.

<sup>178</sup> Cordes 2006: 38.

<sup>179</sup> Hans Olrik's claim that king Frederick IV «took matters into his own hand» and that the preparations for the jubilee started with two royal orders on 12 April is therefore incorrect. Olrik 1890: 3-4.

<sup>180</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No. 101-103. Petition from bishop Worm to the Danish Chancery, 2 April 1717.

*mit Göttlicher Hülffe soll gefeyret werden.*<sup>181</sup> According to Harm Cordes, this text was distributed both in and outside of Sachsen-Gotha, in an attempt to stimulate other territories in the Holy Roman Empire to arrange a jubilee.<sup>182</sup> Carl Axel Aurelius has shown that Cyprian corresponded with the Swedish theologian Erik Benzelius and tried, unsuccessfully, to convince the Swedes to celebrate a jubilee at the same time as the other Lutheran territories. In this correspondence, Cyprian informed Benzelius that agreements had been reached with the Evangelical churches in England, Bohemia, as well as the university and court in Copenhagen.<sup>183</sup> In the *Vorläuffiger Bericht*, Cyprian mentioned a few places where there already plans for a celebration. Surprisingly, Denmark was among these examples: «Die Herren Dähnen, welche sich vor 100. Jahren, auf des glorwürdigen Königs Christiani IV. Anordnung, gar eifrig erwiesen, werden, wie mich der hochgelahrte Herr Severin Lintripius berichtet, diesmahl nicht minder alles vorkehren, was zum Preiß Göttlicher Barmherzigkeit gedeyen kan.»<sup>184</sup> Cyprian's correspondent Søren Lintrup was Professor of Theology at the University of Copenhagen. Since Cyprian's text was dated 20 March 1717, it follows that Lintrup must have discussed the «plans» for a jubilee in Denmark with his German colleague even earlier that year. In other words, the upcoming Danish jubilee was announced to a learned public in Germany at least a month before the idea had even been presented to king Frederick IV.

Added to Worm's letter was three additional documents: a description of how the jubilee had been celebrated in Denmark in 1617 (Lit: A), a proposal for how it could be celebrated this time around (Lit: B) and a list of six Bible verses, from which the king could select appropriate verses for a proposed thanksgiving and prayer day on 5 November.<sup>185</sup> Compared to most of the German states, with the exception of Prussia, the Danish government started making concrete plans very early in the year. The reason for this was the geographical distances between the Danish monarch's territories: in a letter to a high-ranking member of the royal administration dated 2 April, bishop Worm stressed that decisions concerning the jubilee had to be made quickly, as the ships to Iceland and the Faroe Islands were leaving shortly.<sup>186</sup>

As Cordes and Flügel points out, many Lutheran territories searched their archives for information about the celebrations in 1617 and used these as a basis when planning the bicentenary

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<sup>181</sup> Cyprian 1717.

<sup>182</sup> Cordes 2006:30.

<sup>183</sup> Sweden never celebrated a jubilee in memory of Luther in 1717, but instead chose to celebrate a bicentenary for the Swedish Reformation in 1721. Aurelius 1994: 80.

<sup>184</sup> Cyprian 1717.

<sup>185</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. No.101-103. Petition from bishop Worm to the Danish Chancery, 2 April 1717.

<sup>186</sup> DRA. DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. Letter from bishop Worm to unnamed recipient, 2 April 1717.

in 1717.<sup>187</sup> This was also the case in Denmark-Norway. Bishop Worm wrote a two-page description of what had been done a hundred years before, on which he closely based his own suggestion. Like in 1617, the bicentenary should start on 31 October, the day Luther had posted his 95 theses, and last for 8 full days. The plan had to be adjusted to fit different weekdays: in 1617, the jubilee had started on a Friday, while it would start on a Sunday in 1717. Therefore, the sermons on the first and last day of the bicentenary would be based on the verse prescribed by the Church Ritual, instead of a specially selected verse as had been done in 1617. Otherwise, the structure of the two jubilees was quite similar. The Privy Council must have approved of using the first centenary as a model, for it set up a document with two columns, the first of which listed the events in 1617, the second Worm's proposal for the coming bicentenary.<sup>188</sup> The Privy Council endorsed Worm's proposal and recommended that the king set down a committee consisting of the Masters of Ceremonies Christian von Lente and Vincents Lerche, bishop Worm, Doctor Hans Bartholin and the diocesan dean Professor Jacob Lodbierg to make a plan for how the «entire jubilee» could be executed according to the «conditions of the times.»<sup>189</sup> On 12 April, the king gave instructions to two committees, the one suggested by the Privy Council as well as a smaller committee consisting of the Masters of Ceremonies Christian von Lente and Vincents Lerche, the Marshal of the Court Count Callenberg and the King's Confessor Christian Lemvig. The former committee was instructed to make a proposal for the jubilee as a whole, while the latter was instructed to make a proposal for those parts that had to specifically with the court and the castle chapel. Since there was an overlap in personnel between the two committees, there is also some overlap of content in the two proposals. The proposals from the two committees are important sources to understanding the historical development of centennial celebration in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. Many of the elements that were also part of later jubilees in Denmark-Norway were introduced here for the first time. In many cases, the committee members gave their reasons for their various suggestions. This merits a closer look at the texts.

The larger committee delivered its proposal on 13 May 1717. In the first point, it suggested that the jubilee should be announced with a printed ordinance well in advance, that it could be

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<sup>187</sup> «Oftmals dienten die in den Archiven noch vorhandenen Unterlangen von 1617 als Orientierung für die neuerlichen Planungen.» Cordes 2006: 38; Flügel 2005: 141.

<sup>188</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. «Allerunderdanigste Relation hvorledis Jubileum holdet Aar 1617 efter Høylovligst Thukommelse Konning Christian den Fierdis Høypræiseligste Anstalt/Allerunderdanigste Forslag hvorledis Jubel Festen dette Aar 1717 kunde holdes.»

<sup>189</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. «Allerunderdanigste Forestillelse om Anno Jubileo, som indfalder paa den 31 Octobr. indeværende Aar.»

announced from all pulpits in the kingdoms on the Sunday before the jubilee itself (24 October) as well as by the royal herolds in Copenhagen. On the day before the jubilee, All Hallows' Eve, all church bells in the town and the countryside could ring for one full hour, from 6 to 7 in the evening. The same could happen on the first day of the jubilee itself, 31 October, «as happens on all the great holidays».<sup>190</sup> Since it was the first day of the «new jubilee year», the committee added, «the cannons could fire, as is usually done». The committee suggested that on the first day of the jubilee the king could, if he pleased, release a few prisoners that had been sentenced to jail for petty crimes, and give alms to poor, sick and bedridden people. This proposal was possibly inspired by the year of jubilee in the Old Testament (Leviticus 25) where God, among many other things, commands the children of Israel to «hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family».<sup>191</sup> The committee also suggested that the king strike medals in gold and silver to commemorate the event, «as happened in Saxony a hundred years ago».<sup>192</sup>

As for the celebration of the jubilee itself, the committee proposed a programme of church services and Latin orations that would take place for the duration of the bicentenary. Church services would be held in all churches of the kingdoms on the two Sundays at the beginning and end of the jubilee week, on All Saint' Day (1 November) as well as on a special thanksgiving and prayer day on the Friday, 5 November. Bishop Worm would write a special prayer for this day, which could also be read in all churches after the sermons for the duration of the jubilee. Latin orations would be delivered at the University of Copenhagen on 1-4 and 6 November, and at the Universities of Kiel and Greifswald, the schools in Roskilde, Frederiksborg, Sorø and Herlufsholm, and all the Cathedral schools in the kingdoms on 1 November. Apart from their attendance at the church service in the castle chapel on the first day of the jubilee, the king and the royal family were invited to attend the Latin oration at the University on the first day of the jubilee, and the church service in Vor Frue church on the second day.<sup>193</sup> The suggested programme was approved more or less unchanged by the king, and sent out as a royal rescript to all the bishops in the kingdoms on 4 August 1717.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103.

<sup>191</sup> Hans-Jürgen Schönstadt points out the same inspiration in the centennial celebrations in Baden-Durlach in 1617, where Margrave George Frederick distributed food and wine to the poor and women in childbed, released prisoners from jail, and cancelled debts: «In enger Anlehnung an die jüdischen Halljahrsbräuche wurden auf markgräflichen Befehl auch Strafen erlassen und Schulden gestrichen.» Schönstadt 1978: 47; Schönstadt 1982: 13.

<sup>192</sup> «[...]ligesom, for 100 Aar siden, er skeet i Saxon». DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103.

<sup>193</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103.

<sup>194</sup> DRA. D20-10: p. 227-236.



## Pomp and magnificence: centennial commemoration in the age of absolutism

The smaller committee was instructed to give recommendations for the ceremonies that were going to take place at court and in the castle church.<sup>195</sup> Their proposal, dated 29 April, primarily had to do with practical matters related to the church service and the Latin orations at the University, such as how the king and the royal entourage could get from one place to another in a dignified manner. The concern for maintaining the royal dignity is manifest in almost all points in the proposal, expressed with the oft-recurring word *solemnity* («Sollenitet»). The first point had to do with the announcement of the jubilee: since a jubilee only happens once every hundred years, it stated, it had not only to be *celebrated* with more solemnity, it should also be *announced* with more solemnity. The committee therefore recommended that it be announced eight days in advance with trumpets, timpani and herolds. The committee were not pleased, however, with the castle chapel. The king's chair was badly situated, and it was so small that «fast gar keine Solleniteten darin vorgehen können.»<sup>196</sup> If solemnities were going to take place there, the committee recommended that the church be decorated, «so viel möglich», with velvet tapestries. Since the chair was situated in such a way that one could not reach it with a great entourage, they suggested that the king, the royal family entered the church via the secret passage («den Löhnen Gang») and approached the royal chair «en Ceremonie» accompanied by the royal ministers and court officers. Since the king wanted to spend these days with «vielen Solleniteten» the committee recommended that, on the second day of the jubilee, the king and the royal family could go to the cathedral with «vollen Pomp und Magnificens.» When they returned to the castle, there could be a open dinner, «etwas größer als ordinair.» The committee suggested, moreover, that the king invite all the «Geheime Räthen», counts, barons and knights in Denmark and Holstein to attend at court during the jubilee. Again, the purpose was to augment the solemnity as much as possible. The influx of nobility to the capital would increase («vermehrten») the court and «die Sollenitet dadurch so viel größer wurde.»<sup>197</sup>

In the existing literature on the topic, which is admittedly sparse, the Danish Reformation bicentenary in 1717 has been criticized for being a manifestation of pomp, luxury and splendour rather than piety, and for having occasioned excessive spending during a time of war and scarcity. According to the church historian Johannes Pedersen, who wrote a few pages about the jubilee in his

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<sup>195</sup> The Master of Ceremonies Vincents Lerche was absent from the proceedings. DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103.

<sup>196</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. Letter from Callenberg, Lenthe and Lemvig to Frederick IV, 29 April 1717.

<sup>197</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. Letter from Callenberg, Lenthe and Lemvig to Frederick IV, 29 April 1717.

chapter of a book on Danish church history, the bicentenary took the form of «a massive tribute to king Frederik IV—invincible in war and the persevering guardian of the pure Lutheran faith [...]» Martin Luther and his Reformation was the primary theme during the jubilee, he claimed, but the monarchs' role in introducing and safeguarding the Reformation was also omnipresent.<sup>198</sup> Pedersen was, moreover, sceptical about the lasting religious significance of the jubilee: «It was a sparkling fireworks, but it did not leave lasting traces in everyday life, yes, it does not even seem to have urged the men of the church to consider what constitutes the specifically Lutheran.»<sup>199</sup> Hans Olrik pointed out that the king and the royal house became the centrepiece of the jubilee, in contrast to the first jubilee in 1617, and he explained this as a consequence of the introduction of absolutism in 1660.<sup>200</sup> Olrik argued, furthermore, that this led to excessive expenditures:

A splendour was therefore demonstrated that did not stand in proportion to the country's poor economy. Frederik IV has clearly not considered that the Great Northern War demanded all the financial sacrifices that Denmark could bear. The jubilee was celebrated as if had taken place in the deepest peace. Orators and poets praised the king, who «in the midst of the roar of war» could dedicate himself to the great joy in the church; but he would have been more praiseworthy if he had not demonstrated so much useless luxury.<sup>201</sup>

Johannes Pedersen, too, expressed a distaste towards the form of the jubilee when he wrote that there was found both time and money to celebrate it with pomp and splendour for a whole week «despite the long-lasting and burdensome war.»<sup>202</sup>

It is possible that these verdicts on the jubilee as a pompous and superficial event may in part be influenced by how it was reported by contemporaries. The Reformation bicentenary in 1717 was thoroughly documented by Ernst Salomon Cyprian, who from an early stage had eagerly promoted the celebration of the jubilee in the Protestant territories of the Holy Roman Empire. After the jubilee, Cyprian started collecting official instructions, sermons, orations, prayers and descriptions of the celebrations from his friends and correspondents abroad, with the intention of publishing them

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<sup>198</sup>«[J]ubilæet formede sig som en kraftig hyldest til kong Frederik IV- uovervindelig i krig og den rene lutherske læres standhaftige værner.» Pedersen 1951: 61.

<sup>199</sup> «Det blev et gnistrende fyrværkeri, men den satte ikke spor in den efterfølgende hverdag, ja, den synes ikke engang at have tilskyndet kirkens folk til at besinde sig paa, hvad der er det særlig lutherske.» Pedersen 1951: 63.

<sup>200</sup> Olrik 1890: 3.

<sup>201</sup> «Derfor blev der udfoldet en pragt, som stod i meget slet forhold til landets sørgelig pengevæsen. Frederik IV har tydelig nok slet ikke taget i betragtning, at den store nordiske krig allerede krævede alle de finansielle ofre, som Danmark kunde overkomme. Festen blev holdt, som om der var den dybeste fred. Talere og digtere har lovprist kongen, der «midt i kampbulderet» kunde hengive sig til den store kirkeglæde; men han vilde have været mere at rose, hvis han ikke havde udfoldet saa megen unyttig luksus.» Olrik 1890: 3.

<sup>202</sup> Pedersen 1951: 61; See also Kolsrud 1917: 251.

together as a history of the jubilee. The result of his efforts was the publication in 1719 of more than a thousand pages long book in folio, entitled *Hilaria Evangelica*.<sup>203</sup> According to Harm Cordes, the purpose of the work was to demonstrate the territorial and theological unity of Lutherdom and to convince the reader of its historical legitimacy.<sup>204</sup>

The work was divided into three main parts. After the foreword, followed a 170-page long polemical «Schutz-Schrifft» in defense of the Reformation. The first part of the *Hilaria Evangelica* itself consisted of 130 chapters that described the official texts and instructions and the celebrations in Denmark-Norway and the Protestant territories of the Holy Roman Empire. The second part consisted of various Latin orations and «programmata jubileæ», while the third part contained descriptions and copper engravings of all the jubilee medals. Although Cyprian's work apparently did not sell so much as its publisher had expected it was well received by the German theological journals.<sup>205</sup> Its contemporary importance lies primarily in its character as the authoritative historical documentation of the jubilee: the work was clearly intended to be, and was perceived as, a lasting monument of the celebrations.<sup>206</sup> The *Hilaria Evangelica* became a model for attempts to compile and publish great chronicles of jubilees later in the century, although none of these came to fruition.<sup>207</sup>

We know that the Danish theologian Søren Lintrup was Cyprian's primary contact in Copenhagen. As noted above, Lintrup had corresponded with Cyprian in the spring of 1717 about the Danish plans for a bicentenary. The correspondence continued after the jubilee, when Cyprian asked Lintrup to supply him with Danish jubilee texts. In a letter in February 1718 to Christian

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<sup>203</sup> According to Harm Cordes, the work was a collaborative effort between Cyprian and his publisher Moritz Weidmann, on the one hand, and the theologian Johann Ernst Kapp and the publisher Johann Christian Martini, on the other. The latter pair had intended to publish a work of their own, when they discovered that Weidmann entertained similar plans. After a intense dispute over the rights to publish the history, Martini and Kapp decided to hand over the materials they had collected to Weidmann and Cyprian. Cordes writes that Martinis engagement made the work larger than it would have otherwise have been, and allowed it to be published faster. Cordes 2006: 10-12.

<sup>204</sup> Cordes 2006: 12.

<sup>205</sup> The price of the work would have restricted the amount of potential customers. In its review of the book, the journal *Unschuldige Nachrichten von Alten und Neuen Theologischen Sachen* pointed out that few private persons would be able to afford it, and therefore encouraged all Evangelical churches to read from it to the edification of high and low. [Löscher] 1719: 63. See also Cordes 2006: 12.

<sup>206</sup> Cyprian wrote about the intentions of the publishers that «ihr Vorhaben der Posterität zur Befestigung im Glauben dienen, und, wenn man diese monumenta recht brauchet, die Ehre Gottes dadurch verherrlicht werden kan». Cyprian (Vorrede) 1719: a2r; The journal *Unschuldige Nachrichten von Alten und Neuen Theologischen Sachen* described it as «ein warhafftiges, und, so lange die Welt stehen wird, daurendes Denckmahl der Krafft und Wunder-Güte Gottes und der Einigkeit unseres Evangelischen Zions, vor welches wir und hoffentlich alle redliche Gliedmassen der Kirche Gottes allen, die solches veranlasset, dirigiret und ausgefertiget haben, vielen Danck sagen müssen, und wünschen nur, daß es auch in vieler Hände kommen, von hohen und Niedrigen möge gelesen, und Gottes Wege daraus recht betrachtet werden» [Löscher] 1719: 63.

<sup>207</sup> Johann Erhard Kapp attempted to make a similar work after the bicentenary of the Augsburg Confession in 1730, but did not succeed (see below). Bishop Peder Hersleb mentioned plans for making a *Hilaria Oldenburgico Danica* after the dynastic tercentenary in Denmark-Norway in 1749, but this never materialized either.

Falster, the conrector at Cathedral school in Ribe, Lintrup wrote that Cyprianus had sent him six jubilee medals from the duke of Sachsen-Gotha and in return requested information about what had happened in Denmark during the jubilee. Lintrup therefore wanted Falster to send him «a small relation about everything that took place in Ribe, with sermons, orations, etc. as well as the order and process of things. Just as I am waiting for such relations from other places in the kingdoms.»<sup>208</sup> Already a few weeks after the jubilee, Lintrup had expressed doubts whether anything was going to be published in Denmark due to «the way things are here now.»<sup>209</sup> In May 1718, he complained about his difficulties with supplying Cyprian with an adequate amount of material:

It is [...] very regrettable that it should fare so poorly with our jubilee orations, that we can not get any of them printed because of the many affairs of our dean [bishop Christen Worm], and I have little to send the good D. Cypriano from here. [You] would do me a great favour if [you] could ask lector Terpager if he could be persuaded to write a fair copy of his oration so that, after it has been approved by the bishop, it could be sent and be included in the great work that the Duke of Saxe-Gotha plans to publish. Here a trinlingual description of the jubilee has been published, which has its blemishes and does not describe everything correctly.<sup>210</sup>

The *Hilaria Evangelica* is one of the primary sources to what took place in Denmark-Norway during the bicentenary in 1717. It is therefore important to note that it presents a limited and fragmented image of the celebrations. A substantial amount of the pages on Denmark-Norway are devoted to a reproduction of two official or semi-official descriptions that were published in the wake of the jubilee, both of which spent several pages on detailed descriptions of the procession to Vor Frue church on the second day of the bicentenary. In a trilingual description published by Hieronimus Christian Paulli, 18 out of a total of 54 pages were dedicated to a detailed list of the participants in the procession.<sup>211</sup> In the description published by the Royal printing house, the procession took 5 out of a total of 14 pages.<sup>212</sup> Apart from these texts, the only celebrations that were described in the work were those in three provincial towns on Jutland (Ribe, Ålborg and Viborg) as well as short

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<sup>208</sup> «[...]at min høystærede Ven ved første leylighed ubesværget vilde meddeele mig een liden *relation* om alt hvis hos dem i Ribe *passerede*, med prædikkener, *orationer etc.* Saasom jeg vendter saadan *relation* fra andre steder i Rigerne.» Bruun 1869: 108.

<sup>209</sup> «Skal ellers meget tvile, at noget hos os derom skulde udkomme, saasom vores sager nu ere.» Bruun 1869:106.

<sup>210</sup> «Det er ellers meget at beklage, at det med vores *Jubel orationer* skal gaae saa lumpen, at vi for vores *Decani* mangfoldige forretninger ey kand vendte nogen aff dem i trykken, og jeg lidet kand communicere dend brave *D. Cypriano* herfra. Min Hr. Con- Rector kunde gjøre mig een stor tjeneste, om hand vilde *sondere* Hr. *Lector Terpager* om hand ey vilde lade sig overtale til at renskrive sin *oration*, at dend aff Biscopen her *approphetet* kunde udsendes til at *insereres* i det store *Corpore*, som Hertugen af *Saxen-Gotha* lader udgaae. Her er udgaeen een *description* over *Jubel-Festen* paa 3 sproger, som dog har sine *nævos* og ey beskriver alleting for rigtig.» Bruun 1869: 113.

<sup>211</sup> *Beskrivning Over de SOLENNITETER 1717: 17-35.*

<sup>212</sup> *Udførlig Beretning 1717: 4-9.*

description of the celebrations in Bergen in Norway. There was no systematic effort to collect and publish such accounts, so the most of the texts that reached the hands of Ernst Salomon Cyprian and, consequently, the eyes of the European public, were those written by friends and associates of Lintrup.

Whether or not the sources conveys a narrow impression of how the jubilee was actually celebrated in the kingdoms, the scholarly critique of the centenary as an ostentatious demonstration of pomp and luxury in any case disregards the political importance attributed by contemporaries to ceremony and magnificence. The importance of order and regulation was expressed in no uncertain terms in a memorandum written for the bicentenary. The document is unsigned, but I believe that the author must have the Master of Ceremonies, Vincents Lerche.<sup>213</sup> The memorandum is also undated, but it must have been written right before the bicentenary: Lerche's purpose was to clarify unresolved matters of etiquette and ceremony, and he complained that he had too little time to ensure that «his Majesty's service can take place with more order and regularity than what happens now.»<sup>214</sup> The Danish Chancery sent an order, which followed Lerche's recommendations almost verbatim, to Count Callenberg on 30 October 1717, only one day before the jubilee.<sup>215</sup> Lerche introduced his memorandum with an almost programmatic statement:

Ceremonies that kings and rulers would attend in their own person is of such a nature that, since they in such instances show themselves in public in their royal splendour, not only for their own subjects, but also before the eyes of the entire world, yes even for posterity, and everything which is done in such cases is exposed to and subjected to the censure of all other nations, for this reason it is incontestably necessary that all concomitant things are regulated with the greatest care and accuracy according to the appropriate fundamental rules and the practice that is observed at other well-regulated foreign courts in such cases; When this does not happen, it would be much better to not do such things at all.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Hans Olrik attributes the document to the Marshall of the Court, Otto Carl Count of Callenberg. This cannot be correct, since the document criticizes recommendations previously made by Callenberg. The author of the document complained that he had not been part of the planning since the beginning, «in complete disregard of his Majesty's written commands [...]». The only person absent from the meeting of the «smaller» committee that had been created by the king was Vincents Lerche. Finally, Lerche has been described as «very pedantic in matters of etiquette», which fits well with the style and contents of the document. Olrik 1890: 5.

<sup>214</sup> «[...]hans Mayts Tieneste skee med meere Ordentlighed og Regularitet end dend nu skeer.» *Collectaena om Jubelfæsterne 1717 og 1736* (Thott 813 folio).

<sup>215</sup> DRA. DK. D20-10: no. 339, p. 321.

<sup>216</sup> «Ceremonier som Konger og Potentater i Egen Person vilde bievaaene, ere af dend Beskaffenhed, at som de i slige Tilfælde viiser sig self offentlig udi Deres Kongel: Pragt, ei alleene for deres egne Undersaatter, men end og for dend heele Verdens Øyesun, ja end og for alle Efterkommerne, og alt hvis i slig Maade begaees exponeres og underkastes alle andre Nationers Censur, da var det vel uforgribeligen nödigst at alle de der tilhörende Ting med störste Flid og Accuratesse bleve i Tide reglerede efter de der tilhörende fundamental Regler og efter dend Praxis, som i slige Tilfælde ved andre vel reglerede Kongel: Hoffer observeres. Naar dette ikke skee, var det langt bedre aldeeles intet at befatte sig dermed.» *Collectaena om Jubelfæsterne 1717 og 1736* (Thott 813 folio).

The rest of the text is formulated as a point-by-point criticism of the ceremonial instructions described in a royal rescript that had been prepared in early August.<sup>217</sup> Lerche pointed out several instances in which the instructions deviated from the standards of other well-ordered European courts. In point four, for instance, the rescript stated that Princess Sophie would ride in the same carriage as the queen on the second day of the jubilee.<sup>218</sup> According to Lerche, customary practice at other royal courts was always that royal persons sat alone in their carriage, without anyone next to them, «which is completely impermissible at such ceremonies».<sup>219</sup> The rescript also stated that the Marshall of the Court's carriage should ride in front of the king's carriage. Not only was this against customary practice at other royal courts, it was also contrary to established practice in Denmark. If the Marshal of the Court did not ride on a horse in front of or next to the king's carriage, wrote Lerche, it was disrespectful towards the king, which would be completely unacceptable.<sup>220</sup>

As Joachim Eibach points out, the conspicuous demonstration of magnificence was a political necessity in the early eighteenth century. The reason for this, he writes, was the intensified competition in the international system of European powers around 1700, a struggle for hegemony that was fought not only on the battlefield or through diplomatic channels, but also with symbolic resources: A magnificent court and ostentatious ceremonial was a central way of increasing the honour of the prince.<sup>221</sup> Whether or not one agrees with Hans Olrik's remark about the dubious morality and financial wisdom of spending so much resources on «useless luxury» in the midst of a long and costly war, one must temporarily suspend the moral judgement in order to understand why the bicentenary took the form that it did.<sup>222</sup> For Frederick IV and his peers, luxury was not useless, and neither was the intense attention to minute ceremonial details. There was a reason the king set down a special committee to handle ceremonial issues: a perfectly regulated and executed ceremonial served to enhance the international prestige and the royal dignity of the prince; a chaotic or botched ceremonial threatened to do the opposite.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> See DRA. DK. D20-10: no. 249, p. 222 ff.

<sup>218</sup> DRA. DK. D20-10: p. 224.

<sup>219</sup> *Collectaena om Jubelfæsterne 1717 og 1736* (Thott 813 folio).

<sup>220</sup> *Collectaena om Jubelfæsterne 1717 og 1736* (Thott 813 folio).

<sup>221</sup> Eibach 2002: 136.

<sup>222</sup> Although Johannes Eibach stresses the political importance of splendour in the early eighteenth century, he also sensibly warns us against being unduly taken in by the arguments of contemporaries: «Bedenken wären allerdings anzumelden, wenn ein allzu einheitliches Bild gezeichnet würde, d.h. wenn womöglich die materiellen Kosten für Land und Leute sowie mahrende Stimmen von Zeitgenossen im Hinblick auf die höfische „Necessität“ ausgeblendet würden.» Eibach 2002: 136.

<sup>223</sup> The ideal of perfection was extended to the reporting of court events in the press. In a censorship instruction from 1701, king Frederick IV demanded that all reporting from events at court had to be written in a appropriate and decent

Considered from the perspective of international publicity and prestige, the bicentenary seems to have been a success. The *Hilaria Evangelica* publicized the celebrations in Denmark-Norway to a German-reading public in the Holy Roman Empire. Thanks to their inclusion in Cyprian's book, the Danish jubilee texts reached a larger audience than they otherwise would have done. Despite his difficulties, Lintrup still managed to send a great deal of texts to Cyprian. The chapters on Denmark-Norway are in fact among the lengthiest in the entire work; only the chapter on Electoral Saxony are of comparable length. The chapters on Denmark are also first in each of the three parts of the work. Cyprian, well aware that the princes of Europe were very much preoccupied with rank, stressed in the introduction that most of the chapters were randomly arranged according to the order in which he had received the material.<sup>224</sup> Although the reason why is not entirely clear, however, it can not be a coincidence that Denmark-Norway came first in order in all three parts of the work.<sup>225</sup> The jubilee in Denmark-Norway were also the only one to be reported in the journal *Die Europäische Fama*, which stated that the kingdoms were an example to all states following the Augsburg Confession.<sup>226</sup>

### From Catholic darkness to Protestant light: the message of the Reformation bicentenary

The bicentenary in 1717 was not only a grand manifestation of royal splendour—it was also intended to propagate a message to king Frederick's subjects about what the Lutheran Reformation in 1517 had meant for the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway. The three medals that were struck to commemorate the bicentenary is a good starting point for ascertaining what views of the Reformation the government wanted to promote. The medals themselves reached the hands of only a relatively small amount of people: the largest medal was struck in 50 silver copies, the medium-sized medal in 100 gold and 20 silver copies, and the smallest medal in 700 silver copies.<sup>227</sup> The two

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style, and that ceremonial involving foreign princes and ambassadors had to be described exactly as it had taken place, so that «our ceremonial can not be criticized in the future». See point 4 and 5 in Vogel-Jørgensen 1949b: 18.

<sup>224</sup> «Weil ich kein *jus publicum* geschrieben, so wird sich über die Ordnung der Capitel niemand beschweren können, gestallten die hohen Häuser mehr nach der nahen Anverwandtschaft, als dem range lociret worden, und die mehreste Nachrichten in der Folge erscheinen, darinnen sie bey uns eingelauffen. Wie man also niemanden etwas zum Präjudiz verhanden können oder wollen.» Cyprian (Vorrede) 1719: a2r.

<sup>225</sup> Frederik IV was not the only king that figured in *Hilaria Evangelica*: Frederick August II was king of Poland and Elector of Saxony, while Frederick Wilhelm I was king of Prussia and Elector of Brandenburg. One possible reason for Denmark's precedence in the work might be that Frederick IV was the only Lutheran monarch of the three. Frederick August had converted to Catholicism in 1697 in order to be eligible for the throne of Poland, while Frederick Wilhelm was a Calvinist ruler. Another possible reason is the age of the Oldenburg royal dynasty. The house of Oldenburg had been a royal dynasty for 250 years. Frederick August had become king of Poland in 1697, while Frederick Wilhelm's father Frederick was the first king of Prussia.

<sup>226</sup> *Die Europäische FAMA, Welche den gegenwärtigen Zustand der vornehmsten Höfe entdecket. Der 207 Theil.* 1718: 202-208.

<sup>227</sup> Galster 1936: 183-185.

former were largely distributed to courtiers, royal officials and other dignitaries, while the latter was thrown out to a crowd of spectators on the second day of the jubilee, and was also sold at the Royal Mint. One did not necessarily have to acquire the medals, however, to be exposed to their message: they were also reproduced and described in detail in newspapers, pamphlets and books after the bicentenary.<sup>228</sup>

The smallest of the medals was also the simplest. Since it was thrown out to the common people, the inscriptions were all written in Danish. On the obverse, there was a portrait of Frederick IV on a bust, on which there was short verse where the king stated that God had given him a jubilee year, but that God himself should have the «jubilee honour».<sup>229</sup> There was no image on the reverse, only a short Danish verse that praised God for having freed the true faith from «the tyranny of the Pope» two hundred years ago.<sup>230</sup> Around the edge of the reverse, there was a verse that stated that «God's Church in the North jubilates» because God's pure and true Word is triumphant in the North.<sup>231</sup> The medium-sized medal had a more advanced design. According to contemporary descriptions, the reverse depicted a «temple of peace» inside of which stood an altar, on top of which lay an open Bible inscribed with the words: «the Holy Scriptures» («saCra sCrIptUra») and «God's Word» («VerBUM DeI»). Underneath the altar was an inscription stating that the Word of God had been accessible to the people of the North for two hundred years.<sup>232</sup> Around the edge ran the inscription: «The second jubilee for the Augsburg Confession».<sup>233</sup> How this inscription found its way onto a medal commemorating the bicentenary of Martin Luther's posting of the 95 theses is a bit of a mystery. The mistake was not commented upon in any contemporary newspapers, books or journals. It was, however, noted by the young student Andreas Hojer who was travelling abroad in Germany when Denmark-Norway celebrated the bicentenary. In a letter to Søren Lintrup, Hojer wrote that he had seen the medal and that it was nicely sculpted, but that the invention was erroneous. Hojer had heard that the medal had been designed by the high-ranking official Frederik Rostgaard, but refused to credit him with such an error. The mistake, claimed Hojer, was particularly

<sup>228</sup> Cyprian (Der III. Theil) 1719: 2-4; *Beskrivning Over de SOLENNITETER* 1717: 41-48; *Udførlig Beretning* 1717.

<sup>229</sup> «MIG GAV GUD DET IUBELAAR. IUBELÆREN GUD SELV FAAR.» Galster 1936:183.

<sup>230</sup> «LOVET VÆRE GUD I DET HØIIE. TU HUNDER AAR FORBI. DEN SANDE TROE BLEV FRI. FRA PAVENS TIIRANNI. MDCCXVII. D. 31 OCTOB.» Galster 1936:183.

<sup>231</sup> «I NORD NU TRIUMPHERER GUDS RENE SANDE ORD. DERFORE IUBILERER GUDS KIRKE NU I NORD.» Galster 1936: 183.

<sup>232</sup> «GENTIBUS ARCTOIS IAM DUO SECLA PATET». Galster 1936: 183.

<sup>233</sup> «Confessionis Augustanæ Jubilæum Secundum 1717». Galster 1936: 186.



ridiculous when it concerned the history of the fatherland, since historical inquiries were so meticulous in the present age.<sup>234</sup>

Frederik Rostgaard was not in fact responsible for this medal, but he did design the inventions for the third and largest medal.<sup>235</sup> Its reverse depicted the «German Apostle» Martin Luther and the «Danish Apostle» Johannes Bugenhagen, holding a tablet between them inscribed with an Latin quotation from Revelation 14, 7: «Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgement is come, and worship him».<sup>236</sup> Above the two reformers soared an angel holding a banner inscribed with the words: «EVANGELIUM AETERNUM», or «the eternal Gospel», which is a quote from the same chapter of Revelation (Rev. 14, 6). The inscription around the edge stated that the medal had been struck in memory of Martin Luther's restitution of the faith two hundred years ago.<sup>237</sup> According to Harm Cordes, German Protestant writers identified the angel in Revelation 14, 6 as a prophecy of Martin Luther. It was in fact one of the two most popular motives in jubilee texts and on jubilee medals in 1717, the other being the description of Luther as «the third Elijah».<sup>238</sup> The interpretation of the angel in Revelation 14, 6 as a prefiguration of Luther was also among the most popular motives in sermons during the Reformation centenary in 1617.<sup>239</sup> As Hans-Jürgen Schönstadt has shown, the interpretation had even older roots. It appeared for the first time in the sermon delivered by Johannes Bugenhagen in Martin Luther's funeral in 1546, and became a permanent fixture in the «altprotestantischen Lutherdeutung» in the course of the sixteenth century.<sup>240</sup> The iconography and inscriptions on the three medals presented a quite traditional Protestant interpretation of Martin Luther and the Reformation in 1517. The medieval era was claimed to have been a period of spiritual tyranny and false religion, while Luther's Reformation was presented as a divine act of liberation that had returned the church to the true and only source of the Christian faith, God's Word.

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<sup>234</sup> «Pervenere ad manus meas numi seculares nitide sculpti, sed inventionis adeo infelicis, ut a summo Viro Rostgardio, Musarum alias amore, profectos esse, non credam, etiamsi summa id fide mihi sit confirmatum. Quis enim annum 1717 aut pro Seculari Aug. Confessionis habeat, aut affirmet, repurgatam verbi divini lucem 200 iam annos Daniæ fulsisse, nisi omnis historiæ rudis. Quales maxime in patriis rebus cespitationes ridiculæ sunt isto seculo, eoque magis, quo curatius iam ubique in historica studia inquiritur». Bruun 1870: 552.

<sup>235</sup> Bruun 1870: 552.

<sup>236</sup> «TIMETE DOMINUM ET DATE ILLI HONOREM QUIA VENIT HORA IUDICII EIUS ET ADORATE EUM APOCAL. XIV.6.»

<sup>237</sup> Galster 1936: 183-185.

<sup>238</sup> Cordes 2006: 212-213.

<sup>239</sup> Zika 2003: 266; Revelation 14, 6 was also one of the verses that bishop Resen used as motto for the printed version of the jubilee programme in 1617. See Kornerup 1968: 154.

<sup>240</sup> Schönstadt 1978: 254ff.

Outside of Copenhagen and some of the larger provincial towns in the kingdom, the king's subjects would perhaps not have experienced the bicentenary as a great disturbance in the normal run of things. The jubilee week was not very different from any other week in the church year, apart from the thanksgiving and prayer day on Friday 5 November. There was one element, however, that ensured that the topic of the Lutheran Reformation in 1517 received extra attention during the jubilee: the parish ministers were required to read bishop Worm's thanksgiving prayer a total of four times in the course of eight days. In this way, all of the king's subjects were repeatedly exposed to an officially approved account of the Reformation. If we want to discover what the government intended the subjects to learn from the jubilee, the printed booklet that was distributed to all the clergymen in the kingdoms, containing psalms, bible verses and Worm's thanksgiving prayer, is the best place to start.

Worm's thanksgiving prayer was formulated as a direct address to the Lord. The first paragraph established the purpose of the jubilee, which was to gather in God's house to give thanks for his mercy and truth. In the following three paragraphs, the prayer went on to describe the Protestant Reformation as a great proof of the Lord's grace: God had liberated the kingdoms two times, first from heathendom and then from the papacy, so that the people had gone from being blind and erroneous people to becoming «enlightened Christians». The Lord had liberated them from human invention, made the Bible available for everyone to read, and taught them the true means of justification, namely by faith rather than by works. Instead of worshipping the dead and dead images, the people had learnt that they should worship God alone.<sup>241</sup> All of these assertions were standard elements of Protestant identity and anti-papist polemics in the early modern period, and were spoken from pulpits and lecterns all over Protestant Germany during the bicentenary.<sup>242</sup> The next paragraph, however, described Denmark-Norway as particularly blessed even when compared with other Protestant lands and posited the allegedly unique nature of the Danish Reformation: in other places, claimed Worm, the Evangelical faith was introduced with «great persecution, murder and bloodbath», whereas «not a drop of blood was spilt» in Denmark and Norway». Elsewhere, restless people and delusional heretics had used Scripture for their own corruption and had disturbed what

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<sup>241</sup> *TEXTER til een almindelig Taksigelses og Bede=Dag 1717: a4r-a5r.*

<sup>242</sup> See Harm Cordes' analysis of anti-Catholic rhetoric in German jubilee texts from 1717, Cordes 2006: 273-285.

had begun so well. In Denmark-Norway, everything had gone peacefully, and hypocrisy and false teachings had not gained any ground.<sup>243</sup>

Worm then turned from the blessings of the past to the sinfulness of the present, and the tone of the prayer became more remorseful and penitent. God had given the kingdoms so much, but instead of following his Word the people had wandered on their own path. He had therefore every reason to punish them, but the great mercy of the Lord gave them hope that he would show pity on them, forgive them, and move their hearts to true penitence. The prayer expressed hope that God would continue to protect his own, provide them with holy and righteous shepherds, and fight against the enemies of his church, «the Turk and the Pope». In the remainder of the prayer, Worm asked God to protect the king and the royal family. It is only in this final section of the text we discover the first mention of the fact that the jubilee occurred while Denmark-Norway was in the midst of a long and exhausting war against Sweden, what has come to be known as the Great Northern War (1700-1721). Worm's prayer asked the Lord to assist the king to victory, and to give the kingdoms the peace that they longed for after years of war.<sup>244</sup>

In addition to bishop Worm's prayer, the booklet also contained a collect (i.e. a short prayer to be read before the sermon), a list of psalms that the king had selected for each of the church services, as well as the three Bible verses that had been selected for the morning, noon and evening service on the thanksgiving and prayer day. As we shall see in more detail in later chapters, the verses on which the clergy based their sermons had a strong impact on the way they spoke of the historical events that were commemorated. The first half of the sermon was always dedicated to the exegesis in which the minister interpreted the verse of the day, while the second part was dedicated to the application, in which the minister applied the verse to the topic at hand. This means that the officially selected verse supplied a framework for how the clergy structured their own interpretations of the past.

The three verses for the thanksgiving and prayer day were chosen by Frederick IV from a list of six verses proposed by bishop Worm.<sup>245</sup> They were all clearly selected for their topical relevance for the Reformation bicentenary. In the verse for the early morning and morning services (Amos 9, 11), God promises to raise David's fallen tabernacle and rebuild it as in the days of old. Although

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<sup>243</sup> *Texter til een almindelig Taksigelses og Bede-dag 1717*: a5r-a5v; The notion that the Danish Reformation was particularly peaceful and successful appears to be even older than this: the Norwegian theologian Cort Aslaksson made almost exactly the same statement in the speech he delivered at the first Reformation centenary in 1617. Aslaksson 1622: g3r.

<sup>244</sup> *TEXTER til een almindelig Taksigelses og Bede=Dag 1717*: b2r.

<sup>245</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. Lit C.; «Allerunderdanigst Forslag om Texter, som til Een almindelig Taksigelsis og Bede Dag d: 5 Novembr: 1717 over alt i Danmark, Norge, Island og paa Færøe kand brugis».

conventionally understood as a prophecy of the Messiah, an eighteenth-century Protestant could readily interpret the verse as God's promise to rebuild his true church and return to its original state as it had been before it was corrupted by the errors of the papacy. Texts from the jubilee confirm that it was indeed interpreted in this way. In an «Evangelical jubilee song» written to be sung on the thanksgiving and prayer day, the minister Hans Thomesøn Trojel quoted the verse in one of the stanzas, and portrayed Luther as sent by heaven to repair the fallen tabernacle.<sup>246</sup> In his sermon for the same event, Trojel explicitly used the image of David's fallen tabernacle to describe the state of the church before Luther.<sup>247</sup>

The verse for the noon service (Joshua 24,14) describes how the aging Joshua spoke to the Israelites and entreated them to fear and serve the Lord, and to «put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt». Again, the verse could be applied to the history of the Danish church: The Egyptian slavery of the Israelites was a commonplace analogy used by early modern Protestants to describe the state of the Christian Church under the medieval papacy.<sup>248</sup> The evening service verse (Thessalonians 2, 13) is less obvious as a topical reference to the Reformation, but it was not irrelevant, as it thanked God for the Thessalonians' reception of the divine word.

Of the four church days celebrated during the bicentenary in 1717, three were regular features of the church year, which meant that the pericopes were already decreed in the Altar Book. Although only a few of the total number of verses had thus been selected for their direct relevance for the Reformation bicentenary, bishop Worm clearly considered all of the church services as part of a coherent programme for the jubilee. In his petition to the king from 2 April, Worm explained the specific lessons that he envisioned that the clergymen could draw from each of the pericopes.<sup>249</sup> On the first day of the jubilee, 31 October, the pericope was Matthew 22, 15-22. According to Worm, the 21<sup>st</sup> verse of this chapter («Render therefore unto Cesar the *things* which are Cesar's; and unto God the *things* that are God's») provided an opportunity for the clergy to talk about the positive changes wrought by the Protestant Reformation. The ministers could speak of how, under the

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<sup>246</sup> «Vers. VII./ DAVIDS Hytte saae sit Fald/ Ved saa mange Storme=Vinde,/Hvert Guds Barn med Graad paa/Kinde/Raabte Ach i Himmell=Skrald:/Ach! Vort Sion ligger øde,/Gierdet det er sønderbrudt,/ Vand og Vind det sønderbrøde/Udaf Dragens Mund udskudt./ Vers IIX./Himlen hørte selv det Ach,/ Himlens Gud den Sag befalte,/ Og til Doctor LUTHER talte:/Staae du op, og hastig gack!/Hen min Hytte at oprette,/Og at flye dens Gierde=Skaar,/Jeg vil dig en Støtte sætte/ Til mit Huus i Verdens Aar.» Trojel 1717: [3]; See also Bergendal 1717: [5].

<sup>247</sup> Trojel 1718: 120-121.

<sup>248</sup> Schönstadt 1982: 28-29.

<sup>249</sup> DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. No.101-103. Lit B; «Allerunderdanigst Forslag hvorledis Jubel=Festen dette Aar 1717 kand holdes».

darkness of the papacy, the things that were God's were given to dead saints and the Roman pope, who also acquired the authority that really belonged to the highest worldly authority here on earth. They could furthermore explain that, after the Reformation, «God expects of us that we shall give him the honour that belongs to him and show the authorities the subservient obedience we are obliged to show them».<sup>250</sup> For the evening service, the daily epistle (Philippians 3, 17-21) encouraged the clergy to explain to their congregations that they should not walk with the enemies of the cross of Christ, but thank God «who has freed them from such a great darkness», and take the Holy as an example.<sup>251</sup> On All Saint's Day, wrote Worm, the ministers could explain the usual texts (Matthew 5, 1-13 and Revelation 7, 1-13) and «thank God for the Reformation». On the last day of the jubilee, the ministers could use Christ's answer to the woman who was diseased with an issue of blood, ««Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole» (Matthew 9, 22), to explain how God's Word has referred the believers to Christ alone, and taught that nothing helps them except a true and living faith in Him. This, wrote Worm, «is what the same merciful God has reminded us of with his true servant D[octo]r] Martin Luther».<sup>252</sup>

Bishop Worm thus clearly intended all of the sermons delivered during the entire jubilee to be somehow dedicated to the topic of the Lutheran Reformation in 1517. It is another matter whether or not the rank and file of the clergy followed up on his intentions. As far as I have been able to tell, Worm's own interpretations of the different verses were never actually communicated to the other bishops or their subordinates. In the decree that went out from the Danish Chancery to all bishops in kingdoms of Denmark, the clergy were simply told to «discuss the usual Sunday text» on 31 October and 7 November, and to «discuss» the prescribed verses on the extraordinary thanksgiving and prayer day. The decree did not in any way specify how the verses should be applied to the topic of the Lutheran Reformation.<sup>253</sup> It is quite possible that the ministers were simply left to

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<sup>250</sup> «[...]af disse Christi Ord [...] tage Anledning at foreholde Menighederne Guds Tieneste ved Reformationen, nemlig: at, som under det Papistiske Mørke, hvad Guds er, blev givet afdøde Helgener og den Romerske Pafve, der og tilegnede sig den Myndighed, som ellers den høieste Verdslig Øfrighed paa Jorden tilkommer, saa vente nu Gud af Os, at Vi skal gifve ham den Ære, som hannem tilhøre, og bevise Øfrigheden den underdanig Lydighed Vi er dennem pligtige». DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. No. 101-103. Lit B; «Allerunderdanigst Forslag hvorledis Jubel=Festen dette Aar 1717 kand holdes».

<sup>251</sup> «[...] som gifver Anledning nok at viise hvorledis Vi ei bör gjøre et med dem der ere Christi Kaarses Fiender, men takke Gud der har friet os fra saa stort et Mørke og tage de Hellige til Exempel». DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. Lit B; «Allerunderdanigst Forslag hvorledis Jubel=Festen dette Aar 1717 kand holdes».

<sup>252</sup> «[...]hvilket og er det som samme naadige Gud ved sin troe Tienere D: Morten Luther haver ladet os mindes om». DRA. DK. D21-24. No.101-103. No.101-103. Lit B; «Allerunderdanigst Forslag hvorledis Jubel=Festen dette Aar 1717 kand holdes».

<sup>253</sup> See for example royal rescript to bishop Peder Krog, 4 August 1717 in: SAT. Nidaros biskop. Forordninger og Reskripter 1717-1722. Pk.nr. 121; In Western Pomerania and Rügen, which were temporarily in the possession of

their own devices and entrusted to interpret each of the texts as they saw fit. In one particularly well-documented case, however, the ordinary clergy did receive quite comprehensive guidelines from their superior: in the diocese of Ålborg on Jutland, bishop Frands Thestrup instructed his subordinates to start preparing their congregations for the bicentenary many weeks before it took place. Every Sunday after the sermon, they informed their congregations about the upcoming jubilee, and entreated them to prepare their hearts to celebrate with appropriate devotion. At a synod («Landemode») on 13 October 1717, Thestrup delivered a Latin speech to the ministers where he exhorted them to not only consider God's great mercy and firm protection of his church, but also to entreat their congregations to celebrate the jubilee with spiritual joy and thanksgiving. At the same synod, Bishop Thestrup also gave detailed instructions («Monita») to his subordinates about what they should talk about in their sermons and how the jubilee should be arranged.<sup>254</sup> On the Sunday preceding the jubilee, all ministers should inform their congregations about the reason for celebrating the bicentenary and tell them about what had happened in Wittenberg on 31 October 1517, when Doctor Martin Luther publicly demonstrated the ungodliness of the papal trade in indulgences. In their sermons on the first and last days of the jubilee, wrote Thestrup, they should use the regular Sunday texts to tell their congregations about the divine blessings of the remarkable Reformation, admonish their listeners that they should prepare for the celebration, and thank God especially for having preserved the light of the Gospels in Denmark and Norway from the earliest days of the Reformation to the present day. He wanted them to mention the removal of the papal bishops in Denmark, and the Lutheran Doctor Bugenhagen's ordainment of seven Evangelical bishops in Copenhagen on 2 September 1537. With regards to the thanksgiving and prayer day on 5 November, Thestrup told his subordinates to interpret the verse for the morning service (Amos 9, 11) as a reference to the Christian church, and explain their congregations how it had been obscured and destroyed by the erroneous teachings of the pope and restored by Luther and his companions.<sup>255</sup> The clergy in Ålborg diocese should also not forget to speak of the remarkable divine blessing of protecting the kingdom from foreign invasion, and exhort their congregations to repent, renounce all

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Frederick IV, the clergy were told to focus their applications on the present jubilee («die Application auf jetziges Fest gerichtet»). Cyprian (Der erste Theil) 1719: 35.

<sup>254</sup> Wulff 1891-93: 324.

<sup>255</sup> «Festo Eucharistiæ, die Veneris seu 5 Novembr. celebrando, in explicando Oraculum Propheticum de suscitando Tabernaculo Davidis, cum respiciatur Ecclesia in adventu Christi, quæ persecutorum crudelitate & Pharisæorum aliorumq; Pseudo-Doctorum corruptelis labefactata, per Apostolos & Discipulos reedificanda erat, mentio simul fieri potest Ecclesiæ, Pontificiorum traditionibus & erronea doctrina obscuratæ & destructæ, [at] luce Doctrinæ Cælestis per Lutherum & alios illustratos Doctores vivis lapidibus restauratæ.» Cyprian (Der erste Theil) 1719: 60.

idols and sins and sincerely follow the divine commands, leaving all human vanity behind.<sup>256</sup> In addition, the dean Sixtus Aspach had prepared a short historical text that the ministers could read when they announced the jubilee on the Sunday preceding the jubilee. The text was intended to give «simple people» («de enfoldige») some knowledge before the bicentenary. It described the state of religion in Denmark from the birth of Christ to the present, the introduction of Christianity in the reign of Harald Klak, and «something about all changes, both under the darkness of the papacy and the enlightenment of Luther's Reformation».<sup>257</sup> The bishop of Ålborg thus ensured that all of the congregations in his diocese were presented with a comprehensive and uniform interpretation of the Reformation and its significance for the kingdoms.

Due to a scarcity of sources, it cannot be ascertained whether measures such as those carried out by bishop Thestrup were made also in other places. In contrast to the relative abundance of sermons from later centenaries, moreover, only four sermons have survived from the bicentenary in 1717, all of them written by the same vicar (Hans Thomæson Trojel of Vor Frelzers church in Copenhagen). It is therefore not possible to conduct a detailed study of the ways in which the official account of the Reformation was transmitted to the general populace by the clergy during this jubilee.

### The bicentenary of the Augsburg Confession in 1730: a failed jubilee?

In 1730, most of the Protestant principalities and free cities in the Holy Roman Empire once again commemorated a landmark event in the history of Lutheranism: the presentation of the Augsburg Confession to the Imperial Diet at Augsburg on 25 June 1530. In contrast to the centenary in 1630, the bicentenary for the Confession took place in a period of religious peace in the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>258</sup> The bicentenary was met with some hostile polemics from Catholic writers, but the amount of these writings was small compared with the earlier jubilees.<sup>259</sup> Despite the relative external calm, however, there was inner tensions in the Corpus Evangelicorum: the ruling house of Electoral

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<sup>256</sup> «Nec omittenda singularis Dei gratia in protegendo patriam nostram ab irruptione hostium, qui vicinorum agros & domicilia desolarunt. Proinde, Auditores, si gratiâ, hactenus à Deo concessa, porro beari, & simul Pace ab hostibus, qui tam diuturno bello statum turbarunt, confirmata, in pristinum restitui exoptant, excitandi, ut seria poenitentia ad Deum propitium se convertant, projiciant à se Idola, Vitia scilicet & peccata, qui Dei provocarunt iram, & sincera pietate observent mandata Divina, ideoque abjecta humana vanitate, soli Verbo Divino adhæreant, ut fide & sanctitate Deo placeant». Cyprian (Der erste Theil) 1719: 60.

<sup>257</sup> «[...]noget om alle Forandringer, baade under Pavedømmets Mørkhed og Lutheri Reformations Oplysning [...]». Wulff 1891-93: 324; Cyprian (Der erste Theil) 1719: 60; Hans Olrik describes the text as a «German poem». This is not evident from the descriptions in Hilaria Evangelica or in Wulff 1891-93. The fact that the text was written for the edification of the «simple people» would suggest that it was written in Danish. See Olrik 1890: 18.

<sup>258</sup> Kapp 1730: c3v; von Ammon 1829: 228-230; Galley 1930: 702.

<sup>259</sup> Galley 1930: 707-708; von Ammon 1829: 232.

Saxony, who had long been the leaders of German Protestantism, had converted to Catholicism along with other German dynasties of lesser importance.<sup>260</sup> The Calvinist Hohenzollern dynasty in Brandenburg-Prussia had instead taken the role as the dominating force among the Protestant states, and led a policy aimed at reducing confessional differences between Lutherans and Calvinists.<sup>261</sup> The sharp conflict between German Orthodox Lutherans and Pietists was already on the wane around 1730, but it was being replaced by a conflict between conservative Lutheranism and early Enlightenment rationalism.<sup>262</sup> Albert Galley writes that «[d]ie ganze Zeitstimmung war einer Jahrhundertfeier des Grundbekenntnisses der Lutherischen Kirche nicht günstig.»<sup>263</sup> According to Hugo Schnell, the internal tensions in Lutheran Germany meant that the jubilee was celebrated with a strange combination of passivity and grandiosity: «Dennoch konnte das Jubiläum, wenn auch ohne großen Schwung, ohne alle Überheblichkeit und in merklicher Veräuserlichung im großen Stil gefeiert werden.»<sup>264</sup>

In Electoral Saxony, the bicentenary was celebrated with three days of sermons and prayers. Work and trade was forbidden and church attendance was mandatory. On each of the three days, a portion of the Augsburg Confession was read from the pulpit for the benefit of the illiterate subjects.<sup>265</sup> The Saxon programme for the jubilee was used as a model in many other Lutheran territories.<sup>266</sup> An almost identical program was prescribed by Duke Friedrich II of Sachsen-Gotha, after «beschehener Communication mit andern Evangelischen Reichs-Ständen [...]».<sup>267</sup> Similar plans were also made for princely territories such as Braunschweig-Lüneburg, Sachsen-Weimar, Sachsen-Eisenach, Prussia, Württemberg, and Free Imperial Cities such as Hamburg, Augsburg and Nürnberg.<sup>268</sup> The bicentenary was also celebrated with an «allgemeines Jubel- und Dancksgungs-Fest» in the kingdom of Sweden and its overseas provinces in Northern Germany.<sup>269</sup> In only a few places did political conditions prevent Lutherans from celebrating the bicentenary. In Erfurt and Salzburg, under the authority of the Catholic Archbishop of Mainz and France respectively, the

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<sup>260</sup> Schnell 1983: 68; Galley 1930: 703.

<sup>261</sup> Schnell 1983: 68; Galley 1930: 703-705.

<sup>262</sup> Galley 1930: 723-724.

<sup>263</sup> Galley 1930: 724.

<sup>264</sup> Schnell 1983: 68

<sup>265</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Erstes Stück* 1730: 84-88

<sup>266</sup> Galley 1930: 747.

<sup>267</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Erstes Stück* 1730: 89-94.

<sup>268</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Zweytes Stück* 1730: 179-188; *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Drittes Stück*. 1730: 263-282; *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Viertes Stück* 1731: 348-358; *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Fünftes Stück* 1731: 394-399, 428-466.

<sup>269</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Siebtes Stück* 1732: 582-604.



celebrations were subdued and quiet.<sup>270</sup> A general motive behind the jubilee seems to have been a desire to promote awareness of the content and importance of the Augsburg Confession among the common people. In most places, the Confession or parts of it were read to the congregations. In the city of Augsburg itself, the Confession was read in the schools once a week in the two months preceding the jubilee, and the text was printed and distributed to school children for free.<sup>271</sup>

The celebrations in the Protestant territories of the Holy Roman Empire were reported in learned journals in several years following the jubilee. The journal *Auserlesener Theologischer Bibliothec*, edited by the Weimar preacher Johann Cristoph Coler, published a supplement in several instalments containing the official jubilee instructions from the territorial princes and city councils, summaries of sermons and speeches as well as descriptions of the medals struck for the event. Johann Erhard Kapp, Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Leipzig, entertained plans to produce a history of the jubilee, modelled after Ernst Salomon Cyprians' *Hilaria Evangelica*. In a letter published in *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesenen Theologischen Bibliothec*, Kapp encouraged the readers to send him information about the solemnities in all the places where no special «Acta Jubilæi» had been printed, as well as descriptions of all the coins and medals that had been struck for the occasion. He was particularly interested in sources from «die Rectores Magnifici» at the universities, the superintendents and «Rectores in Städten» so that the work would become as reliable and correct as possible.<sup>272</sup> The work never materialized, however, due to difficulties with acquiring a publisher and other practical obstacles.<sup>273</sup>

The kingdoms of Denmark and Norway are notably absent from all the surviving documentation from the bicentenary. In the realms of Frederik IV, the celebrations were very subdued both in contrast with the previous jubilee in Denmark in 1717 and the celebrations in the Holy Roman Empire in 1730. There was no large procession with nobility and foreign dignitaries in Copenhagen, no banquet, no musical entertainment, and no commemorative medals. The lack of celebrations helps explain why a thorough search for sources from this event has brought up a very meagre result. Apart from sources from the government archives, I have only succeeded in finding two texts from the jubilee: an edition of the Augsburg Confession printed at the Waysenhaus in Copenhagen in the jubilee year, and one manuscript sermon.<sup>274</sup> The lack of celebration requires an

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<sup>270</sup> Galley 1930: 746

<sup>271</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Viertes Stück* 1731:432-433

<sup>272</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Viertes Stück* 1731: 374.

<sup>273</sup> Hane 1749: 38.

<sup>274</sup> *Tale i anledning den augsburgske konfesjons jubileum i 1730* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 379); *Den Uforandrede Augsburgiske Confession* 1730.

explanation. It is, in fact, doubtful whether the Danish-Norwegian celebration of the Augsburg Confession in 1730 merits the name of a jubilee («Jubel-Fæst») at all. From the outset, it was merely dubbed a *thanksgiving day* («Taksigelses Fæst») by the government, a term that suggests a lower level of ambition than the more spectacular Reformation bicentenary thirteen years previous. Thanksgiving days were not only much more frequently celebrated than jubilees, but they also lasted for only one day rather than taking place over several days.<sup>275</sup>

The first suggestion that the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession should be celebrated in some way was made by Søren Lintrup, who had now become Frederik IV's confessor, in a letter to the king on 4 February 1730. Lintrup pointed out that it would soon be exactly two hundred years since the Confession was presented at Augsburg. Since the Confession constituted not only the fundament of the freedom enjoyed by «our religious brethren» in the Holy Roman Empire, but was also the official confession in his Majesty's kingdoms, Lintrup suggested that this divine mercy could be publicly celebrated and praised in church. He proposed either the third or fourth Sunday after Trinity Sunday (25 June or 2 July) as suitable dates, and added a paper with two Bible verses that might be appropriate for the occasion (Matthew 10,32 and Romans 10, 10).<sup>276</sup> The king approved Lintrup's suggestion. On 3 March, the Danish Chancery sent out an instruction to the bishops about the celebration of a thanksgiving day in all the churches in Denmark and Norway to be celebrated on 25 June 1730. The instruction was almost a verbatim copy of Lintrup's proposal to the king, and the prescribed verse was Matthew 10, 32, one of the two verses he had suggested.<sup>277</sup>

There were, in other words, never any discussions about whether or not the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Augsburg Confession should be celebrated in a grand manner, with festivities, splendour and public ceremonies. From the start it was only supposed to be a thanksgiving day, which was a much more ordinary category of event (for more about thanksgiving days, see chapter 3). The only real evidence we have of *why* the king opted for a low-key celebration in 1730 is a document written in connection with the planning of the next jubilee, six years later. The bishop of Zealand, Christen Worm, then explained to king Christian VI the type of historical events that were normally celebrated with a jubilee. He claimed that one such event was the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, and that this had happened in the kingdoms in 1730, when there had been thanksgivings from the pulpits. He then added that «the same celebration would have been held in a more solemn fashion, or with other church ceremonies, if the last great fire had not left all the churches of this

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<sup>275</sup> For more about the difference between thanksgiving days and jubilees, see Flügel 2005: 91-92.

<sup>276</sup> DRA. DK. D21-58. «Memorial anl: Taksigelse at holdes for Reformationen».

<sup>277</sup> SAB. Björgvin biskop. Brev 9. 1725-1735. Letter from Frederick IV to bishop Marcus Müller, 3 March 1730.

royal capital in ashes.»<sup>278</sup> This was a reference to the great fire in Copenhagen in October 1728, in which large portions of the city was destroyed. Among the buildings consumed by the flames were the city's cathedral, Vor Frue church, and the University of Copenhagen, both of which had been important venues for the jubilee in 1717.<sup>279</sup> Worm was undoubtedly correct in blaming the fire for the lack of solemnities in 1730. It took many years to rebuild the capital, and Vor Frue Church was not even ready for the jubilee in 1736. We can add to this that the Frederik IV himself was in a bad state in 1730. According to Edvard Holm, the king had fallen ill in the summer of 1729, and did not recover completely before his death in October 1730. In the same period, he lost his final surviving son with his second queen, Anna Sofie Reventlow, and he feared for what would happen with his spouse after his death. In the final year of his life, the king was depressed and entertained a plan of retreating to Fredensborg castle and leaving the government to his son.<sup>280</sup> In this state of affairs, it is perhaps not surprising that there were no plans for a repeat performance of the bicentenary in 1717, with eight days of pomp, splendour and ceremony.

Foreign observers, however, had a different explanation for why there had been no jubilee in Denmark-Norway in 1730. In his request for sources from the bicentenary, Johann Erhard Kapp excused himself in advance to those who did not send him any materials: if he did not receive anything from a state, county or city, it would receive no mention in the final work, in which case they would themselves have to answer to posterity for their negligence. The editor Colerus, however, added that many places could be excused for not sending anything. Among these places was Denmark:

Wir haben selbst Nachricht aus Dänemarck, daß daselbst die Jubel=Feyer nicht sonderlich gewesen, und daß man vielleicht solche bis ins Jahr 1737 verspahren wolle, weil gegen die Zeit das Gedächtnis der merckwürdigsten Religions=Veränderungen in diesem Stücke einfällt.<sup>281</sup>

Even though the commemoration of the Augsburg Confession took the form of a thanksgiving day and was celebrated in a subdued fashion in Copenhagen, several contemporaries nonetheless referred to it as a jubilee. The minister in Ørbæk, Rasmus Winther, wrote in his memoirs about all the jubilees he had celebrated in his lifetime, thanking God for the blessed longevity of his life. In the list, he

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<sup>278</sup> «Og var samme Fest, høytideligere, eller med andre geistlige Ceremonier blefvet holden dersom ei sidste store Ildebrand hafde lagt alle Denne Kongelig Residences Kirker i Aske.» Christen Worm, «Jubel Fest pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkaast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>279</sup> Lauring 2003: 48-50, 54.

<sup>280</sup> Holm 1891: 595-597.

<sup>281</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Viertes Stück* 1731:377

included the «jubilee in the year 1730, in remembrance of the Augsburg Confession which was made public in the year 1530.»<sup>282</sup> In his jubilee sermon from 1749, Otho Holmboe enumerated all the prayer days and thanksgiving days celebrated in the reign of Frederik IV. Holmboe, too, wrote that «in the year 1730 on 25 June a jubilee was celebrated in memory of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession.»<sup>283</sup> In Norwegian parish registers from 1730, we find that the event is referred to both as a thanksgiving day and as a jubilee.<sup>284</sup> The minister of Grytten parish even connected the Danish-Norwegian «jubilee» to centennial celebrations in other countries: King Frederik IV had decreed the celebration of a jubilee, «just like in Sweden and many principalities and cities in Germany, where the Lutheran religion is practiced [...]».<sup>285</sup> It is not surprising that many ministers in rural areas referred to the event as a jubilee. For them, the thanksgiving service for the Augsburg Confession would not have been fundamentally different from the actual jubilees. The main difference was that they delivered two or three sermons and read a special prayer during the jubilees, while they only delivered one sermon on the 1730 thanksgiving day. In towns such as Copenhagen or Ålborg, the difference would have been much more tangible, since the bicentenary in 1717 had been celebrated there with ceremony and festivities.

In any case, the circumstances surrounding the subdued celebration of a bicentenary in 1730 demonstrate that the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway, although not participating in the same manner as it had done before due to largely coincidental circumstances, were still very much part of an international culture of Protestant commemoration. When viewed in conjunction with the previous two centenaries, moreover, the thanksgiving day in memory of the Augsburg Confession strengthens the impression that centennial celebrations were primarily driven by leading Danish theologians, rather than the king himself or other civil government officials. It was men like the Zealand bishops Resen and Worm and the theologian Lintrup who suggested that Denmark-Norway should follow the lead of German Protestant states such as Electoral Saxony and celebrate key moments in the history of the Reformation. Their suggestions were almost certainly made on the basis of

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<sup>282</sup> «Jubel-fæst Ao. 1730, til at ihukomme dend Augsburgiske Confession, som skeede Publice Ao. 1530.» Kofod 1934: 114; In his biographies of the bishops of Zealand, Jonas Haas also described the thanksgiving day in 1730 as a jubilee: «Det andet *Jubilæum Augustanae Confessionis*, som indfaldt A. 1730.» See Haas 1761: 100.

<sup>283</sup> «Ao. 1730 den 25 Junii blev et Jubilæum celebreret til Erindring af den Augsburgiske Confessions Overgivelse.» Holmboe 1749:87; See also Heiberg 1749:4; Leigh 1749:7; Lange 1749; Rasmus Øgler, *Aftensangs Prædiken i Roeskilde Domkirke ofver denne anordnede Text 2 Sam: vii, v 18 [...] holden, efter Kongl. Allernaadigste Befaling paa dend almindelige ofver alt i Danmar og Norge, sampt alle Förstendömmene, anbefalede Jubel=og Taksigelses Fest d: 28de Octobr. Ao 1749, for dend Oldenborgeske Stammes velsignede Regering paa denne Danske Throne, nu i 300 Aar, fra Christiani 1mi Regerings Tiltradelse Anno 1449*, Landsarkivet for Sjælland m.m. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel- og ordinationsprædikener 1749. EA-001, D1-67: [20]

<sup>284</sup> For «thanksgiving day», see Nannestad, Elverum, Grue, Strøm (Odalen), Tynset, Stord, Vik (Sogn), Røros. For «jubilee», see Grytten, Veøy, Eidsberg, Hvaler, Våler.

<sup>285</sup> Grytten, Ministerialbok nr. 544A01 (1725-1763): 30-31.

correspondence with fellow theologians in the Holy Roman Empire. In the case of later jubilees in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway, however, both the initiative to celebrate and the expertise to define what the celebrations should be about would come from other quarters. In this sense, the not-entirely-successful bicentenary of the Augsburg Confession in 1730 marked the terminus in Denmark-Norway of the centenary as a manifestation of international confessional solidarity. All of the later centenaries were more parochial in nature and, with the Reformation bicentenary in 1736 as a partial exception, celebrated central political events in the history of the kingdoms rather than the founding moments of the Lutheran confession. We shall follow these developments in later chapters.

### Local centenaries: The centenaries in Kongsberg (1723) and Røros (1744)

In the first half of the eighteenth century, at least two centenaries were celebrated in local communities in Norway. Both of them commemorated the establishment of mines: the centenary of the silver mine in Kongsberg (1723) and the centenary of the copper works in Røros (1744). In addition, there might also have been a centennial commemoration in the town of Christiania in 1724, in memory of king Christian IV's foundation of the town in 1624, although I have found little concrete evidence to confirm that this event actually took place.<sup>286</sup> As far as I have been able to tell, no other towns or institutions in Denmark-Norway saw similar celebrations in the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>287</sup>

Local forces appear to have made the initial steps towards celebrating both of the centenaries. There is no reference to a centenary in Kongsberg in the royal decrees from the Danish Chancery in the period 1722-24.<sup>288</sup> The date that marked the hundredth anniversary of the discovery of silver, July 16 1723, was selected after conferral with the local pastor, Niels Kongsberg, which further indicates that the idea came from local actors.<sup>289</sup> On the other hand, Frederick IV commissioned the medallist Olav Wif to make a jubilee medal, sixty silver specimens of which were

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<sup>286</sup> I have only managed to find two texts where such a jubilee is mentioned, none of which are contemporaneous with the event. The first is the preface to the Danish clergyman Gerhard Treschow's book *Danske Jubel=Lærere*, where Treschow claims that «[i]n Christiania in Norway, the town's jubilee was celebrated with great splendour in 1724». The other is the Norwegian author Conradine Dunker's memoirs. Dunker here refers to Christiania's bicentenary in 1824, when Bishop Sørensen spoke of the jubilee a hundred years before in his sermon: «He spoke of how this [jubilee] had been celebrated in this same church one time before, and about the people who had filled the church back then, of which no one were still alive». Treschow 1753: c1v; Dunker, Ullmann & Steffens 1909: 357; See also Daae 1891: 25.

<sup>287</sup> I have not studied the archives of the mining administrations in Kongsberg and Røros, so the following discussion is based largely on secondary literature.

<sup>288</sup> RA/EA-3023/F/Fc/Fca/Fcab/L0022. Danske kanselli, norske tegnelse. 1722-1724.

<sup>289</sup> Brünnich 1826: 50; Bergwitz 1924: 9.

handed out to the most distinguished courtiers on the king's birthday.<sup>290</sup> This means that the centenary in Kongsberg at least received a royal stamp of approval. In Røros, the initiative to celebrate a centenary came from the clergyman Peter Abildgaard. He wrote a memorandum to the *General Church Inspection College*, a government body established in 1737 to regulate church affairs (see chapter 5), informing them that a hundred years had passed since the copper mine was founded, and that «the officials and the workers as well as the inhabitants of the works have asked [him] to deliver [...] a thanksgiving speech in Røros church.» Christian VI granted Abildgaard permission to deliver a thanksgiving sermon on an appropriate day in the summer, at a time when the miners were home from the mines.<sup>291</sup>

As it turned out, the jubilee in Røros was celebrated with much more than a mere thanksgiving sermon. Both of the centenaries were in fact celebrated extensively for three days with church services, illuminations and processions. In Kongsberg, the Norwegian stattholder Ditlev Wibe entertained the local dignitaries with a splendid dinner party. A fireworks show had been arranged on the east side of the river Numedalslågen, to entertain the general populace. The centrepiece of the celebrations was a triumphal gate on the town's bridge (Nybrua), in the centre of which was a plate bearing a Danish poem in golden letters describing how each of the kings had protected and privileged the mine. The poem also celebrated the recent discovery of silver ore in Numedal.<sup>292</sup> In Røros, the centrepiece was an illumination «in the form of a portal» over the church door. On the top of the portal was a small inscription that explained the purpose of the jubilee, to honour God for his protection of the mine in the last hundred years.<sup>293</sup> The illumination also bore an image of both the abandoned and the still-functioning mines of Røros, accompanied by a poem that described the transformation of «stone» to «food» as the work of «the finger of the Lord».<sup>294</sup> On each side of the portal was a pyramid bearing tools that symbolized the mining profession. On top of the pyramid on the left was the year of the foundation of the mine (1644), and on its pedestal a plate with the words:

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<sup>290</sup> The medal depicted the silver mine in Kongsberg, surrounded by an inscription that stated that Frederick IV had celebrated three jubilees: for the new century (1700), the light of God's word (1717) and Kongsberg silver mine (1723). Galster 1936: 203-205.

<sup>291</sup> «[...]hvorfore Betienterne og Arbeiderne tillige med Beboerne ved Verket av bemældte deres Sognepræst have været begierendes, at hand den Allershøyeste til Ære og til en Ærindring af Verkets Begyndelse samt dets lykkelig Drift nu et gandske Seculo vilde udi den samme holde en Taksigelses Tale udi bemældte Røraas Kirke [...]» RA/EA-3023/F/Fc/Fca/Fcab/L0030. Danske kanselli, norske tegnelse. 1744-1746: p. 177.

<sup>292</sup> Moen 1978: 89.

<sup>293</sup> «Røraas Verkes Opholdere, den store ævige og uendelige GUD til Ære helligholdes denne almindelige Jubel- og Taksigelses Dag den 9<sup>de</sup> Octobris MDCCXLIV.» Abildgaard 1744: 31.

<sup>294</sup> «I hvert af disse Rum GUDS Almagt staar,/ som rette Magazin, hvor nu hundred Aar/ Vi hentet har vort Brød, og høstet vores Grøde./ Hvor Steen ved Herrens Haand forvandlet er til Føde./ Hvad Under at vor Tak til Himlen da sig svinger/ med dette Jubel-Skrig: See her er Herrens Finger!» Abildgaard 1744: 31-32.

«Golden times, jubilee year./ We will never have it better here.» On top of the pyramid on the right was the year of the jubilee (1744) and on the pedestal a plate with the words: «Golden times, jubilee year/ God gives, as long as the world stands.»<sup>295</sup>

Both centenaries proudly showcased the distinctive cultural features of the two mining communities. The large influx of German miners to Røros and Kongsberg since the mid-seventeenth century, caused both by the acute need for mining expertise and because of the upheavals in Germany during the Thirty Years War, had stimulated the development of a particular mining culture that distinguished the workers in the two towns sharply from the peasant culture of the surrounding areas. A notable expression of local identity was the traditional miner's habit («bergmannsdrakten») and miner's tools, both of which were donned for processions and public festivities.<sup>296</sup> In Røros in 1744, a special honour guard was created for the occasion, consisting of twelve of the largest miners and smelters. All of them were dressed in traditional miner's overall («kittel») leather aprons («Artzleder», originally «Arschleder», literally meaning «ass-leather») and caps with a brass emblem depicting the hammer and pick («Eisen og Schlägel»).<sup>297</sup> The honour guard, the foremen and the workers assembled and paraded in order to the church, accompanied by musicians.<sup>298</sup> A similar parade took place in Kongsberg in 1723, where «all the miners walked through the streets in their mining attire».<sup>299</sup>

At the centre of the two centenaries, however, were the thanksgiving services in church. This is particularly evident in Røros, where both the inscriptions of the main illumination and its location emphasized that the miners should address their jubilation and thanksgiving to the Lord. In the sole surviving sermon from these events, the minister Peter Abildgaard thanked the merciful providence of the Lord for having maintained Røros copper mine for 100 years. He spoke of how God had blessed every part of the earth with something to feed the people that lived there and provided them with a living. Even in those places where one would least expect it, such as the waters around the North Pole or in the sunburnt land of Egypt, God had made it so that people could survive and prosper. Abildgaard then went on to describe how the Lord had provided the cold and infertile regions around Røros with something to live by: the plentiful treasures that lay buried deep in the

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<sup>295</sup> «Gyldne Tider, Jubel-Aar./Aldrig vi her bedre faaer.» and «Gyldne Tider, Jubel-Aar/ Give GUD! mens Verden staaer.» Abildgaard 1744: 32.

<sup>296</sup> Berg 1988: 73-74.

<sup>297</sup> The guard was not only assembled to march in the parade, but also to prevent pressure or «other inconveniences» from the crowds of peasants and commoners that came to witness the jubilee. Abildgaard 1744: 29.

<sup>298</sup> Abildgaard 1744: 29-30.

<sup>299</sup> «Alle Bergfolkene i deres Berghabitt trak op igiennem Gaderne» Deichmann 1777: 246; See also Moen 1978: 89.

mountains. Copper was not the most precious metal in the world, wrote Abildgaard, but it was one of the most useful. Just like the people of Israel had been given a land with mountains full of iron and copper (Deuteronomy 8, 7-10, Deut. 33, 24-25) he had given Røros the greatest copper mine in the kingdom. For this, the people of Røros should thank the Lord and praise him for his merciful Providence. A hundred years ago, wrote Abildgaard, the «wild desert» of Røros had housed only seven or eight families that survived by hunting wild animals. Now, in contrast, over two thousand souls belonged to Abildgaard's congregation alone, while even more people in the surrounding areas could thank the mine for their daily bread. God had also protected the people in the previous war against the Swedes. During the recent famine [in the early 1740s], God had ensured that nobody had died of hunger and that even the poorest received their bread and saved their lives. His mercy was even greater, since prosperous times had unexpectedly returned to the land. If the people returned these blessings with their thanksgiving, they could hope that God would be pleased and would maintain and multiply them. Solemn thanksgiving to the Lord was especially important, claimed Abildgaard, in a town that lived by the extraction of metals from the mountains. Unlike the fruits of the land, which always returned even though there might sometimes be a bad year, metal had never been known to grow back again once a mine had been emptied. Abildgaard's hope was therefore not that the Lord would refill the mountains with metals, but rather that he would reveal new hidden deposits.<sup>300</sup>

I have found no sermons from the centenary in Kongsberg, but we may safely assume that the clergy there had a similar approach as Abildgaard, explaining how God had filled the mountains with silver to provide his people with a living. The selected Bible verses (Psalm 68, 16-17; Job 22, 23-25) certainly encouraged such applications.<sup>301</sup> The belief that the deposits of wealth in the mountains and the safety of the workers was dependent on God's providence was an important element of traditional mining culture, among other things manifested in practice of starting every shift with a special prayer, and also in the religious tenor of the mines' names («Segen Gottes», «Gnade Gottes», Hilff Gott zu Erz, «Gott allein die Ehre» and so on).<sup>302</sup>

The centenaries in Kongsberg and Røros clearly drew on the Protestant tradition of commemorating the pivotal events in the history of the Reformation. The name given to the events («Jubel-Fest») as well as the essential underlying theme of collective thanksgiving to the Lord are two clearly recognisable elements found in the two large-scale Reformation centenaries that had been

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<sup>300</sup> Abildgaard 1744: 4-27.

<sup>301</sup> Deichman 1777: 247.

<sup>302</sup> Berg 1988: 74.



celebrated in Denmark-Norway before 1744. Two factors make the centenaries in Kongsberg and Røros quite unique events in the kingdoms in the early eighteenth century, however, namely their completely local scope and the fact that the initiative to celebrate them appear to have come from outside of the central government in Copenhagen. They may also be unique in another sense: I have not found any references to similar events in Germany in the eighteenth century either in contemporary sources, secondary literature or in searches on the internet.<sup>303</sup> It therefore seems that the centenaries in Kongsberg and Røros were genuine local innovations in the jubilee culture of early modern Protestantism.

### Concluding remarks

In our own era, the practice of celebrating an historical event after the passing of a hundred years appears to have become completely normalized, so much so that when the round anniversary of a landmark event approaches, the question is always *how* it shall be celebrated, rather than *if* or *why* it should be celebrated. Michael Mitterauer calls this phenomenon a «compulsion of round numbers» («Zwang der runden Zahl») and argues that it is an ahistorical way of thinking about jubilees. The history of jubilees, writes Mitterauer, clearly shows that it is a very specific way of dealing with the past: «So nimmt ein Blick zurück dem Phänomen Jubiläum sehr rasch jene unhinterfragte Selbstverständlichkeit, die es aus der Praxis der Gegenwart zu haben scheint.»<sup>304</sup> Historian Winfried Müller similarly points out that jubilees are celebrated with the simplest of all justifications, namely that a specific amount of time (100, 50, 25 years) has passed, and that this «practicing of the self-explanatory» («Praktizierung des Selbstverständlichkeit») obscures the historicity of jubilees as a specific type of construction of time («die Historizität einer Zeitkonstruktion»)<sup>305</sup>.

The Danish government did not merely follow an established blueprint when it set out to celebrate centenaries— the government imported a novel cultural practice that had originated in Protestant Germany, and adapted it to local conditions. In this chapter, we have seen that the first Reformation centenary in Denmark in 1617 was largely conceived and planned by one man, bishop

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<sup>303</sup> The theologian Phillipp Hane does not mention anything similar in his account of particular jubilees («besonderen Jubelfeste») before 1749. See Hane 1749.

<sup>304</sup> Mitterauer 1997: 23.

<sup>305</sup> Müller 2004: 30; See also Wolfgang Flügel: «Angesichts der Routine, mit der dies [the celebration of historical jubilees] geschieht, geht jedoch völlig verloren, dass der 'institutionelle Mechanismus' des historischen Jubiläums entgegen aller landläufiger Vorstellung keineswegs eine schon immer existierende, gleichsam naturgegebene Selbstverständlichkeit, sondern vielmehr eine kulturell bedingte Zäsurierung von Zeit darstellt.» Flügel 2005: 11.

Hans Poulsen Resen, and that the structure of the centenary was similar to how it was celebrated in Electoral Saxony, the leading Lutheran state at the time. One hundred years later, the impulse to commemorate the bicentenary of Luther's Reformation came from Christen Worm, who was also the bishop of Zealand. Once again, the Danish jubilee was celebrated in close correspondence with the other Protestant territories of Europe, and information about the celebrations was exchanged with Lutheran clergymen abroad both before and after the jubilee. Denmark-Norway's prominent inclusion in Ernst Salomon Cyprian's *Hilaria Evangelica* is the most visible evidence of the kingdoms' active participation in a European Protestant culture of commemoration. Although Denmark-Norway did not celebrate the bicentenary of the Augsburg centenary with a full-scale jubilee, as happened many other places, the government was well aware that it took place, and would probably have participated in the celebrations had it not been for purely coincidental factors.

The basic structure of the bicentenary in 1717 was closely based on the precedent of the first Lutheran centenary in 1617 and as we shall see later on, the other jubilees in the eighteenth century largely followed the same basic pattern. At the core of the jubilee celebrations was the solemn church service, the purpose of which was to thank the Lord for his blessings he had shown his true church in the past and to pray for their continuation in the future. Collective thanksgiving to God was the central rationale of Lutheran jubilees. Another aspect of the jubilees that was there from the beginning, and which would also become a permanent fixture of all later centenaries, was the academic celebrations at the University of Copenhagen, where professors and students delivered Latin speeches. Finally, jubilee medals became another standard element of the Lutheran centenary. No medals had been struck for the centenary in Denmark-Norway in 1617, but both of the jubilee committees in 1717 recommended that Denmark follow the example of Electoral Saxony and strike such medals. All later jubilees in Denmark-Norway saw the production of jubilee medals.

In the early eighteenth century the historical jubilee or centenary had found its basic form in Germany and in Denmark-Norway, but there were still continual innovations and changes in how and for what category of events they were celebrated. Originally, centenaries were only celebrated to commemorate Martin Luther and events pertaining directly to the Protestant Reformation. By the middle of the eighteenth century, centenaries had been celebrated in memory of royal dynasties, the invention of printing, the peace of Westphalia and other types of historical events. Denmark-Norway appears to have been at the forefront of this development, with centenaries celebrating the establishment of the silver mine in Kongsberg (1723), the copper mine at Røros (1744) and, as we shall see in later chapters, the Danish Reformation (1736), the Oldenburg royal dynasty (1749) and

the introduction of absolute monarchy (1760). The first half of the eighteenth century seems, in short, to represent a period of experimentation and rapid innovation in the history of centennial commemoration.

The development did not go unnoticed among contemporaries. At the beginning of our period, centenaries were such a rare occurrence that the playwright Ludvig Holberg could make a humorous point of it in one of his comedies. In his *Jean de France* (1723), the eponymous hero, a dandy who has returned home from his Grand Tour of Europe, teases his father-in-law Jeronimus for his outmoded style of dress by asking him if he got it made «for the previous jubilee?». <sup>306</sup> For a theatre audience in 1723, the comment would almost certainly have been perceived as a reference to the *first* jubilee more than a hundred years before. <sup>307</sup> Near the end of our period, however, the joke would have lost much of its comic exaggeration, as jubilees had now been celebrated with an average frequency of fourteen years, or six if we include the entirely local centenaries in Kongsberg and Røros.

In 1753, the clergyman Gerhard Treschow published an historical work on so-called *jubilee teachers*, which he defined as persons that, after the Reformation, had faithfully worked as ministers, teachers or university professors for fifty years or more. <sup>308</sup> The book had the form of a series of biographies that described the career, family life and literary production of the jubilee teachers. Treschow's history was inspired by similar works from Germany where the concept of jubilee teachers and the practice of celebrating «Amtsjubiläen» was firmly established by the mid-eighteenth century. <sup>309</sup> The fact that Treschow imported this genre to Denmark is in itself testimony of the increasing cultural impact of the concept of the jubilee. In the introduction to his work, Treschow listed a short inventory of all the jubilees that had been celebrated in Denmark-Norway. After mentioning the first jubilee in 1617, he observed that «in this century we have *really* begun to commemorate God's blessings by celebrating jubilees in this country.» <sup>310</sup> Treschow defined the four jubilees celebrated in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century as «general jubilees» («almindelige Jubel-Feste»). In addition to these, there had also been some particular jubilees («besynderlige

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<sup>306</sup> «A propos, mon cher Sviger Papa, blev icke den Kiøle, I har paa giordt til den forrige Jubelfest? ha, ha, ha, ha! ha». Holberg 1758: k1v.

<sup>307</sup> Eegholm-Pedersen 2004: 55.

<sup>308</sup> Treschow 1753: [ii].

<sup>309</sup> Treschow 1753: [xvii-xxi]; Müller 2004: 47-49; Flügel 2005: 123-124.

<sup>310</sup> «Men i dette Seculo have vi her i Landet for Alvor begyndt at ihukomme GUDs Velgierninger ved at holde Jubel=Feste». Treschow 1753: [xv]; the emphasis is mine.

Jubilæa): the bicentenary of the silver mine in Kongsberg in 1723, the bicentenary of the copper mine in Røros in 1744 and the centenary of the town Christiania in 1724.<sup>311</sup>

In the sermon he delivered during the centenary in 1760, the septogenerian clergyman Jacob Muus, who had celebrated all of the jubilees in the eighteenth century as pastor of Stenløse-Veksø, commented on the proliferation of centennial celebration in the eighteenth century:

[I]f [...] every century from our Lord Christ's birth has its own particular and significant name in the history of the church, then this eighteenth century must rightly be called in our histories Denmark's jubilee century [Seculum Jubilæum], because of the many jubilees since the year 1700, now pertaining to the religion, now to the government.<sup>312</sup>

These examples demonstrate that, by mid-century, contemporaries were sensitive to the phenomenon that has been referred to as the «Verdichtung des Jubiläumsgedankens» (Wolfgang Flügel) or the «Verdichtung des Jubiläumskalenders» (Winfried Müller), that is, an increased frequency of jubilees and a widened palette of historical events deemed fit for commemoration.<sup>313</sup>

Unlike Electoral Saxony, where Wolfgang Flügel has demonstrated that the proliferation and normalization of centennial celebration took place in the course of the seventeenth century, the jubilee tradition became established in Denmark-Norway much later, in the wake of the great Reformation bicentenary in 1717.<sup>314</sup> As we shall see in more detail later on, however, once the royal government had (re)discovered the potential of the jubilee as a way of mobilizing its subjects, it became an innovative initiator of centenaries.

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<sup>311</sup>Treschow 1753: [xvii].

<sup>312</sup> «Og har hvert hundrede Aars Löb, hvert et Seculum fra vor Herre Christi Födse, sit eget og visse betydelige Nafn udi Kirke-Historien, da maatte vel dette 18de hundrede aar med rette i vore Historier, kaldes Danmarks Seculum Jubilæum, af de mange Jubel=Fester, siden Aar 1700, nu Religionen, nu Regieringen angaaende.» Jacob Muus, *ALOE SECLISENIS Sola in Horto Regio Conspicia. Vor Allermaadigste Monarchs Kong Friderich den Femtes Sampt Deris Kongl: Majestæts Rigers og Landes Egen Jubel=Fest, Den Treenige Gud til Ære og Tack Torsdagen d 16de Octobr. og følgende 2de Dage Anno 1760 for Den Kongl. Enevoolds Regiering nu, loved være Herren! Hundrede Aar varig, gid avindelig og vel vedvarende! Udi een Höymesse-Prædicken betragted for Stenløse og Veksø=Meenigheder af Jacob Muus*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69 :[14].

<sup>313</sup> Flügel 2004: 88-91; Müller 2004: 28.

<sup>314</sup> Flügel 2005: 123-124.

### Chapter 3: Annual days of commemoration

Parallel with the evolution of the jubilee tradition sketched in the previous chapter ran another and interconnected development in the history of public commemoration in Denmark-Norway. In the early modern period, Protestant universities, towns and states also celebrated *annual anniversaries* to commemorate important events in the history of the Reformation. In the Holy Roman Empire, various Lutheran towns had already begun commemorating events in the life of Martin Luther or the local history of the Lutheran church during the second half of the sixteenth century. In Pomerania and Frankfurt an der Oder, for instance, Martin Luther was commemorated annually on his baptism day. In Eisleben, where the reformer was born and died, Luther was commemorated on the date of his death. Regensburg and Lauenburg celebrated a thanksgiving service each year on the days the first Evangelical sermon had been delivered.<sup>315</sup> According to Michael Mitterauer, the annual Reformation commemorations in Germany were essentially the same in form and content as the Reformation jubilees: both the liturgy and the message of the two forms of celebration was similar: «Anniversarium und Jubiläum erscheinen-wie bei den öffentlichen Gedenktagen der Moderne– als korrespondierende Formen des Feierns von Geschichte.»<sup>316</sup>

Catholic and Protestant states alike, moreover, celebrated so-called *thanksgiving days* or *Te deum* ceremonies to thank God for important military victories, the conclusion of peace treaties or other episodes of national deliverance.<sup>317</sup> In times of trouble, war and disaster, thanksgiving days were complemented by *prayer days*, which were held in order to beg God for mercy and assistance in times of crisis, and to plead him to avert his wrath from the land.<sup>318</sup> Both forms of worship were rooted in the idea that God intervened directly in human affairs and that, consequently, collective prayer and thanksgiving could affect the outcome of conflicts or crises.<sup>319</sup> Wolfgang Flügel points out the close conceptual link between the Protestant jubilees and thanksgiving services. The term «Jubelfest», which was the most commonly used term for the jubilees in Germany, referred explicitly to the jubilation for God's works of mercy, and the term «Lob- und Dankfest» was used by contemporaries

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<sup>315</sup> Schönstadt 1978: 10-11; Mitterauer 1997: 53-54.

<sup>316</sup> Mitterauer 1997:61.

<sup>317</sup> For France, see Rameix 2011; For Sweden, see Lindberg 1937: 493-494, Forssberg 2005, Forssberg 2014, Ullberg 2007; For England, see Williamson 2008; Johnston 2012; For Electoral Saxony, see Flügel 2005: 80.

<sup>318</sup> For the origins of the extraordinary prayer day in Denmark, see Schwarz Lausten 1990; For a general description of prayer and thanksgiving days, see Lindberg 1937: 387-390; Viken 2014: 224-229.

<sup>319</sup> Viken 2014: 249.

to describe the jubilees. Therefore, suggests Flügel, the jubilees in the seventeenth century should be seen as a special category of the more regularly occurring thanksgiving days: «Da in der Ausrichtung auf Gott und der damit verbundenden Vergewisserung letztendlich der zentrale Inhalt beider Feiertypen lag, kann zumindest für das 17. Jahrhundert das Jubiläum als Spezialfall des Lob- und Dankfestes angesehen werden.»<sup>320</sup>

Flügel's observation is relevant also in the Danish-Norwegian context, where thanksgiving days were frequently held to celebrate the end of the many wars of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. There, the jubilees bore the title «Jubel- og Taksigelses-Fest», and the special prayers written for the occasion were couched in a language of gratitude and thanksgiving.<sup>321</sup> Just like during the thanksgiving day services, the psalm «O! Store Gud, Vi love dig!» was sung after the morning service sermon on the first day of the jubilees. This psalm was the Danish translation of the Ambrosian hymn, the *Te Deum Laudamus*, which was sung as part of thanksgiving services in most European states throughout the early modern period.<sup>322</sup> The conceptual affinity between the thanksgiving day services and the jubilee services were strengthened in Denmark-Norway by the fact that some of the thanksgiving days were made into annual commemorations. In the period 1629 to 1728, three thanksgiving days became permanent celebrations, while three thanksgiving day prayers were incorporated into the liturgical calendar to be read by the ministers in church after the sermon on specific dates of the year.

The practice of celebrating annual anniversaries with special church services was not at all unique to Denmark-Norway in the early modern period. As previously noted, David Cressy has documented the development and cultivation of a «calendar of English Protestant thankfulness, watchfulness, and commemoration» in England from the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>323</sup> The commemoration of these days were formalised in the course of the seventeenth century. After the Restoration in 1660, four historical events were marked with anniversaries in England every year: the execution of Charles I (30 January), the Restoration (29 May), the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot and the Glorious Revolution (both on 5 November).<sup>324</sup> In the Catholic world, the battle of Lepanto (1571) and the victory over the Turks at Vienna (1683) were commemorated with the observation of two Marian feasts every year, the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Holy Rosary

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<sup>320</sup> Flügel 2003: 83-84.

<sup>321</sup> See for instance the official prayer distributed to the clergy in 1749, *Texter og Bønen som skal forklares og bruges paa den almindelige Jubel- og Taksigelses-Fest* 1749.

<sup>322</sup> Malling 1964: 259-268.

<sup>323</sup> Cressy 2004: xii.

<sup>324</sup> Ihalainen 2005: 31-35.

(7 October) and the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary (12 September).<sup>325</sup> In Denmark-Norway's neighbouring kingdom Sweden, the successful discovery and prevention of a royalist coup in 1756 was celebrated with a thanksgiving service every year on Midsummer's Day.<sup>326</sup>

The chapter will discuss the development of a calendar of annual anniversaries in Denmark-Norway in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The practice of annually commemorating military victories and other significant events with special prayers and church ceremonies began in the reign of Christian IV in the first half of the seventeenth century and intensified in the age of the absolute monarchy from 1660. The celebration of annual commemorations reached its apex in the first half of the eighteenth century, precisely the period when the absolute monarchy celebrated all of its historical centenaries. This confluence in time, as well as the structural similarities between the jubilees and the annual thanksgiving days, merits a closer investigation of the development of this calendar.

### **In Memory of the Reformation: the All Saint's Day prayer (1 November)**

In Denmark-Norway, the practice of commemorating important historical events every year with a special liturgy originated shortly after the first Reformation jubilee in 1617. Once again it was the influential bishop of Zealand Hans Poulsen Resen who took the initiative. According to Bjørn Kornerup, Resen instituted two new traditions in the immediate wake of the centenary: Every year on 31 October, one of the professors delivered a Latin oration at the University of Copenhagen in memory of the Reformation. The tradition was probably introduced in 1618, and lasted for almost three hundred years at the University of Copenhagen.<sup>327</sup> A year later, Resen wrote a special prayer in memory of the Reformation to be read in all churches of the kingdoms every year on All Saint's Day (1 November). According to Kornerup, this prayer was very important to Resen, who reminded the Danish clergy almost every year in the national synod that they had to remember to commemorate the Reformation on All Saint's Day. The threat from Denmark's Catholic enemies during the Thirty Years War made Resen even more adamant in stressing the importance of remembering the blessings

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<sup>325</sup> Both feasts had been celebrated by local confraternities and churches for a long time, but were extended to the entire Church in connection with military victories against the Ottoman Empire. The Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Holy Rosary was extended to the universal Church after Prince Eugene's victory against the Ottomans at Peterwardein in 1716. *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume IX* 1967: 211-212; Feichtinger 2013: 25-27.

<sup>326</sup> Nordin 2009: 228-229.

<sup>327</sup> Kornerup 1968: 158; The tradition was also continued at the Frederick's University in Christiania in Norway after the end of the union with Denmark in 1814. See § 24 in *Lov, indeholdende Fundats for det Kongelige Norske Frederiks Universitet i Christiania* 1824: 6.

of the Reformation, and to pray that they would not be taken away.<sup>328</sup> In the prayer, Resen gave thanks to God for having saved his Christian Church

from Papist imprisonment and darkness and for having so mildly let your Evangelical light be lit again by your faithful servant Martin Luther and others who have followed him truthfully in your holy Word, both in these kingdoms and lands as well as other places [...].<sup>329</sup>

Kornerup describes the annual All Saint's Day service as a «repetition of the jubilee», which suggests that the holiday as a whole was dedicated to the memory of the Reformation.<sup>330</sup> In fact, *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* (1685), the liturgical book of the Danish church, did not actually specify that the ministers should speak of the Reformation in their sermons. They were only told to discuss «the faith and Christian behaviour of the saints here on earth» as an example to follow, but without invoking or venerating them.<sup>331</sup> These guidelines were essentially the same as in the *Danish Church Ordinance* (1539), which means that they were never altered in order to enhance the commemorative nature of the holiday.<sup>332</sup> The *Altar Book* (1688) prescribed a section from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 1-13) as the text for the day, and a verse from Revelation (Revelation 7, 1-13) as the epistle for the day.<sup>333</sup> It was certainly possible to use both of these verses, as well as the prescribed topic of saint worship, as the basis for a discussion of the Reformation in 1517. It does not follow that the ministers actually did this in their sermons, however, as it was not actually specified in any of the official guidelines.

In his jubilee sermon from the Reformation bicentenary in 1736, the clergyman Franz Vogelius discussed the commemorative nature of the different annual church holidays. He described All Saint's Day as a day dedicated to «praise God's mercy in carrying out the Reformation» («For at priise Guds Naade ved Reformationens Værk»). He also described the holiday as an «annual jubilee» («een aarlig Jubel-Fest») and wrote that «we speak about this blessing [i.e. the Reformation] in our sermons on the same day, where there is opportunity for it».<sup>334</sup> In his book of portraits of the

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<sup>328</sup> Kornerup 1968: 159-160.

<sup>329</sup> *Forordnet Alterbog udi Danmark og Norge* 1688: 286; Bjørn Kornerup has documented that the prayer which was prescribed in the Altar Book («Alterbogen») was in fact written by Resen. Kornerup 1968: 224-225.

<sup>330</sup> «[Kirkefesten] skulde gentages aarlig», «Gentagelsen af Reformationsfesten», «Jubileæts gentagelse». Kornerup 1968: 158-160.

<sup>331</sup> *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke=Ritual* 1685:28.

<sup>332</sup> Ellingsen 1990: 54.

<sup>333</sup> *Forordnet Alterbog udi Danmark og Norge* 1688: 230-234; The former («Evangelium») was the topic for the early morning and morning service sermons, while the latter («Epistelen/Lectien») was the topic of the evening service sermon, and was also sung after the collect during the morning service. *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke=Ritual* 1685: 14-21.

<sup>334</sup> «[...]om dend Velgierning taler vi samme Dag i vore Prædikener, hvor dertil kand gives Leilighed». Vogelius 1736: [6].



bishops of Zealand, the copper engraver Jonas Haas credited Resen with instituting the tradition that the Reformation was spoken of from the pulpits on All Saint's Day.<sup>335</sup> Both of these authors seem to imply that All Saint's Day was indeed an annual Reformation holiday, where the entire church service was dedicated to the topic of the Reformation. Another example, however, gives the impression that Resen's prayer might have been the only part of the All Saint's Day services that dealt explicitly with the Reformation: in their suggestions for the planned revision of the Church Ritual in the 1730s, the clergy in Venneberg hundred in Denmark articulated the need for an official injunction to discuss Luther's Reformation in the sermons on All Saint's Day: «Would it be possible to most mercifully order the preachers to discuss the topic of the late doctor Martin Luther's Reformation on this day?». In support of this proposal, they claimed that «generally, very little is known about this great divine mercy, although the prayer after the sermon speaks clearly of it».<sup>336</sup> It seems, therefore, that the character of All Saint's Day probably depended on the inclinations of the individual preacher. The holiday does seem to have become established as a «Reformation Day» by the eighteenth century, but the absence of any concrete orders to speak of the Reformation meant that the clergy could choose if they would discuss it in depth in their sermons or not.

### **In Memory of the Thirty Years' War: Prayers on Michaelmas (29 September) and St. John the Evangelist's Day (27 December)**

Christian IV's intervention in the Thirty Years War led to the creation of a new commemorative tradition in the Danish church. After a catastrophic war effort that had climaxed with Wallenstein's invasion of Jutland in 1627, the king managed to negotiate an unexpectedly favourable peace with the Emperor that restored all conquered territories to Denmark on the condition that Christian IV stay out of the war. This agreement, the so-called Peace of Lübeck (1629), was celebrated with a thanksgiving day on 28 September the same year, for which bishop Resen wrote a special prayer.<sup>337</sup> It later became a permanent arrangement for the ministers to recite Resen's prayer every year on

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<sup>335</sup> Haas 1761: 38.

<sup>336</sup> «Om dend Materie om Reformationen ved S.D. Luther maatte Allernaadigst anbefalis Prædikanterne paa dend Dag at behandle?» «Denne störrre Guds Vellgierning vides gemeenlig saare lidet af, skiöndt Bönnen efter Prædiken dend tydelig meldes». DRA. Generalkirkeinspektionskollegiet. F4-13. Dokumenter til ritualets revision 1735-1735; Their complaint would be echoed a hundred years later by the Danish vicar Ludvig Ferdinand Luplau, who claimed that the All Saint's Day prayer contained «various figures of speech that only the more enlightened properly understand», and that «the simple cannot possibly understand the true meaning of all these figures of speech, or know precisely why they are written like this in our annual thanksgiving prayer for the Reformation». Luplau 1836 :1-2.

<sup>337</sup> Rørdam 1889: 169; Kørnerup 1959: 250-251.

Michaelmas (29 September). The *Danish Church Ordinance* (1539) had prescribed a thanksgiving prayer for the harvest on the same feast day, as well as singing of the Ambrosian hymn, *Te Deum Laudamus*.<sup>338</sup> *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* (1685) prescribed the use of a «thanksgiving prayer for the year's harvest and particularly for the peace that God gave us so miraculously in the year 1629».<sup>339</sup> The thanksgiving for the peace of 1629 was, in other words, superimposed onto the more traditional meaning of the feast, the thanksgiving for the harvest, which associated the day with the rhythm of the agricultural year. The day was also traditionally associated with the Archangel Michael and the angels of heaven: the prescribed epistle («Lectie») for the day was Revelation 12,7-12, and the prescribed verse was Matthew 18, 1-11. The clergy was instructed to preach about «the angels and the great benefit and protection we have from them.»<sup>340</sup>

The Michaelmas prayer thanked God for having spared Denmark despite the great sins of the people. They had deserved much greater punishments, but the Lord had decided to protect them in «this dangerous time» since they had put all their trust in his fatherly goodness. They had entrusted him with the protection of their children, «to whom you have particularly promised the protection of you and your angels in all want and danger.»<sup>341</sup> God had withdrawn his support for some time in order to teach the people faith and patience, but he had intervened when everything had seemed hopeless. When «the evil and powerful enemy had invaded both Holstein and Jutland and kept them firmly for a long time», imposing harsh taxes and tormenting the land, the Lord had chased them out and granted Denmark a peace with conditions that were beyond anyone's expectations. He had revealed his power over earthly affairs, as if he wanted to demonstrate the truth of Martin Luther's prophecy that the true church would survive in the North until the end of the world.<sup>342</sup>

The Altar Book of 1688 also prescribed a special thanksgiving prayer every year on St. John the Evangelist's Day, or the third day of Christmas (27 December) for «the peace in the year 1645, 31 October».<sup>343</sup> The prayer harked back to the Peace of Brømsebro (1645), the conclusion of the *Hannibal War* or *Torstensson War* against Sweden. The war started without warning when a Swedish army led by Field Marshal Lennart Torstensson suddenly invaded and occupied Jutland in 1643. The main Swedish war goals were to conquer territories in eastern Denmark and to force Christian IV to

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<sup>338</sup> Ellingsen 1990: 54.

<sup>339</sup> Ellingsen 1990: 54; *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* 1685: 29.

<sup>340</sup> «St. Michels Dag om Englerne/og det store Gavn og Beskærmelse/ vi have af dennem [...]» *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* 1685: 28.

<sup>341</sup> «[...] med vore Smaa/ hvilke du synderlig haver lovet din og dine hellige Englers Beskyttelse i al Nød og Fare.» *Forordnet Alterbog udi Danmark og Norge* 1688: 275.

<sup>342</sup> *Forordnet Alterbog udi Danmark og Norge* 1688: 276-277.

<sup>343</sup> *Forordnet Alterbog udi Danmark og Norge* 1688: 290.

exempt Swedish ships from the Sound dues. Although Christian IV secured some victories, he was eventually forced to sue for peace.<sup>344</sup> On 16 October 1645, Christian IV instructed the bishops of Denmark and Norway to celebrate a thanksgiving day in all churches on 31 December the same year.<sup>345</sup> The thanksgiving prayer was written by Resen's successor, bishop Jesper Rasmussen Brochmand, and was later included in the Altar Book. In contrast to the Michaelmas prayer, this prayer hardly referred to any specific historical events. It only stated that God had let himself be moved by the repentance and promises of the people to

let our enemies leave our land, thou sent peace within our borders, thou forbid the one people to lift its sword against the other, thou said that we should live in safety, thou led everyone home to their property, thou let us come to our homes in peace.<sup>346</sup>

Both of these prayers, commemorating the end of hostilities after two devastating periods of war, would no doubt have resonated with the people that had experienced these events at first hand. But what happened as the distance in time increased from the Emperor's War or the Hannibal War? What did the prayers mean to people living in the eighteenth century? The passage of time may have led to a gradual loss of the knowledge necessary to actually understand what the prayers were about. Such a process is registered by bishop Peder Hersleb in his proposal for the revision of the Church Ritual of 1685.<sup>347</sup> Hersleb suggested here that one of the old thanksgiving prayers be revised and updated:

The Michaelmas prayer that is read after the sermon is very good: it is also certain that God's merciful deeds should not die among us because they are old, but it cannot be denied that most of those who now hear or read that prayer do not know what they are thanking God for, which is an unreasonable church service, for the enemy's attack in Holstein and Jutland 107 years ago; there are more recent and just as great divine blessings for which there are no public thanksgiving; it is strange that there is no thanksgiving in Norway for the desirable peace and great victory in the year 1659, when not only Holstein and Jutland, but all of Denmark excluding Copenhagen was in the enemies hands, since the thanksgiving day on 11 February is not celebrated here, but there is a thanksgiving for the peace in 1629. It is also certain that the prayer is not suitable at all times, since it is a thanksgiving for peace, and when it is read in wartime, the common man is disturbed and thinks that a new peace has been made, so that this prayer needs a revision and a form that is suitable at all

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<sup>344</sup> Rian 1997: 247 ff.

<sup>345</sup> Rørdam 1889: 325.

<sup>346</sup> *Forordnet Alterbog udi Danmark og Norge* 1688: 293.

<sup>347</sup> Lindhardt 1986: 8.

times, so that the peace in 1629 is not forgotten, but also the other great blessings, which were of equal importance, like mentioned above.<sup>348</sup>

Hersleb wanted, in other words, to revise bishop Resen's old Michaelmas prayer, since most people no longer knew anything about the invasion of Jutland and Holstein in 1629. Instead, he wanted to include more recent divine blessings such as the victory against the Swedes in 1659 (see below), which was not celebrated in Norway, and also to give the prayer a more generic form that was suitable at all times.

### In Memory of the Karl Gustav Wars

The next armed conflict against the Swedes, the two *Karl Gustav Wars* (1657-1660), saw the creation of two annual thanksgiving days. One of these was celebrated in the entire kingdom of Denmark, while the other was limited to the town of Nyborg on Funen. The war itself started when Frederick III declared war on Sweden, in what had seemed like a very favourable situation. Denmark was allied with Brandenburg, Saxony, Poland and the Holy Roman Emperor, while the Swedish king Karl X Gustav was occupied with an unsuccessful campaign in Poland. The Danish plan, however, went wrong. As soon as Danish forces attacked the Swedish possessions in Northern Germany, the Swedes turned west and invaded Jutland, crossed the straits on the winter ice and reached Zealand. The first war against the Swedes ended with the Peace of Roskilde in February of 1658, where desperate Danish negotiators had to cede massive territories in Denmark and Norway to the Swedish enemy. The second war started in August the same year, when the Swedish king decided to launch a new attack on Denmark to achieve a final devastating victory. The Swedes invaded most of Denmark and besieged the city of Copenhagen for several months, during which the king and the city's inhabitants mounted a staunch defence of the city. When Denmark's Dutch allies broke through the Swedish navy in the Sound with fresh supplies and troops in October, the siege could potentially go

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<sup>348</sup> «Den Michelsdags Bøn, som oplæses efter Prædikken, er meeget god; det er og vist, at Guds velgjerninger bør ikke uddøe hos os, fordi de ere gamle, men det kand ikke negtes, at de fleeste, som høre eller læse nu den Bøn, ikke veed, hvad det er de takke Gud for, hvilket er en u-fornuftig Guds tjeneste, for fiendens indfald i Holsteen og Jylland for 107 aar siden; der ere yngre og liigesaa stoere Guds Velgjerninger mod Fæderne landet, hvilke offentlig ikke takkes for; det er sært, at for den ønskelige freed og stoere sejer Ao 1659, da ikke alleene Holsteen og Jylland, men ganske Dannemarck, Kjøbenhafn undtagen, var i fiendens haand, skeer ingen tacksiiigelse her i Norge, efterdi tacksigelsesfesten d. 11. februar her ikke holdes; men her skeer tacksiiigelse for den fred 1629. Det er og vist, at den Bøn passer sig ikke till alle tiider, ti den er en tacksiiigelse for freed, og naar den da læses i Kriigstiider, forstyrres den gemeene Mand og veed ikke andet, end en nye fred er sluttet, saa at den Bøn vel behøvede en revision og indretning, som kunde passe paa alle tiider, at vel den fred Ao 1629 ikke bleev glemmt, men ogsaa de høye Velgjerninger, som vare av ligesaa stoer vigtighed, tiliiige med ommeldet.» Lindhardt 1986: 35.

on forever. On the eve of 10 February, the Swedish king therefore made an effort to break through the fortification, in what came to be known as *the storm of Copenhagen*. After a desperate battle that lasted the whole night, the Swedes finally had to give up and drew back in the early hours of 11 February. Although the siege lasted for a whole year longer, the failed attack marked an important turning point in the war. In the following period the Swedes gradually lost control over the Danish islands, and were finally forced to make peace in May 1660.<sup>349</sup>

### The storm of Copenhagen (11 February)

For king Frederick III, the storm of Copenhagen was a day worthy of remembrance. The king ordered the celebration of a thanksgiving day already the day after the victory. In 1660, he made the thanksgiving day an annual event and ordered bishop Hans Svane to select Bible verses and write a special thanksgiving prayer. Svane chose Psalm 124 («If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say») for the early morning and morning service, and Matthew 7, 24-25 (the parable of the wise man who built his house upon a rock) for the evening service. In the thanksgiving prayer that was to be read by the ministers after the sermon, bishop Svane emphasized God's protection of the city in the time of danger and his direct intervention against the Swedish enemy.<sup>350</sup> The storm of Copenhagen was the first event to be commemorated with an entirely new annual holiday with its own liturgy, rather than merely a thanksgiving prayer placed on one of the traditional holidays or saint's days. According to *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual*, the ministers' entire sermons should be about «God's special protection of his own/and particularly of [the protection] he so miraculously showed this country/particularly in the storm the enemy carried out on the capital/Copenhagen in the year 1659/ on the night before the same day».<sup>351</sup>

Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen points out that the thanksgiving day on 11 February had a special political actuality in the aftermath of the introduction of absolute monarchy in Denmark. Although the main theme of the thanksgiving day was God's special protection of Denmark, the «alliance between the king and the burghers of Copenhagen emerged as a significant subsidiary theme.»<sup>352</sup> The alliance between the king and the burghers that had been forged during the siege was further

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<sup>349</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 16-21.

<sup>350</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 38.

<sup>351</sup> «Den gandske Talis fornemmelige Indhold er om Guds sønderlige Beskærmelse over sine/ og allermest om den hand saa underlig beviste dette Land/særdelis i den Storm Fienden gjorde paa Hovedstaden/Kiøbenhavn Aar 1659/Natten for samme Dag». *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke=Ritual* 1685: 25-26.

<sup>352</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 138.

consolidated when the burghers of Copenhagen took a leading role in offering Frederick III absolute power at the Estates General in October 1660. As a reward for its services, the king gave the city special privileges in June 1661 that, among other things, opened the door for the sons of burghers to make a career in the royal administration.<sup>353</sup> The memory of the storm was thus closely associated with the memory of the introduction of absolutism, and the strong alliance between king and burghers was a prominent motive in the official interpretation of both events. Danish historian Niels G. Bartholdy has identified another way in which the regime strengthened this connection. Starting in 1671, the absolute monarchs issued ordinances that created a new and intricate system of rank that to some extent superseded the Danish nobility's old privileges and claim to a special social status. The system awarded special privileges to those who had a position of rank in the system, and rank was exclusively awarded to those who had been appointed to an office by the monarch. This meant that noble birth did not qualify for rank. In 1679, a new ordinance gave «personal nobility» (non-hereditary royal privileges) to royal officials, their wives and children. This ordinance was issued on 11 February 1679. Bartholdy sees the ordinance as an attempt to strengthen the loyalty of the burghers in a time of war (the Scanian War) and claims that the choice of this particular date was an attempt to invoke the memory of a date that was significant to the burgher estate. Subsequent rank ordinances were normally issued on the same date: «Every year on 11 February there was celebrated a special thanksgiving church service in memory of the events in 1659; this was doubtlessly a date that particularly spoke to the burgher estate. 11 February became the normal date for rank ordinances.»<sup>354</sup>

### Frederick's Day (14 November)

During the same war, on 14 November 1659, a joint Danish and Dutch army beat a Swedish army at Nyborg fortress on the island of Funen. The Battle of Nyborg punctured the myth of Sweden's invincibility on the battlefield and gave Denmark hope and a much-needed boost of confidence.<sup>355</sup> A few weeks after the battle, king Frederick III instructed bishop Hans Svane to organize the celebration of a thanksgiving day in the churches of Copenhagen and Christianshavn, to give thanks to God for the reconquest of Funen.<sup>356</sup> The following year, this was made into a permanent annual

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<sup>353</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 47.

<sup>354</sup> Bartholdy 1971: 587.

<sup>355</sup> Bregnsbo 2009a: 8.

<sup>356</sup> Rørdam 1889: 418.

thanksgiving service, to be celebrated in Nyborg fortress every year on 14 November in memory of the «happy victory that the good Lord gave us in that town on that very day last year.» The day was celebrated with church services, music, bell ringing and other solemnities.<sup>357</sup> According to Michael Bregnsbo, the day soon came to be known as *Frederick's Day*. In an article from 2009, Bregnsbo suggested that it was probably named after king Frederik III's illegitimate son Ulrik Frederik Gyldenløve, who had played an important part in the battle as commander of a regiment.<sup>358</sup> In a later article (also from 2009), he instead concluded that the day received its name from the fact that 14 November was king Frederick's name day, and that it was considered a particularly good omen that the battle was fought and won on the king's name day.<sup>359</sup>

Although Ulrik Frederik Gyldenløve was not involved in the genesis of Frederick's Day, there can be no doubt that Frederick's Day was important to Gyldenløve. In 1679, when he had become Governor General of Norway and Count of Laurvigen (Larvik) and Tønsberg, Gyldenløve donated the sum of 2000 riksdaler to the new church in Larvik when he was on his way to Copenhagen from a military campaign in Sweden near the end of the Scanian War. The interests of this sum was to go to the maintenance of the church, as well as to pay for an annual memorial service on *Frederici Day*, 14 November, for which the parish ministers would receive one *rosenobel* (a gold coin worth about four rigsdaler) and the sexton would receive one rigsdaler.<sup>360</sup> His reason for instituting this practice has always been a mystery. Historian Ludvig Daae claimed that one theory was that he donated the money in memory of his survival from a shipwreck on this date, while Daae himself believed that it is simply because it was Gyldenløve's own name day.<sup>361</sup> According to local legend in Larvik, Gyldenløve survived a shipwreck, and was rescued by Danish fishers on the coast of Marstrand on this date.<sup>362</sup> Gyldenløve's biographer Otto von Munthe af Morgenstjerne suggested that Gyldenløve, as a mark of loyal support of the king's absolute power, instituted the day as a remembrance of the Royal Law, which was signed on 14 November 1665.<sup>363</sup> No one, however, has yet made the connection between the Frederick's Day in Larvik and the corresponding thanksgiving day in Nyborg in Denmark, which commemorated an event in which Gyldenløve himself had taken part. Most likely, we have here an example of what Ann Rigney has called a *convergence* of cultural

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<sup>357</sup> Rørdam 1889: 423; Kornerup 1959: 300; Bregnsbo 2009a: 10.

<sup>358</sup> Bregnsbo 2009a: 10.

<sup>359</sup> Bregnsbo 2009b: 110.

<sup>360</sup> Daae 1891: 119-120; Helland 1915: 174; Munthe af Morgenstjerne 1944: 13: For the donation letter, see Wasberg & Nord 1976: 82-83.

<sup>361</sup> Daae 1891: 119-120.

<sup>362</sup> Augestad 1918: 131; Nyhus 1981: 194; Wasberg & Nord 1976: 85.

<sup>363</sup> Munthe af Morgenstjerne 1944: 247.

memory. According to Rigney, memories tend to «converge and coalesce» in specific sites of memory. These sites of memory function as «a principle of economy» in the cultural memory, reducing the number of disparate memories and focusing the remembrance in one place, which then becomes a «self-perpetuating vortex of symbolic investment.»<sup>364</sup> In the case of Frederick's Day, the symbolical importance of the date 14 November must have begun the moment the Danes won an important battle on that day in 1659. The fact that the battle had been won on the king's name day intensified the significance of the date itself. We can be certain that it was not a coincidence that Frederick III signed the Royal Law on the same date, which had now become firmly established as a fortuitous day. Some or all of these factors must have led Gyldenløve to establish his own local remembrance in Larvik. The tradition has survived into our times and the so-called Fredericia Day was last celebrated in 2014.<sup>365</sup> Fredericia Day is therefore the longest surviving of the thanksgiving days that were established in Denmark-Norway in the seventeenth century.

### **In Memory of the Great Northern War (13 January)**

The annual thanksgiving day service on 11 February was celebrated only in the churches of Denmark. After the conclusion of the Great Northern War, however, the Norwegian subjects began celebrating a divine blessing of their own. The mastermind behind the new service was the royal favourite Bartholomeus Deichman, bishop of Christiania. On 7 January 1719, just a month after the death of Charles XII at Frederikshald and before the Swedish army had even retreated completely from Norway, Deichman sent a petition to Frederick IV where he proposed the celebration of an annual thanksgiving service to celebrate that God had delivered the kingdom. A whole year later, the king approved the proposal and Deichman was commanded to write a thanksgiving prayer and collect, and to select appropriate psalms and verses.<sup>366</sup> According to Steinar Supphellen, there had been discussions about commemorating the date of Charles XII's death (11 December), but this was considered too be too provocative for the Swedes. The king instead settled for 13 January, the day the Swedish army had left the country.<sup>367</sup> The instruction to the bishops about the celebration was distributed to the bishops in Norway on 4 March 1720, which means that the first thanksgiving service was celebrated in January 1721. In this decree, the king stated that he had decided to institute

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<sup>364</sup> Rigney 2005: 18 ff.

<sup>365</sup> I thank Terje Fonk, dean of Larvik, and Aina Aske at Larvik Museum for this information.

<sup>366</sup> RA/EA-3023/F/Fc/Fca/Fcab/L0021. Danske Kanselli, norske tegnelser. 1719-1721: 199.

<sup>367</sup> Supphellen 1989: 41.



a special annual day of remembrance «with music and other solemnities» to thank God for the «great mercy he has shown us, our kingdom Norway and our beloved and faithful subjects and inhabitants there, in that all the Swedish enemy forces, after the good Lord's inscrutable will, were forced to remove themselves from the kingdom [...]»<sup>368</sup> At the same time as the other bishops received their instructions, bishop Deichman was told to print the texts, prayers and psalms in Christiania and distribute them to all the other bishops in Norway.<sup>369</sup> The booklet contained an 11-page long prayer to be read aloud by the ministers. In the prayer, the sinful Norwegian populace was given the blame for having brought down the wrath of God upon the kingdoms. In the midst of his anger, however, God had shown mercy and listened to the people's cries for help, chased the enemies out of the land, saved the monarch and given peace to the land. These propositions were couched in the language of the Old Testament: Norway was presented as a new Israel that had angered God, with whom they stood in a unique and special relationship.<sup>370</sup>

In addition to the annual thanksgiving day on 13 January, the death of Charles XII and the end of the Great Northern War led to a small profusion of commemorative activity. Several medals were struck to commemorate the victory.<sup>371</sup> More unusually, the sculptor Diderich Gercken was commissioned to create a monument in memory of the death of the Swedish king.<sup>372</sup> According to Christian Bruun, the monument was designed and paid for by the Norwegian student Matthias Plade, and approved by Frederick IV.<sup>373</sup> Originally, the head secretary of the Danish Chancery Frederik Rostgaard had designed an obelisk that was projected to measure 11 meters in height and be made out of Norwegian marble. Rostgaard's wanted the obelisk to be surrounded by three lions, one carrying the Danish coat of arms, the second the Norwegian coat of arms and the third the three crowns of the union. It would be surrounded by a mural crown, «which in antiquity was given to he who had either conquered or defended a fortress against the attack of the enemy.» Rostgaard's obelisk was topped by a cross, which symbolized that «Norway's salvation came from God and Christ the saviour of the world [...]» It would also serve as a reminder of death, which «in this place

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<sup>368</sup> «[...]for den store Naade, som hand haver beteed os, Vort Kongerige Norge og Vores kiere og tro Undersaatter og Indbyggere sammesteds, i det at ald den Svenske fiendtlig Magt, efter samme grundgode Guds urandsagelige Raad, blev nödt og tvungen til sig der ud af Riget at forföye[...]». SAB. Björgvin biskop. Brev 7. 1716-1720. Letter from Frederick IV to bishop Clemens Schmidt, 4 March 1720.

<sup>369</sup> RA/EA-3023/F/Fc/Fca/Fcab/L0021. Danske Kanselli, norske tegnelser. 1719-1721: p. 240-241.

<sup>370</sup> *Texter og Bønner at bruge paa den Aarlige og Almindelige Taksigelse=Fest hver 13 Januarii [...]*, 1720; See Viken 2014: 230.

<sup>371</sup> Bussæus 1770: 328-331; Galster 1936: 185.

<sup>372</sup> Gercken received 715 riksdaler for the job. Munthe 1906:753; Gercken's contract, price calculations and sketches of the monument with inscriptions are found in the Norwegian National Archives. See RA/EA-4061/F/L0036/0004. Danske Kanselli, Skapsaker. Skap 9, pakke 263.

<sup>373</sup> Bruun 1870: 292.

became master over the king of Sweden.» Finally, a crown would sit on top of the cross, both «to honour the cross of Christ», and to distinguish the monument from all others «as a royal monument, which the Norwegian nation has erected for the immortal honour of our most merciful king [...]»<sup>374</sup>

Rostgaard's project was discarded, however, because it was too expensive.<sup>375</sup> Instead, a cheaper 6-meter tall sandstone monument was erected in 1723, allegedly placed on the exact spot where the Swedish king had drawn his last breath. It was shaped like a pyramid or obelisk and topped by a crown. On each of the obelisk's four sides was a bas-relief, and on all four sides of the pedestal were plates of Italian marble carrying inscriptions and bas-reliefs. The plate facing south carried an image of a female personification of the town of Frederikshald, holding an olive branch and bearing a shield with the town motto «Emmanuel». On the northern plate was an image of the Norwegian lion and a short Danish verse written by Rostgaard, thanking God for king Frederick IV who had protected his kingdoms.<sup>376</sup> The eastern plate bore a longer Danish poem verse, also by Frederik Rostgaard. The verse stated that Charles XII had escaped Stralsund and Germany and then tried his best to conquer Norway until a «command from up high» had killed him. It concluded: «Here he fell; and everyone went home.»<sup>377</sup> On the western plate was a Latin inscription, written by Mathias Plade, describing the doomed military campaign and God-given death of Charles XII, and praising Frederick IV as a victor and bringer of peace.<sup>378</sup>

To my knowledge, the victory monument in Frederikshald is the first monument ever erected in Norway. In fact, there was not many monuments in the kingdoms at all outside of the residential city of Copenhagen, and even there there was not much to speak of at this time, apart from

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<sup>374</sup>RA/EA-4061/F/L0036/0004. Danske Kanselli, Skapsaker. Skap 9, pakke 263. «Allerunderdanigst Forklaring om dend paa hosfølgende Papiir projecterede Trekantede Obelisco».

<sup>375</sup>The price was calculated to 7134 riksdaler.

<sup>376</sup>«HAV TAK, O STORE GUD/ FOR FRIDERICH DEN FIERDE,/ SOM VAR MOD FIENDENS BRUD,/ NEST DIG, VOR VÆRN OG GIERDE!/MDCCXVIII.»

<sup>377</sup>In Danish: «CARL DEN TOLVTE MOTTE VIGE/FRA STRALSUND, OG TVUNGEN SIGE/HELE TYDSK=LAND, SIT FARVEL:/ DERFOR HAND DET NORSKE RIGE/VIL VED FRIDRICHSHALD BESTIGE,/OG VED FLERE GRENDSE=SKEL./HAND EY SPARER KUNST OG MØYE;/ IA NATUREN SELV VIL BÖYE,/ FOR AT FAAE SIT FORSET FREM;/ MEN ET BUD SENDT FRA DET HÖYE/ LUKTE SVERRIGS KONGES ÖYE:/ HER HAND FALDT; OG HVER GIK HIEM. D.XI.DECEMB. MDCCVIII.»

<sup>378</sup>The inscription read: «MORTIFERO GLOBO ICTVS HOC LOCO ET HOC ANNO OCCVBVIT/ET/SIBI MORTEM SUIS FUGAM/QVAS NOBIS DESTINABAT/IPSE MATURAVIT/BELLICOSISSIMUS SVECIE REX/ **CAROLUS XII**/QVI/ITERATO FRUSTRA IMPETU MUNIMENTI HUIUS ET REGNI/**ABHINC ANTE BIENNIVM NON SINE HOSTIS CÆDE OPPVGNATI**/PROPRIIS AVITISQVE VESTIGIIS NON DETERRITUS/OPPUGNATOR/DIVINO HIC FATO CECIDIT/ET/PROPUGNATORUM IMPERTERRITÆ FORTITUDINI/PROPRIAM ADHUC ET PERPETUAM/RELIQVIT/**VICTORIAM**/QUAM/DEHINC POST BIENNIVM INSECVTA FVIT/**PAX**/VICTO HOSTI EXTORTA VICTRICI PATRIÆ VINDICATA/FELICI AUSPICIO AC MODERAMINE/**VICTORIS ET PACIFICATORIS**/INVICTISSIMI DANIE NORVEGLÆ ETC: REGIS/**FRIDERICI QVARTI**/ CUI DOMINUS ADIUTOR/FECIT MATTHIAS PLADE.»

Abraham-César Lamoreux' equestrian statue of Christian V. Shortly after the death of Frederick IV in 1730, however, his son Christian VI ordered the removal of the monument. According to Munthe, this was done to appease the Swedes, who had complained that the monument was offensive for them.<sup>379</sup> The king himself later wrote that he had removed the monument to maintain peaceful relations with the neighbouring kingdom, and that he found the inscription on the monument to be inappropriate.<sup>380</sup>

### In Memory of the Great Fire of Copenhagen (23 October)

The final annual church service created in the eighteenth century was a «prayer and thanksgiving day» established by Christian VI in 1731 in remembrance of the great fire that destroyed large parts of the city of Copenhagen in 1728.<sup>381</sup> Bishop Worm's collect portrayed the fire in Copenhagen as a punishment from God against his loved ones. It had only been a moderate punishment, because if God had been truly angry, he would have «destroyed us completely.» The prayer expressed the shame of the people for not having properly appreciated God's many deliverances. The Lord had saved the city from pestilence (1711) and a long war (1709-1720), but the people had only used their life to sin even more against the Lord. God had decided to give the city of Copenhagen one more chance: «You still wanted to see whether we would hear your scourge, and you, who made and prepared it; therefore sent the fire and the stormy weather to implement your commands, to complete your judgements over us, === years ago.»<sup>382</sup> Consequently, the people owed the Lord even greater thanksgiving and penitence for having saved the city yet again by stopping the flames.

The annual thanksgiving and prayer day in Copenhagen on 23 October had a close parallel in the annual church commemoration of the Great Fire of London in 1666. In the *Form of Prayer* issued for this event, the fire was similarly presented as a divine punishment against the sins of an ungrateful people.<sup>383</sup> In London, the Great Fire was also commemorated with the construction of a monument: in the 1670's, the City of London commissioned the surveyor Robert Hooke and the King's Commissioner for Rebuilding and Surveyor of His Majesty's Works Cristopher Wren to

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<sup>379</sup> Munthe 1906: 756.

<sup>380</sup> Møller 1831: 169; According to Vilhelm Bang, bishop Bartholomæus Deichmann had also opposed the erection of this monument «with all his powers». Bang does not cite his sources, however. Bang 1885: 188.

<sup>381</sup> DRA. DK. D20-16: p. 266, 274.

<sup>382</sup> «Du agtede endny at prøve, om vi vilde høre dit Riis, og Dig, som bandt og beridde det; thi sendte Du Ilden og Stormvejret, som udrette Dine Befalninger, at fuldføre, for == Aar siden, Dine Dommer over os [...]» *Texter og Bønner Som forklares og bruges, paa den Bede=Dag og Taksigelses=Fest 1747*: 3v

<sup>383</sup> *A Form of Prayer To be used yearly on the Second of September, For the Dreadful Fire of London*. 1696.

design what has come to be known simply as *The Monument*, a 62-metre high fluted Doric column. The western side of its pedestal was embellished with Caius Gabriel Cibber's sculptur depicting scenes from the Great fire, while the other cardinal points bore Latin inscriptions describing the course of the fire (north) the heroic actions made by king Charles II to extinguish it (south), and the construction of the monument (east). The column was topped by a gilded urn of fire.<sup>384</sup> There is in fact evidence of plans for the construction of a similar monument in Copenhagen, which was almost certainly inspired by the English model. The designs for the monument were drawn by the artist Carl Marcus Tuscher, who had stayed in London in 1741-1743.<sup>385</sup> Tuscher's sketch depicts a monolith that he envisioned being inscribed with runes (!) describing the event.<sup>386</sup> The pedestal would be decorated with a Latin inscription and a bas-relief depicting the fire. On Tuscher's sketch, the monolith is topped by a phoenix rising out the flames.<sup>387</sup> Tuscher envisioned that the monument could be placed on Amager market square (Amagertorv), but it was never actually constructed.<sup>388</sup>

### Popular responses to annual commemoration

We have very few sources that can tell us anything about subjective experiences of commemoration ceremonies in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. As a consequence, we know much about how the government designed the thanksgiving days, but very little information about how ordinary subjects responded to them. There are, however, some scattered statements that purport to say something about the attitudes of the commoners to the thanksgiving day services that were celebrated annually in Denmark and Norway. These statements do provide some small indications of the extent to which the general populace might have adapted the official narratives of the past they were designed to convey. The attitudes and values of the majority of the population in eighteenth century Denmark-Norway are thus «an elusive quarry» mediated through secondary sources written by a literate minority. While such texts are often distorted and biased, however, they can provide valuable information if treated with care.<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Stevenson 2005.

<sup>385</sup> Due 1916: 46-49.

<sup>386</sup> «Tutto L' Obelisco sara coperte di Lettere Runiche per esprimere il Fatto tristo». Due 1916: 111.

<sup>387</sup> A phoenix rising from the ashes was one of three alternative finials projected by Cristopher Wren for the Monument in London, described in Cristophers Wren's *Parentalia*. Stevenson 2005: 55.

<sup>388</sup> Due 1916: 112.

<sup>389</sup> Burke 2009: 104 ff.

The challenge with most of these texts is that they are written with a very specific purpose in mind, namely to criticize the overabundance of feast days in the liturgical year. In the course of the eighteenth century, reform-oriented clergy in Denmark and Norway attempted to reduce the number of feast days in the church. Their criticism can in part be read as examples of what Peter Burke has called «the reform of popular culture» in early modern Europe.<sup>390</sup> In the course of the early modern period, European elites attempted to eradicate what they considered to be remnants of ancient religious practices and, in Protestant countries, of medieval Catholicism. In many Protestant territories, the reforms also involved a restructuring and purification of the ritual year, a process that was far from completed with the Reformation.<sup>391</sup> In Denmark-Norway, the process was still ongoing in the eighteenth century, and was not completed until a comprehensive «holiday decree» in 1770, which eliminated eleven holidays, among others, Epiphany, Candlemas, the Feast of the Visitation, St. John's Day, Michaelmas and All Saint's Day.<sup>392</sup> According to Jens Toftgaard Jensen, the government discussions preceding this reform included religious, moral and economic arguments: it was argued that the holidays were leftovers from Catholic times, that too many holidays led to idleness and debauchery and, the argument that apparently carried the most weight during the legislative process that eventually led to their abolition, that they had a detrimental effect on agricultural production.<sup>393</sup> Earlier in the century, the clergy's arguments had primarily been religious. Their main problem with the feast days was that they reduced the glory of the Sabbath, the only holy day instituted by God himself. As mere human inventions, many of them in fact introduced in the dark and superstitious days of Catholicism, the monarch could easily abolish them if he so wished. Some clergymen also pointed out that the feast days led to idleness, drunkenness and immoral behaviour and kept the peasant from the plough.

In 1735, Akershus bishop Peder Hersleb wrote a memorandum for the planned revision of *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* (1685).<sup>394</sup> Hersleb suggested that the king reduce the number of feast days in the Danish church, since many of these were remnants from the papacy. The only reason Luther had not removed these days, he claimed, was that he had not wished to change everything all at once. Hersleb therefore suggested that a number of feast days were either removed completely or made into days of penance («Bots-dage»). He specifically mentioned Epiphany, Candlemas, the Feast

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<sup>390</sup> Burke 2009: 289.

<sup>391</sup> Cressy 2004: 34-49; Jensen 2004: 82-83.

<sup>392</sup> Jensen 2004: 73-74.

<sup>393</sup> Jensen 2004: 84-85.

<sup>394</sup> See Lindhardt 1986.

of the Visitation, St. John's Eve, Michaelmas and All Saint's Day.<sup>395</sup> Hersleb's main objection against these days was that common people behaved as though they were more holy than the Sabbath itself. The arrangements in the churches were partly to blame for this, since on these days there was extra ringing and chiming of the church bells, special music and extra decoration of the church interior. All this had «led the common man to think, and strengthened him in his belief, that such days are holier, which has impaired the glory of the Sabbath».<sup>396</sup> Hersleb therefore suggested that all such distinctions should be forbidden, and that soldiers should be drilled on the feast days rather than on Sundays, so that the difference between «the Lord's Sabbath and human feast days» was clearly demonstrated.<sup>397</sup>

Hersleb's claims are interesting in the context of popular responses to the annual commemorations. Not only did two of the feast days he singled out as too popular among the general populace commemorate historical events, namely Michaelmas (the peace in 1629) and All Saint's Days (Luther's Reformation in 1517), he also added that the same problems were true of the thanksgiving day in Norway on 13 January and the thanksgiving and prayer day in Copenhagen on 23 October, in memory of the great fire in 1728.<sup>398</sup> Hersleb's remarks indicate that these days meant something to the common subjects, although one cannot be certain of exactly why this was the case. Michaelmas, for instance, had long been an important day in the traditional ritual year, and marked the last day of the harvest as well as the day when the livestock should have been brought back from pasture.<sup>399</sup> Scattered remarks in the Norwegian clergy's responses to the proposed revision of the law book indicate that this was one of the days in the church year when attendance was highest.<sup>400</sup> It might well be that the peasants were primarily interested in Michaelmas' associations with the end of the harvest season, rather than caring about its commemorative functions. This suspicion is further supported by bishop Hersleb's claim that few Norwegian commoners had any knowledge of the historical events that the Michaelmas prayer referred to. That being said, it is still interesting that Hersleb claimed that these days were marked by high attendance and extra solemnity.

One of Hersleb's subordinates, the deacon Johann Cold, made similar objections in 1738 against the many feast days in the Danish-Norwegian church, in a proposal for revisions of the

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<sup>395</sup> Lindhardt 1986: 25.

<sup>396</sup> Lindhardt 1986: 25.

<sup>397</sup> Lindhardt 1986: 25-26

<sup>398</sup> «Iblandt disse fest-dage, som her opregnes maatte en og vel indføres til sidst, d. 13. Januar: Tacksigelsens Fest i Norge og den 23. Octobris Takke og Beede-Dag i Københafn.» Lindhardt 1986: 26

<sup>399</sup> Møller 1933: 96-101.

<sup>400</sup> Two times a year, on Palm Sunday and the fourth Sunday in Advent, the clergy were supposed to read certain parts of the law book from the pulpit after the sermon (NL 2-4-13). Bishop Niels Dorph and the ministers of Toten and Valdres claimed that church attendance was low on these days and suggested that these days should be replaced with Maundy Thursday and Michaelmas, when the entire congregation was present. Fæhn 1985: 199, 203, 249.

second book of *Norske Lov* (the Norwegian law code of 1687). He claimed that «[t]oo many feast days contribute to the impairment of the Sabbath and the most important feasts, prevent the common man from working, and makes a land poor». Like Hersleb, Cold suggested that the Feast of the Visitation, St. John's Eve, Michaelmas, All Saint's Day and Candlemas should either be removed, or that people should be allowed to work and the soldiers to drill on these days. Interestingly in our context, Cold suggested a way of salvaging the commemorative content of some of these feast days by adding that «[i]f there is, on some of these days, something to explain to the congregation about the remembrance of God's merciful deeds, this could happen on the following Sunday, so that one could for instance speak about the Reformation on the first Sunday in the month of November.»<sup>401</sup>

Almost twenty years later, the entire clergy in Norway were asked to give their opinions on the second book of the Norwegian law code of 1687. In the response from Bergen there was a call for a reduction of feast days, which were allegedly misused by the commoners.<sup>402</sup> Unlike their colleagues in the town, however, the clergy in the nearby rural district of Nordhordland wanted to keep the prescribed amount of feast days. If some of them were abolished, they would have to use other labour-free days instead to preach and hold services «to answer the needs of their congregations.»<sup>403</sup>

These remarks do suggest that the many feast days in the liturgical year, among them the annual commemorative rites, were popular among the general populace in Norway. These claims alone do not allow us to make any conclusions, since it is possible that the clergymen exaggerated the people's attachment to these days in order to support their argument for reform. However, Jens Toftgaard Jensen mentions instances of resistance in Norway to the royal decree of 23 October 1770, which support the impression that the feast days were considered important at least in this kingdom. Hans Hagerup Krog, minister of Ibbestad parish in Troms, continued to observe all of the abolished holidays. When confronted by his superiors in Copenhagen, he replied that «a large number of my parishioners have come to the church and wholeheartedly demanded it of me.»<sup>404</sup> The congregations of four parishes in Akershus diocese wrote a petition to the Danish Chancery in 1773 where they asked (in the Chancery's paraphrase) if «the abolished holidays that are ordained to

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<sup>401</sup> «Er ellers Meenigheden paa nogen af saadanne dage noget at forestille til Guds Velgjerningers erindring, da kunde det skee paa næste Søndag, Saasom om Reformationen kunde talis dend første Søndag i November Maaned, etc.» Fæhn 1985: 112.

<sup>402</sup> They wanted, however, the thanksgiving day on 13 January to be included in the revised law book. Fæhn 1985: 287.

<sup>403</sup> Fæhn 1985: 298.

<sup>404</sup> Hagerup Krog was threatened with suspension, and later removed to another parish for refusing to stop observing the abolished holidays. Jensen 2004: 89; Erlandsen 1857: 157; Fæhn 1994: 242.

remember the great blessings that God has shown the holy ancestors can still be observed, since the [congregations] think that the work they carry out on these days will bring the wrath of God upon them.»<sup>405</sup> According to Toftgaard Jensen, the government's abolition of the feast days collided with the congregations' form of worship, which was based on the repetition of rituals, and their understanding of the deity, which was that of the stern and directly intervening Lord of the Old Testament. He speculates whether such resistance to the reform might have been stronger in Norway, where the fickleness of nature made the peasants material existence more insecure.<sup>406</sup>

We have yet another testimony of the Norwegian peasantry's reluctance towards the abolition of the feast days, written around the same time as the instances mentioned above. In 1773, the 59-year-old Norwegian minister Thomas Georg Krog published a book of fictional dialogues between an old clergyman and an old peasant, in which the pair discussed a variety of current topics. In the preface, addressed to king Christian VII, Krog wrote that the purpose of the text was to «enlighten the minds of the peasants, widen their understanding, correct their thoughts and improve their judgements of your Majesty's actions [...]».<sup>407</sup> In every dialogue, the peasant wants the minister to explain some new government policy that he does not understand. The peasant is conservative and sceptical of novelty, but he always changes his mind after a firm but friendly lecture from the reform-minded and enlightened minister. In the first dialogue, the minister asks what the peasant thinks of the recent abolition of feast days. The latter replies that the topic had been discussed at a wedding in his brother-in law's house, where everyone was disconcerted by the decree. According to the peasant,

[t]hey thought that our old religion would be abolished; that we would now have a new faith. They prayed that God would protect their children and their descendants that would live after them. The most sober and decent of them wanted everyone to go to the local district court and give public testimony that they did not want to lose the holidays, and thereafter write a collective petition to the king, asking if those holidays could remain, which they and their ancestors had observed for such a long time, for which God had given them both corn and kernel, both crops and blessings.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> Quoted from Jensen 2004: 90. See also Fæhn 1994: 241.

<sup>406</sup> Jensen 2004: 90.

<sup>407</sup> «[...] Joplyse Almuens Forstand, udvide dens Begrebe, rette dens Tanker, og forbedre dens Domme over Deres Majestæts Gierninger [...]. Krog 1773: [iii].

<sup>408</sup> «De meente, at vor gamle Religion skulle afskaffes; at vi skulle nu faae en nye Troe. De bad Gud bevare deres Børn og Efterkommere, som skulde leve efter dem. De Sindigste og Skikkeligste vilde, at de alle skulde gaae paa Tinget, og tage Tings-Vidne paa, at Almuen ikke vilde miste Hellig-Dagene, og derefter alle tilsammen supplicere til Kongen, at Hellig-Dagene matte blive staaende, som baade de og deres Forfædre i saa lang Tid havde helligholdet og da gav Gud dem baade Korn og Kierne, baade Grøde og Velsignelse.» Krog 1773: 7.



The minister then starts to give the peasant the correct understanding of the reform, employing the usual arguments: he claimed that most of the feast days were mere human inventions, many of them indeed created by Catholic popes, that they led to idleness and immorality, and that they were unnecessary.<sup>409</sup> While the dialogue itself may not be entirely convincing, there is no reason to doubt that the topic of the discussion, the peasantry's conservative attachment to the old feast days, reflects actual conditions in Norway in this period. Krog would hardly have bothered to write about the reluctant attitude of the peasants if he did not actually consider it to be a widespread problem. A few months later, moreover, the Danish Chancery in fact responded to the same popular demand by issuing a memorandum to the Norwegian bishops stating that it had come to their attention that «many of the commoners in Norway wishes that the abolished holidays be celebrated again». Since these days were used for nothing but «idleness and other impermissible social gatherings and drinking parties», the bishops and deacons should convince the peasants in «those parishes where it is found necessary» that these days did not have divine origins and were better spent on honest labour.<sup>410</sup>

We have, then, several accounts of resistance to the abolition of feast days from different parts of Norway from around the same period. All suggest the same thing, namely that Norwegian commoners considered the observance the feast days important in securing the material well-being and preservation of the community. If they were not observed, the peasants feared they would provoke the wrath of God or that their crops would fail. Add to this Hersleb's remarks about the relative importance attributed to the feast days by the peasants, and the scattered references to idleness and drinking parties, and we are left with the impression that they have been a central part of popular religiosity in many places in Norway the period. We can therefore surmise that the concept of days of collective thanksgiving encountered a receptive environment among the Norwegian peasantry. We do not know of similar sentiments about the Danish peasantry, but it is uncertain whether this is due to a lack of sources or if the feast days were indeed considered less important in Denmark.

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<sup>409</sup> Krog 1773: 9-40.

<sup>410</sup> SAB. Björgvin biskop. Brev 17. 1767-1771. «Pro memorial» 8 January, 1774; As late as 1817, a peasant from Strandebarne in Norway visited the bishop of Bergen and asked him if he could propose to the Norwegian parliament or government that they «reestablish the holidays that were abolished by Christian VII.» See bishop Pavel's diary on 30 October 1817. <http://www.dokpro.uio.no/litteratur/pavels/1817-19/1817-19014.html>. Retrieved 15.01.2015.

## Concluding remarks

The annual thanksgiving days and prayers were a central part of a culture of public commemoration in Denmark-Norway in the first half of the eighteenth century. Whereas the jubilees occurred at a frequency of approximately every ten years in this period, the thanksgiving days were a more constant reminder of God's great mercies towards the absolute monarchs and their kingdoms of Denmark and Norway. One or two times every year the ministers spoke to their congregations about how their fathers and ancestors had been delivered from great threats. This means that although the celebration of centenaries was still a relatively novel practice in the early eighteenth century, one of their most central components would have been highly familiar to the subject in all parts of the two kingdoms.

Most of the thanksgiving days and thanksgiving prayers had their origins in the seventeenth century. We have already seen some claims to the effect that some of them may in fact have lost some of their relevance for ordinary people in the eighteenth century. There are also indications that the preaching on these days might have changed as the distance in time from the events themselves increased. Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen has identified an interesting development in the postil literature from the late seventeenth to the eighteenth century with regards to the 11 February thanksgiving service: whereas the seventeenth-century sermons dealt with the event itself and interpreted it as an instance of divine intervention, the sermons in postils from the eighteenth century used the storm on Copenhagen merely as a «starting point for general admonitions about sin, repentance and trust in God.»<sup>411</sup>

The tendency identified by Olden-Jørgensen may represent a necessary adjustment to changing societal conditions. The prolonged absence of new wars could have led to the loss of an immediate sense of looming danger that was perhaps necessary to identify with the traditional message of the thanksgiving days and prayers. If this was the case, sermons that steered the idea of repentance and thanksgiving away from the religious collective and towards the individual believer could have been a way of making the thanksgiving days more relevant to contemporaries. Nina Koefoed has suggested that societal developments in Denmark in the eighteenth century, particularly economic growth and the long-term absence of war, made the idea of God's punishment more

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<sup>411</sup> «[...] som et afsæt for almene formaninger om synden, omvendelsen og tilliden til Gud.» Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 42; The only surviving 13 January sermons from Norway were written shortly after the end of the Great Northern War. It is therefore not possible to examine whether a similar change took place there in the same period. See Gierdum 1721 [?]; Bartholomæus Deichmann, *Preken ved takkegudstjenesten ved fredsslutningen 1720*, <http://www.ntnu.no/ub/digital/document/ntnu231>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

abstract and easier to abandon. The influence of Pietism, with its internalization of religion and stronger emphasis on the individual's responsibility for his own salvation, might also have contributed to a reduced fear of God's collective punishment. According to Koefoed, the absolute monarchs were no longer directly responsible in the same way as before for averting God's wrath by ensuring that the subjects followed the Ten Commandments: «The image of God's wrath must have been easier to use as political legitimation in a time of frequent wars, ravaging foreign troops and widespread famine.»<sup>412</sup>

Øystein Idsø Viken, on the other hand, has argued that the threat of God's punishment was a continuous motive in public prayer days in the long eighteenth century. Although Denmark-Norway did not experience war within its own borders, foreign wars and catastrophes (such as the earthquake in Lisbon in 1755) were the topics of new public prayer days where God's wrath was invoked as a very real possibility. The threat of God's punishment and the need for collective atonement was, moreover, actualized with renewed force when the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway once again entered into armed conflict in the first decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>413</sup> Viken's point is no doubt correct: the survival of public prayer and thanksgiving days testifies to the lasting relevance of a worldview where both war and peace were seen as concrete signs of God's will. Nonetheless, it seems that the eighteenth century saw a gradual change in how the central government perceived the necessity of celebrating thanksgiving days and reciting thanksgiving prayers. Both the annual thanksgiving service in Denmark on 11 February and in Norway on 13 January were eventually abolished in 1766, only a few weeks after the marriage between the Swedish crown prince and the Danish princess Sofia Magdalene. The abolition was motivated purely by political reasons: according to a royal rescript on 17 October 1766, the days were no longer to be celebrated because of «the friendship and close relations between us and the Swedish royal house [...]». Since the king still wanted God's protection and blessings to be remembered by the subjects, however, he instructed the ministers to add a short paragraph to the Sunday prayers following 11 February and 13 January. Compared to bishop Wandal's dramatic portrayal of God's protection of the Danish Israel and bishop Deichman's invocations of the Lord Zebaoth, the new prayer was notably subdued:

We remember with heartfelt thanksgiving the powerful help and great beneficence that thou, O almighty God and dear father of mercies showed this kingdom for almost 50 years ago on 13

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<sup>412</sup> «Billedet af Guds vrede må have været lettere at bruge som politisk legitimering i en tid med hyppig krig, hærgen af fremmede tropper og utbredt hungersnød.» Koefoed 2008: 63.

<sup>413</sup> Viken 2014: 251.

January. We therefore praise thy most holy name and shall never forget the great things thou have done to us.<sup>414</sup>

An annual ritual that had lasted for 107 and 45 years, respectively, was thus reduced to a short paragraph in a regular Sunday prayer, because of a dynastic union between the two old rivals Denmark and Sweden. On the one hand, the abolition shows that *raison d'état* weighed more heavily than the perceived need to placate God through collective thanksgiving. On the other hand, the fact that the king opted to keep a small remnant of the old ritual suggests that the imperative to remember God's blessings was still not considered completely obsolete.

As previously noted, the rest of the annual commemorations were abolished in 1770, when the government issued the *holiday decree*, which removed a total of eleven feast days from the liturgical year. The church service on the third day of Christmas and the thanksgiving and prayer day for the fire in 1728 were completely abolished, while the prayers on Michaelmas and All Saint's Day were transferred to the following Sunday, just like the thanksgiving day prayers four years before.<sup>415</sup> Jens Toftgaard Jensen interprets the reform as part of a wider religious shift, from collective and ritually based forms of worship aimed at mitigating the wrath of God, to more personal forms of belief where the relationship with God was individual and did not require the state to regulate the behaviour of the subjects.<sup>416</sup> As we have seen, the ordinance was met with some popular resistance, which shows that the development was not completely streamlined and uncomplicated.

The years between 1728 and 1766 marked the zenith of annual thanksgiving commemorations. In this period, the subjects in most parts of the kingdoms celebrated one or two annual thanksgiving days and heard three thanksgiving prayers in the course of a normal year. This period coincides almost exactly with the period when all the jubilees were celebrated in Denmark-Norway. After 1770, the subjects celebrated no annual thanksgiving days and all the thanksgiving prayers had either been abolished or transferred to ordinary Sunday services. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, after 1760, there were no more jubilees. The first half of the eighteenth century seems to represent, in other words, a particularly intensive «era of commemoration» in the history of Denmark-Norway.

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<sup>414</sup> «Vi erindrer os med inderlig Taksigelse den mægtige Hielp og store Velgierning, som Du, O, almechtige Gud og Barmhertighedernes kiere Fader, nu saa nær for 50 Aar siden paa den 13 Januarii har beviist dette Rige. Vi priise derfor Dit allerhelligste Navn og vil aldrig forglemme de store Ting Du har gjort imod Os.» RA/EA-3023/F/Fc/Fcab/L0038. Danske Kanselli, norske tegnelser. 1766-1768: p. 182; The same prayer was issued for Denmark, only with a different date and number of years.

<sup>415</sup> Jensen 2004.

<sup>416</sup> Jensen 2004: 84.

## Chapter 4: The media of centennial commemoration

The purpose of this chapter is to give an outline of the primary *media* that were used in the context of centennial commemoration. I shall analyse the specific characteristics and functions of the most important media used during the centenaries: commemorative medals, jubilee sermons, illuminations and newspapers. In order to gain a proper understanding of the characteristics and functions of these media, it is necessary to reconstruct the meanings that contemporaries invested in them. In part, relevant information can be gathered by studying how contemporaries actually used them, as this is sometimes described in official and private accounts of the jubilees. Our interpretation is also assisted by sources that describe the production of the media, such as official correspondence and account books. Finally, we are helped by contemporary works of a more theoretical nature, such as homiletical works, theological literature and contemporary historical studies of these media. The chapter also aims to clarify the extent to which the absolute monarchy influenced and controlled the production of each medium. To what extent, for instance, did the royal government control the production and distribution of jubilee medals? To what extent did the government influence what the clergy wrote in their sermons? And did the authorities encourage or in any way influence their publication?

### Annals in metal: the production of commemorative medals

In its early modern form, the art of striking medals originated in Renaissance Italy as part of the rediscovery of Roman antiquity. From the outset, medals were appreciated for their unique commemorative potential. Renaissance rulers were quick to grasp that, unlike other more ephemeral art forms such as paintings, the medal had qualities that allowed it to resist decay and survive through the centuries: medals promised immortality. In addition, the small size and robustness of medals made them a convenient medium of communication and friendly exchange between rulers, and as a gift to clients and subjects.<sup>417</sup> As the art of striking medals spread and reached Europe north of the Alps, the medal gradually came to acquire new functions. In the context of the Dutch revolt against Spain in the late sixteenth century, medals became a medium of political propaganda and

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<sup>417</sup> Jones 1979: 28-29; In the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth centuries, the Danish kings gave «kontrafejer», medals carrying their portrait, as a sign of royal mercy to foreign dignitaries and subjects. Galster 1931: 12.

confessional polemic.<sup>418</sup> In the Lutheran territories of the Holy Roman Empire, the art of the medal helped promulgate the Reformation message and bolster confessional identities. Unlike in Italy, where the medal was intimately connected with the culture of the princely court, the German medals were firmly rooted in the environment of the urban burgher class where medals were given as presents to friends and loved ones, kept as family heirlooms and worn on the chest as «Schmuck und als Bekenttnis».<sup>419</sup>

The strongest influence on Danish royal medals in the eighteenth century was the medals of the French absolute monarch Louis XIV. As part of a policy of cultural centralization, the king's counsellor Jean-Baptiste Colbert organized French artists into academies that were given the task of glorifying the reign of Louis XIV and to ensure the preservation of his deeds for posterity.<sup>420</sup> The so-called «petite académie» (from 1696, *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*) was responsible, among other things, for designing medals and producing so-called medallic histories. According to Peter Burke, the French monarch's «medallic (or metallic) history was planned as an account of the reign in book form, with engravings of all the medals struck to commemorate particular events, arranged in chronological order and accompanied by an explanatory text». The first edition of the so-called *Médailles sur les principaux évènements de Louis le Grand* was published in 1702 and a second edition in 1723.<sup>421</sup> This work exerted an enormous influence on the rest of Europe and was imitated by several other monarchs in the course of the eighteenth century.<sup>422</sup> The kingdom of Denmark was no exception. Christian V was heavily inspired by the cultural achievements of Louis XIV, including the practice of striking medals to commemorate military victories and other glorious deeds in his reign.<sup>423</sup> His grandson Christian VI (1730-1746) had a particularly keen interest in numismatics and the art of striking medals: «More consciously than his predecessors, Christian V and Frederik IV, he resumed Louis XIV's idea of creating a *histoire métallique*, a kind of annal in metal, through which his reign might be commemorated for remote generations.»<sup>424</sup> Under the numismatic enthusiast Christian VI, the production of royal medals was therefore organized more systematically and placed under the auspices of the Royal Danish Academy for Sciences and Letters. The Academy had in fact originated in 1739 as the *Commission for Coins and Medals*, directly modelled after the *French Académie des Inscriptions*

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<sup>418</sup> Jones 1979: 48-50.

<sup>419</sup> Schnell 1983: 15-17.

<sup>420</sup> Burke 1992: 49.

<sup>421</sup> Burke 1992: 97, 118-119.

<sup>422</sup> Galster 1959: 15; Talvio 1985: 159; Alm 2002: 54; Hammarlund 2003: 211.

<sup>423</sup> Galster 1959: 16.

<sup>424</sup> Galster 1959: 17. See also Lomholt 1942: 1.

*et Belles Lettres*. Christian VI gave the commission the responsibility of organizing, cataloguing and describing the medals and coins in the existing royal collection, acquiring new medals, and designing motives and inscription for medals intended to commemorate his reign. From 1741 the commission was preoccupied with creating a «Histoire Métallique de Dannemarc», a description, complete with engravings, of all existing Danish medals.<sup>425</sup> In 1742, the king's minister Johan Ludvig von Holstein suggested to the king that he approve the creation of a «society of antiquities», modelled on the Swedish *Antikvitetsarkivet*, a society intended to enhance the honour of the kingdoms by bringing forth knowledge about their antiquities. The king gave his approval, and in October 1742 the Commission of Coins and Medals reconstituted itself as the *Royal Danish Society of Sciences and Letters*.<sup>426</sup> The Academy was a learned society with a much wider mandate, but the design of royal medals continued to be one of its primary tasks until the 1750s.<sup>427</sup>

Asger Lomholt has shown the many ways in which the Academy was intimately connected to the government in this period. Christian VI was the royal protector and financial supporter of the Academy, and Johan Ludvig von Holstein was its first president and the intermediary between the king and the learned men.<sup>428</sup> In the first twenty years of the Academy's existence its meetings took place in von Holstein's private home.<sup>429</sup> The Academy could, moreover, present proposals directly to the king, a privilege that it shared with government colleges.<sup>430</sup> Both Christian VI and his son Frederik V had close and extensive contact with the Academy, particularly with regards to the design of royal medals.<sup>431</sup> Normally, the individual members of the Academy came up with their own ideas and designs for new medals and presented them for plenary discussion. The suggestions were then corrected, discarded or approved by the king himself. After the designs had been approved, they were sent to the medallists who made the cast.<sup>432</sup> The Academy followed the entire process from start to finish, and was responsible for supervising the production of the medals, paying the medallists, and distributing and selling the finished product to the public.<sup>433</sup> The actual design of the

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<sup>425</sup> Lomholt 1942: 1-7.

<sup>426</sup> Although the original idea had been to create a society for the study of national antiquities and Nordic history, the founding members decided that the society should deal with, in the words of its first secretary, «all sciences in general, but the antiquities and histories of the fatherland in particular». Lomholt 1942: 8-29

<sup>427</sup> In 1754, the task of designing and supervising the production of medals was transferred to the newly founded *Royal Academy for the fine arts* («Det Kongelige Akademi for de skønne Kunster»). However, the Academy designed a medal for the jubilee in 1760. Lomholt 1960: 26.

<sup>428</sup> Lomholt 1942: 207-209.

<sup>429</sup> Lomholt 1950: 501.

<sup>430</sup> Lomholt 1942: 207.

<sup>431</sup> Lomholt 1942: 208-214; Lomholt 1960: 15.

<sup>432</sup> Lomholt 1960: 14-27.

<sup>433</sup> Lomholt 1960: 15.

medals was the Academy's most important task, and this required a close familiarity with the Latin as well as the ability to come up with inscriptions and emblems that effectively conveyed the intended message.<sup>434</sup>

## Jubilee medals

In the particular case of the jubilee medals, foreign models other than Louis XIV also influenced the Danish government. As we saw in the previous chapter, the direct inspiration for the first Danish Reformation jubilee medals in 1717 were the medals struck by Johann Georg I, elector of Saxony, for the first Reformation centenary in 1617.<sup>435</sup> The Saxon example inspired other Lutheran territories to strike jubilee medals in 1617, and such medals became a standard element of later Reformation jubilees in the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>436</sup> Despite great variations in their execution, the purpose of the jubilee medals were essentially the same: they expressed thanks to God for the Reformation and its continuation until the present, they visualized the message of the Reformation in a striking and effective form, and they exhorted contemporaries and posterity to preserve the legacy of the Reformation.<sup>437</sup> The Reformation jubilee medals can be considered a special subgenre of medals that carried particular religious connotations. In his medallic history of the Reformation, the Saxon historiographer Christian Juncker emphasized the religious dimension of Protestant medals when he claimed that he saw it as a proof of God's care for Lutherdom and the Evangelical church that he had inscribed the memory of his faithful servant Luther in gold and silver, propagated it to the world and made it immortal. He compared royal medals to medals commemorating the Reformation: while the former were monuments to the «Gloire» of high potentates and dynasties and were an appropriate way of immortalizing their name and deeds, the latter were a divine miracle: «Aber/daß Luthero/ und der von Ihm verbesserten Kirche zu Ehren über zwey hundert Gedächtniß=Medaillen

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<sup>434</sup> Galster 1959: 18.

<sup>435</sup> Charles Zika suggests that the first Protestant jubilee medals in 1617 might also have been influenced by Roman jubilee medals, which had existed since the fifteenth century and become more numerous in the centuries that followed. See Zika 2003: 218.

<sup>436</sup> No medals were struck in Denmark for the jubilee in 1617. This was remarked upon by the doctor and antiquarian Ole Worm in a letter from 1618 to a friend in Strassburg: «[...]we acknowledge that you are superior to us with regards to the striking of coins.» Worm himself drew a proposal for four medals in an appendix to the Latin speech he wrote for the first academic commemoration of the Reformation on 31 October 1618. The speech was a polemical attack on the Jesuit Adam Contzen's anti-jubilee text *Jubilum Jubilorum, Jubilæum evangelicum, et pia lacryma omnium Romano-Catholicorum* (1618). The medals were, however, never produced. Kornerup 1936-1938: 65-68; Galster 1931:12. For the German jubilee medals, see Schnell 1983: 34-70; For a contemporary history of Protestant medals and jubilee medals, see Juncker 1706.

<sup>437</sup> Schnell 1983: 37.



geprägt worden/das ist in Wahrheit nicht von ohngefahr geschehen/sondern allerdings als ein Werck Göttlicher Direction zu betrachten.»<sup>438</sup>

Although Juncker thus made a distinction between the Protestant commemorative medals, and medals that commemorated the deeds of princes, the difference between the two was not necessarily so clear-cut. In eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway, as well as other princely states, the jubilee medals were a part of the more widely conceived programme of royal glorification inspired by the French model. In this context, a jubilee became one among many glorious events in a monarch's reign that was deemed worthy of commemoration. Critics and confessional adversaries might therefore argue that the worldly glorification of a prince was in conflict with the allegedly devotional character of the jubilee medals. The theologian Ernst Valentin Löscher answered potential critics in his review of the third part of *Hilaria Evangelica*, which was dedicated to describing the jubilee medals. According to Löscher, jubilee medals had already in 1617 been condemned as being made by flattering courtiers («ab aulicis adulatoribus plerosque illos nummos profectos esse, dubium non est»), but the reasonable and Christian (that is, Protestant) world considered this to be a presumptuous judgement. The medals had nothing to do with flattery, wrote Löscher, they were the rulers' own way of demonstrating their godly devotion to their subjects and to posterity. The jubilee medals were mostly inscribed with good biblical proverbs, he claimed, and if they could on occasion be more artful this did not reduce their godliness, since they were solely dedicated to edification and the honour of God. According to Löscher, there was no doubt that jubilee medals expressed the rulers' own thoughts, although pious teachers or other faithful servants might help them by making suggestions for the inventions. He therefore likened them to sermons, and referred to them as «Fürsten-Predigten» that the princes gave to people as a special mercy and to show their devotion and love of the Gospels.<sup>439</sup>

Apart from their religious significance, the jubilee medals were also special in the way that they simultaneously commemorated a past event and cast a contemporary event, the jubilee itself, as something that was worthy of remembrance. In this light, the jubilee medals can be said to encapsulate what Jan Assmann describes as both the «retrospective side» and the «prospective side» of the alliance between power and memory. According to Assmann,

[i]t is unquestionable that power requires origin, and this is called the “retrospective side of the phenomenon. The alliance between power and memory also has a “prospective side”. Rulers usurp

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<sup>438</sup> «Vorrede» in Juncker 1706.

<sup>439</sup> *Unschuldigte Nachrichten von alten und neuen theologischen Sachen* 1719: 91.

not only the past but also the future because they want to be remembered, and to commemorate their own deeds by monuments, ensuring that their glory will be narrated, sung, immortalized or, at the very least, recorded in archives. Power “legitimizes itself retrospectively and immortalizes itself prospectively”.<sup>440</sup>

Early modern monarchs saw medals as lasting monuments to their reigns, as a means to ensure that they would be remembered by future generations, even though most other remnants of their glory had disappeared.<sup>441</sup> During the Danish jubilees, the function of the medal as a medium for the prospective immortalization of the monarch’s deeds was most clearly demonstrated in two foundation stone laying ceremonies. On the last day of the tercentenary in 1749, Frederik V laid the foundation stone for what would eventually become *Frederik’s church* (Frederikskirken), also known as the *Marble church* (Marmorkirken), in the new district *Frederiksstaden* in Copenhagen.<sup>442</sup> A pavilion was erected for the occasion, where bishop Peder Hersleb delivered a short speech to the king and an audience consisting of Knights of the Elephant, foreign ministers and other dignitaries. Inside the pavilion, the architect Eigtvedt’s preliminary sketches for the church were displayed.<sup>443</sup> After Hersleb’s speech, the king placed a box made out of Norwegian marble into a hollow stone that was placed in a hole at the exact spot where the altar was going to stand. The king then deposited in the box the three official jubilee medals, as well as a medal created solely for this ceremony.<sup>444</sup> On the third day of the centenary in 1760, the Marshal of the Court Adam Gottlob Moltke placed a copper plate and six medals, two in gold, two in silver and two in copper, inside a hollow foundation stone for the pedestal of what was to become Jaques François Joseph Saly’s equestrian statue of Frederick V.<sup>445</sup>

In addition to their memorial function, the jubilee medals had functions more oriented towards the immediate needs of the present. They could also be used as tokens of royal mercy to princely relatives, loyal servants and courtiers. During two of the jubilees, the king invited foreign

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<sup>440</sup> (Jan) Assmann 2011: 47.

<sup>441</sup> Galster 1959: 15.

<sup>442</sup> See more about this church in chapter 6.

<sup>443</sup> The Imperial Count Hermann Woldemar von Schmettow described the scene in a private letter to the Danish politician count J.H.E. Bernstorff on November 1st 1749: «[...]le troisième jour, le roy fut à la place du jardin d’Amalienbourg, pour y poser la première pierre d’une église qu’on y bâtit, à laquelle le roy destine 100 mille écus et qui sera fort belle suivant le plan qui en a été dressée;» Friis 1907: 472.

<sup>444</sup> The medal read: «IN MEMORIAM/ SERVATÆ PER TRIA SECLA/ REGIÆ DOMUS OLDENBURGICÆ/GRATO IN DEUM ANIMO/ FRIDERICUS V. REX DAN. NORV./ HUIUS TEMPLI/ PRIMUM POSUIT LAPIDEM/ DIE XXX OCTOBRIS MDCCXLIX.» Hersleb 1749: xxi-xxii; *Nene Europäische Fama*, s.67; See also Raabyemagle 2010: 242.

<sup>445</sup> More about this medal below. Schlegel 1772: 23-25; Raabyemagle 2010: 258.

ministers, nobility and other dignitaries to a banquet at the castle.<sup>446</sup> When the guests arrived at the table, they found jubilee medals lying on their plate. The first time this happened was on the fourth day of the jubilee in 1717, when Frederick IV gave his distinguished guests one gold and one silver medal each as «a permanent remembrance» of the jubilee.<sup>447</sup> In 1749, Frederick V likewise invited members of the social and political elite, as well as a small number of German princes, to dine at Christiansborg castle. Each guest was given three medals: those who dined at the royal table (the royal family, the princess of Culmbach and the dukes of Augustenborg, Plön and Glücksborg) were given gold medals, while the other guest, approximately 130 royal ministers and officials, were given three silver medals each.<sup>448</sup> The limited amount of such medals made them a mark of social distinction – as a personal gift from the king, the ownership of a golden or silver jubilee medal demonstrated membership in an exclusive elite. In this respect, the medals had much the same function as the promotions in rank or office and the conferral of royal orders on courtiers and officials, which also took place during the jubilees: they served to integrate the kingdoms’ social elites in a system of honour and privilege controlled by the absolute monarch.<sup>449</sup>

The medals were also used to demonstrate the king’s liberality towards ordinary subjects. During all the jubilees, except the centenary in 1760 when no official jubilee medals were made, medals were thrown out to crowds of spectators standing outside of the castle or alongside the road watching the royal processions. In 1749, for instance, «a considerable number of hastily manufactured jubilee medals» were thrown out to the people from the castle balcony. Every time a bag of medals were emptied, people shouted «God bless and preserve the king and the royal house!»<sup>450</sup> The combination of large crowds and free gifts meant that these séances could easily turn violent and dangerous. Claus Seidelin, a 15-year old apothecary’s apprentice from Nykøbing on Falster, experienced this first-hand during the Reformation bicentenary in Copenhagen in 1717. The young apprentice found himself among «the rabble» («pøbelen») on the second day of the jubilee, when a court official threw out jubilee medals to the crowd. Claus tried to catch some of the coins in his apothecary’s apron, but was squeezed hard by the crowd, lifted up and carried over people’s

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<sup>446</sup> There was no banquets in 1736 and 1760. In 1736, Christian VI chose to celebrate the jubilee without any wordly splendour, so there was no banquet (see chapter 5), In 1760, there was also no banquet, since the king stayed outside of town at Fredensborg castle during the entire jubilee (see chapters 4 and 7).

<sup>447</sup> *Udførlig Beretning 1717*; See also *Beskrivning over de SOLENNITETER, 1717*: 41-42.

<sup>448</sup> Hersleb 1749: xii-xiii.

<sup>449</sup> In 1760, for instance, four men received the Order of the Elephant, nine men received the Order of Dannebrog, while five women received the Order de la Fidelité. Eleven men were elevated to higher rank. See *Kjøbenhavnns Adresse=Conbtoirs Efterretninger, no 28. Mandagen den 20 October 1760*: 567.

<sup>450</sup> Berling 1749.

heads. When he finally escaped he was pleased that he had survived, but he registered that his apron had unfortunately been stolen. He concluded his account by observing that «it was a strange sight to behold with the dispersal of the money, that there were more hats, wigs, caps, handkerchiefs and such things flying in the air than money, and many people were badly hurt.»<sup>451</sup> This final comment directly contradicted the description of the incident in the semi-official trilingual description of the jubilee published by the printer Hieronymus Christian Paulli. According to this text, there were «many tumults» among the «greedy crowd» but «because of the precautions made beforehand these happened without any damage and did not cause any accidents.»<sup>452</sup> In the German newspaper *Die Europäische Fama*, these security precautions were described in more detail: it had been publicly announced beforehand that it was strictly forbidden to bring knives, daggers and sticks to the palace square when the medals were thrown out. Despite this precaution, wrote the newspaper, there had still been fights and disorder.<sup>453</sup> A handwritten, anonymous eyewitness account of the jubilee 1749 confirms the impression that one could expect injuries at these occasions: «those who got hold of these money were not so badly injured, as usually happens [...] those who received injuries, got them when the money were thrown from the balcony and they landed in many people's faces.»<sup>454</sup>

The jubilee medals could also be attractive collector's items. British historian Daniel Woolf points out that contemporary commemorative medals were becoming a popular collectors item in the late seventeenth century, rivalling the popularity of ancient coins on the collector's market. According to Woolf, early modern governments turned «the enthusiasm for collectables into a money-making and image-enhancing venture, one that literally engraved events into the historical record.»<sup>455</sup> The smallest jubilee medals in 1717, the ones that were thrown out to the crowds, could be bought at the royal mint.<sup>456</sup> In 1736, the jubilee medals were struck in «a few thousand copies», which could be bought at the Royal Mint by «connoisseurs that could find pleasure in having a

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<sup>451</sup> «Ellers var det ved Pengernes Udkastelse et besynderligt Syn, at der saaes meere Hatte, Perucquer, Huer, Tørkleder og deslige at flyve i Luften end Penge, og mange Mennisker kom ilde til Skade.» Clausen & Rist 1915: 22.

<sup>452</sup> *Udførlig Beretning* 1717: 46

<sup>453</sup> «Gegen Abend wurden auf dem Schloß-Platze viele Medaillen ausgeworffen, wobey es ohne Schläge und Unordnung nicht abgieng, ungeachtet vorhero durch öffentlichen Trommel-Schlag war verbothen worden, daß zu erwähneter Zeit sich niemand auf dem Schloß-Platze mit Messern, Degen oder Stock einzufinden unterstehen solte». *Die Europäische Fama, Welche den gegenwärtigen Zustand der vornehmsten Höfe entdeckt. Der 207. Theil.* 1718: 208.

<sup>454</sup> «De der fikk disse Penge til [Hende] kom ikke saa til nogen Ulykke, som der gjerne pleier at skee i slike [Omgange] de der fikk Skade, det kom ved Pengernes udkastelse fra Altanen, at de falt een Deel i Ansigtet.» *Nørmissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart).

<sup>455</sup> Woolf 2003: 237-238.

<sup>456</sup> Galster 1936: 183.

permanent reminder of this holy festival before their eyes [...]».<sup>457</sup> It is not quite clear whether this happened at other occasions, since there are no similar advertisements from the other jubilees. In his history of the *Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters*, Asger Lomholt writes that it was the Academy's task to distribute medals to connoisseurs.<sup>458</sup> He cites instances where the king instructed the Academy to arrange the striking of more medals because he had been informed that many people were interested in buying them.<sup>459</sup> It can therefore be assumed that there would also have been a demand for the jubilee medals.

### Medals as tokens of loyalty

The striking of commemorative medals was not exclusively the reserve of the crown. In connection with the last two jubilees, various institutions took the initiative of commissioning medals in order to demonstrate their loyalty and gratitude to the monarchy. In 1749, the Icelandic Trading Company, the Royal West-Indian trading company and the Trading company («Handelskompagniet») all received royal permission to strike 500 medals each. The Asiatic Company struck two medals in a total of 200 copies. The initiative to strike these medals came from the boards of companies themselves, who also paid for their design and production. All of the designs were, however, approved by the government in advance.<sup>460</sup>

In 1760, other groups contributed to the jubilee with the production of medals. According to the newspaper *Kiøbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender*, four medals were struck for the centenary. The clergy of Denmark and Norway commissioned the first, the second was made by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, the third by the Magistrate in Copenhagen and the fourth, by the Norwegian Commission for forest clearance («Rydningssommisionen»). As already mentioned, the Asiatic Company also paid for a special medal, six copies of which were placed inside the hollow foundation stone for the massive equestrian statue of Frederik V that was going to be erected on the plaza in the new quarter Frederiksstad. <sup>461</sup> All of these medals appeared to be voluntary demonstrations of loyalty and affection to the king. In at least two of the cases from 1760, however,

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<sup>457</sup> «[...]kunde og der af Liebhabere, som maatte finde Behag at have en stedse Erinding for Øyne af denne hellige Fæst, hos hans Kongel. Majests. Myntmester, bekommes.» *Extraordinaire Relationer for October Maaned* 1736: 80.

<sup>458</sup> Lomholt 1960: 15.

<sup>459</sup> Lomholt 1760: 17, 24.

<sup>460</sup> Galster 1936: 240, 274.

<sup>461</sup> *Kiøbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender*. No. 83. *Fredagen, den 17de October*. 567-568; The medal from the Clearance Commission was never distributed in public, due to its poor execution. The Asiatic company also commissioned another medal but this was never produced, probably because the stamp broke. Galster 1936: 292, 295-296.

it can be documented that officials from the top echelons of government actually commissioned the medals.

The medal that was paid for by the Asiatic Company, which was struck by the medallist Daniel Jensen Adzer and cost almost 3000 riksdaler to produce, bore a portrait of the king on the obverse, and a Latin inscription on the reverse: «DANORUM FELICITATIS MONUMENTUM PRIM[us] LAP[is] POS[itus] XVIII OCTOB. MDCCLX». <sup>462</sup> Both the medals themselves and the equestrian statue in which they were eventually placed, were paid for by the Asiatic Company. The president of the Company, however, was none other than the king's closest advisor and confidante Adam Gottlob Moltke. Moltke had suggested to the general assembly of shareholders in 1754 that they pay for the equestrian statue as a gesture of gratitude for the king's support for the Company's expansion in India. The shareholders had responded positively and decided that the Company should pay all the costs. As the project eventually took more than a decade to finish and cost such enormous sums of money that it almost ruined the Company, the shareholders tried, unsuccessfully, to remove Moltke from the position as president in 1767. <sup>463</sup> In 1760, these conflicts were of course far into the future and the shareholders had not yet had the time to regret their support for the project. Although the company thus covered the cost of the statue and the medals voluntarily, it is nonetheless undeniable that the entire project was devised and coordinated by a powerful royal favourite. Karin Kryger's words about the equestrian statue holds true also for the jubilee medals: «Frederik the V's statue was indeed erected by members of the government, but when Moltke convinced Asiatic Company to pay, he created the illusion that it was a group of the country's grateful subjects that were responsible.» <sup>464</sup>

Another group that contributed to the celebrations with a jubilee medal was the clergy in Denmark and Norway. The idea for this project came from Ludvig Harboe, the bishop of Zealand. On 13 September 1760, Harboe sent a letter to his fellow bishops in Denmark and Norway where he informed them of his plan to produce a commemorative medal. Harboe wrote that since «not only several societies in Copenhagen but also the illustrious Magistrate» had decided to «demonstrate their joy and gratitude» by striking medals for the coming jubilee, Harboe considered it a duty for the

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<sup>462</sup> Galster 1936: 294.

<sup>463</sup> The projected price of the statue was 200.000 riksdaler, but it eventually cost 526.000 riksdaler. The Asiatic Company paid 471.000 riksdaler. Jespersen 2010:131-132. Raabyemagle 2010: 252-253; In his memoirs, Moltke himself claimed that all of this happened without any cost for the Asiatic Company: «Alle dieses geschah ohne geringste Bekostung für die asiatische Compagni.» Wegener 1870-72: 157.

<sup>464</sup> «Frederik den 5.'s statue blev nok rejst af magthavere, men da Moltke overtalte Asiatisk Kompagni til at betale, skabte han illusionen om, at det var en gruppe af landets taknemmelige undersåtter, der stod bag.» Kryger 1988: 162.

clergy that they did the same. He had therefore taken the liberty of presenting various proposals for a medal to Johan Ludvig von Holstein, the head secretary of the Danish Chancery, who had chosen one of them as the most appropriate for the occasion: On the obverse of the projected medal, there would be a portrait of Frederick V. On the reverse there would be an image of a kneeling woman, representing Denmark and Norway, placing regalia in the lap of Piety.<sup>465</sup>

Harboe's letter was not an invitation to discuss the proposal. The medals had already been ordered and paid for, to the cost of 2500 riksdaler, so Harboe now only needed financial contributions from his fellow bishops and their subordinates. He wrote the same phrase to each of his colleagues:

[S]ince I am certain that your noble illustriousness and the clergy in the diocese which has been entrusted to you are as ready as all the other dioceses in both kingdoms to take a share of the costs that this medal involves, I will hereby sincerely propose and request, that your highness send a circular letter to the clergy and instruct them to pay their contingent.<sup>466</sup>

Harboe, in other words, pitched his proposal as it as if all the other bishops had already agreed to pay their part of the expense. He had allotted a specific sum of money to each diocese: Funen (478 rd), Ribe (382), Århus (378), Viborg (214), Ålborg (222), Christiania (308), Christiansand (126), Bergen (138) and Trondheim (230). Harboe had already paid the expense, so he wanted the other bishops to put up the money for their subordinates and send him the entire sum as quickly as possible. If any money were left over when all expenses were paid, he would return them or send one or more medals to the bishops.<sup>467</sup>

Harboe's initiative set in motion a chain of money collection in the entire church organization. The bishops put up the money for their own diocese and sent them to Harboe as fast as possible and then the money trickled in from the parish clergy throughout the autumn and into the following year.<sup>468</sup> Although the medal was eventually presented as a voluntary gift from the entire

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<sup>465</sup> DRA. DK. D99-15: p. 985; For an image of the medal, see Galster 1936:295

<sup>466</sup> «[...]som jeg er forvisset om, at Deres høyædle Høyærv. og Geistligheden udi det Dem allernaad: anbetroede Stift med samme Rædebonhed, som de andre Stifter i begge Riger vil tage Deel udi de Udgifter, som denne Medaille foraarsager, saa har jeg herved ærbødigst at proponere og anmode, at Deres høyædle Høyærværd. ville behage ved en Circulair Skrivelse at erindre Geistligheden dertil at give deres Contingent.» LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.1-33. Letter from bishop Harboe to the bishops of Denmark and Norway. 13 September, 1760.

<sup>467</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>468</sup> Bishop Gunnerus in Trondheim was still receiving payments for the medal from clergy in the northernmost parts of Norway as late as September 1761. SAT. Nidaros Biskop. Kopibok. 1760-1763: p. 822, 828, 838, 881.

clergy, the ordinary parish minister does not seem to have had much choice in the matter.<sup>469</sup> In Bergen, bishop Ole Tidemand wrote a circular letter to the deans where he stated that everyone would agree that it was unnecessary and superfluous to encourage anyone to pay their contingent. He instructed them to send the money from their deanery to him as fast as possible, as he hoped to not lose any money because of his advance payment.<sup>470</sup> The diocesan dean Jens Rennord added the following statement to the circular letter: «Dear brothers! None of us can refuse to pay this small expense for such a jubilee coin. And since the bishop has paid in advance, the dear brothers will immediately send me their ducat».<sup>471</sup> The sum of money demanded of each deanery was probably based on calculations of their size and income. The clergy in Nordfjord deanery in Bergen diocese, for instance, paid 12 riksdaler. This sum was split on five ministers and two resident chaplains.<sup>472</sup> Borgund deanery, on the other hand, apparently paid 29 riksdaler, split on two ministers and one resident chaplain.<sup>473</sup> The sums were quite considerable. They came, moreover, in addition to a loan that the clergy had been asked to give to the king in the same year.<sup>474</sup> The dean Ole Ross, minister of Ørkedal, was unable to pay the advance from his deanery because «the money loan to his Majesty has completely emptied my coffers; in addition I have had carpenters and day-labourers here all summer.»<sup>475</sup> Bishop Andreas Wøldike warned Harboe in advance that he would have trouble with collecting the money from his subordinates in Viborg diocese on Jutland. He did not doubt, he wrote, that most of the clergy would be willing, but he feared that «the ability does not match the will». According to Wøldike, the poverty of the clergy in the diocese would scarcely be credible for the bishop and others who did not know the circumstances: «[t]heir income is very small and miserable, their expenses, on the other hand, are great [...]». Since Harboe demanded the money in

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<sup>469</sup> One of the deans who sent money to his bishop referred to the «voluntary gifts and contingents». SAB. Brev frå presteskapet 6. 1761. Letter from Augustinus Meldal to bishop Tidemand, 10 April 1761.

<sup>470</sup> «Det er altsaa i den Henseende jeg kuns vil have Deres Velædle Velærværdighed andmodet, at naar Indsamlingen er skeet af Deres andfortroede Provstie, samme da saasnart mueligt maa blive mig tilstillet, eftesom jeg i Haab om at blive Skades-Løs har resolveret at gjøre Forskuddet, efter Høybemelte Hr. Biskop Harboes Forlangende.» SAB. Björgvin Biskop. Kopibok 7. 1758-1762. Letter from bishop Tidemand to the deans, 28 October, 1760.

<sup>471</sup> SAB. Hamre sokneprestembete I.2.b.1. Kopibok, inn 1749-1775.

<sup>472</sup> Selje, Daviken, Eid, Gloppen (with resident chaplain) and Innviken (with resident chaplain). Lampe 1896: 156-204.

<sup>473</sup> Borgund (with resident chaplain) and Haram. Lampe 1896: 274-289.

<sup>474</sup> The contribution was probably intended to remedy the dire financial situation the kingdoms were in at this time, due to the Seven Years War. See Holm 1898: 367.

<sup>475</sup> «[...]Pengelaanet til Hs. Majt. har ganske udtømmet min Cassa; og jeg desuden har havt Tømmermænd og Daglønnere den heele Sommer.» SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Letter from Ole Ross to bishop Gunnerus, 20 October 1760.



advance, Wøldike suggested that he loan 100 Riksdaler from Zealand dioceses collect for Graabrødre church in Viborg.<sup>476</sup>

In the end of October 1760, bishop Harboe wrote to the deans in Zealand to tell them that he had delivered the medal to the king and the royal family on the second day of the jubilee. The medal had been received «with great mercy», and the king had commanded Harboe to assure the rest of the clergy of his royal mercy. He added that he had registered that «this monument to the humble joy of the clergy over this remarkable change in the government has been considered with great attention.»<sup>477</sup> For bishop Harboe, the clergy's medal was a personal success: he was able to present a costly and rare gift to the monarch on behalf of the church. For ordinary clergymen, however, the cost of the medal might well have outweighed any potential benefits. The evidence is ambiguous. On the one hand, some clergymen wrote letters to bishop Harboe asking to buy a silver medal as a personal remembrance of the jubilee.<sup>478</sup> On the other hand, bishop Peder Hygom of Århus diocese wrote a letter to Harboe in April of 1761 where he admitted that there had been some dissatisfaction among the clergy with regards to the medal. Bishop Hygom expressed doubts that he would be able to collect the entire sum from Århus. Even though he had used all kinds of arguments to convince his subordinates and even paid 10 Riksdaler from his own pocket as an encouragement and example, there were still difficult individuals who blamed their poverty or used other excuses to avoid «giving something to an *invisible medal*, which I have been told that they call it (because they have not heard or seen that any specimen of it has arrived here in the diocese).»<sup>479</sup>

More than any other of the media of centennial commemoration, the jubilee medals was an *official medium* that was predominantly produced by the royal government itself. Medals were very costly to produce and dependent on rare expertise in every part of their production: learned men

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<sup>476</sup> «Deres Indkomster ere meget smaae og miserable, Deres Udgifter derimod stoere[...]; Wøldike complained that the clergy in Viborg paid almost the double amount the so-called «study tax», compared with other dioceses. The study tax, or cathedraticum, was decreed in the Danish law book (DL 2-22-51) and went to the upkeep of students at the University of Copenhagen; LAS. Sjællands stifts bispearkiv. B.3-155. Letter from Andreas Wøldike to Ludvig Harboe, 9 October 1760.

<sup>477</sup> «[...]og haver jeg overhodet erfaret, at dette Monument om Geistlighedens allerund. Glæde over denne saa mærkelige Forandring i Regieringen med megen Attention er bleven anseet.» LAS. Sjællands Stifts Bispeembede B.1-33: Letter from bishop Harboe to the deans of Zealand, undated; He wrote a similar letter to bishop Nannestad in Christiania: LAS. Sjællands Stifts Bispeembede. B.1-33: Letter from bishop Harboe to bishop Nannestad, 7 November 1760.

<sup>478</sup> Bishop Nannestad asked Harboe if he could buy 16 silver medals, since «a portion of the clergymen in the diocese has demanded to own such a medal as a remembrance.» LAS. Sjællands stifts bispearkiv. B.3-155: Letter from Friderich Nannestad to Ludvig Harboe, January 31st 1761; See also LAS. Sjællands stifts bispearkiv. B.3-155.: Letter from Samuel Friedlieb to Ludvig Harboe, 16 October 1760.

<sup>479</sup> «[...]saa findes dog her, som andensteds, eet og andet vrangvilligt Hoved, der deels under Fatigdoms Paaskud, deels paa anden Maade undskylder sig for, at give noget til en *usynlig Medaille*, som jeg har ladet mig sige at de skal kalde den samme /: fordi de ikke have hørt eller seet noget Stykke deraf at være kommen her til Stiftet [...]». LAS. Sjællands stifts bispearkiv. B.3.-155: Letter from Peder Hygom to Ludvig Harboe, 13 April 1761.

with classical training to design the inscriptions and symbols, competent artists to strike the medals, and the royal mint to produce them. Wealthy corporations, such as the Asiatic Company or the Magistrate of Copenhagen, were responsible for making most of the medals that were not commissioned by the king himself. A partial exception to this rule is the medal commissioned by the clergy in 1760. But as we have seen, the bishop of Zealand mobilized the entire church organization to pay for its cost. In addition, high-ranking government officials approved most medals in advance before they were made. We may therefore conclude that medals were a medium over which the absolute monarch exerted a high degree of influence.

### The clergy and their jubilee sermons

The church was a central arena for the celebration of the centenaries. Like all church services in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, the liturgy of the jubilee services was closely regulated by royal decree. The ministers were required to read a collect before the sermon, and a special prayer after the sermon, and all the psalms were specially selected for the occasion. They were, moreover, bound by church legislation when they sat down to prepare their sermons. Most of these rules were stipulated in the second book and fourth chapter of the Danish and Norwegian Law (1683/87), which dealt specifically with the preaching ministry. One central paragraph (2-4-6) committed the ministers to preach in accordance with the Holy Bible, the confessions of the church and the Augsburg Confession and stated, moreover, that they had a duty to teach their congregation to «fear God and honour the king.» Another paragraph (2-4-12) stipulated that the ministers had to end every sermon with a prayer for God and the free progress of his Word, for the king and the royal house, for the authorities and the common welfare. The duty to foster loyalty towards the king and the authorities was a basic condition of preaching in the period.<sup>480</sup>

The law book also contained some general stipulations about the rhetorical quality of the sermons. The ministers had to «accommodate their sermons to the conditions of their audience (2-4-6). In the same vein, they could not talk about things that were «obscure and difficult to understand» and they were not allowed to «demonstrate their wisdom and discernment in the holy place» (2-4-7). In *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* (1685), which regulated the liturgy in the Danish-Norwegian church, the clergymen were prohibited from speaking of anything «pertaining to the king's

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<sup>480</sup> See Bregnsbo 1997a and Viken 2014.

government, affairs of state, royal ordinances and commands or such matters, apart from exhorting their audience to humble obedience towards their king and his commands.»<sup>481</sup> The primary purpose of the sermon should, in other words, be to edify the congregation, not to impress them or try to fill their minds with useless knowledge or to inform them of political matters with which they had nothing to do. The basic theory of homiletics that can be discerned in these paragraphs was based on a conception of the common man as a simple being, unable to grasp more than the most rudimentary knowledge. In his book on pastoral theology, *Collegium Pastorale Practicum* (1757), the influential Danish theologian Erik Pontoppidan discussed which matters he considered necessary—and unnecessary—to make an evangelical sermon edifying for a congregation. Among the things he defined as unnecessary in a good sermon, were the «investigation of critical material, or learned people’s opinions about certain words, as well as antiquarian, genealogical, chronological, historical and geographical matters.»<sup>482</sup> If the day’s text demanded that the preacher touch upon such things, it should be done with the fewest words possible and not take too much time.<sup>483</sup>

With regards to the jubilees, it is clear that such an ideal affected the way the ministers discussed historical topics in their sermons. A sermon was something very different than a history lecture: to the degree that a sermon discussed historical events it should be short, simple and carefully selected according to the principle of edification. As we shall see later on, not all ministers lived up to this ideal, at least not in their printed sermons. We do, however, find scattered statements in the sources that indicate that simplicity and brevity was indeed recognized as an ideal to live up to. The minister Simon Wolff wrote in his sermon that «I do not want to be a verbose historian, since I am standing in a pulpit, preaching for edification.»<sup>484</sup> In a review of Gerhard Treschow’s sermon from the 1749 jubilee, the critic commended Treschow on his comparison between king David’s royal house and the Danish royal house. The critic wrote approvingly that the minister «uses history

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<sup>481</sup> «[...] som angaar Kongens Regering/Stats-Sager/Kongl: Ordinancer og Befalninger/eller dislige/videre end til at formane Tilhørerne til allerunderdanigste Lydighed mod deris Konge og hans Bud og Befalninger.» *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* 1685: 22.

<sup>482</sup>«[...] kritiske Materiers Undersøgelse, eller de Lærdes Meninger om visse Ord, item om antiqvariske, genealogiske, chronologiske, historiske, geographiske og deslige Ting.» Pontoppidan 1850: 145.

<sup>483</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 145.

<sup>484</sup> «Jeg vil nu ikke være en vidtløftig Historicus, da jeg staaer som Prædikant paa en Prædike-Stoel, og taler til Opbyggelse.» Wolf 1760: 235; The following passage in Hermann Dominicus Beckmann’s jubilee sermon (1749) expresses the same sentiment: «To recount all the good, all the blessings that God has shown us in these 300 years would partly be too extensive («vidtløftig»), and partly it does not fall under our purpose, since the Danish history gives complete information («fuldkommen Efterretning») about this [...].» Herman Dominicus Beckman, *Et Gud velbehageligt Jubel-Offet betragted over dend allernaadigst anbefalede Text af Psalmen d. 89: v.1-6. Paa dend allernaadigst forordnede Jubel-Fæst d. 28 Octob: 1749. I Anledning af Guds naadige Ombue og Beskærmelse over sit Danske og Norske Israel, da dend naadige Gud nu i 300 Aar har vedligeholdt Regjeringen i dend Oldenborgiske Stamme, i Boeslunde Kirke*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [35].

well, but he does not immerse himself in it in a way that makes him forget that he is delivering a sermon.»<sup>485</sup>

### Methods of historical interpretation

The clergy were not merely conduits that passed on to their congregations the historical information they had found in the pages of works of national history. Their accounts of the past were shaped by the edificatory purpose of the sermon, which we have already considered, but also by their training for the preaching ministry. The accounts of national history that we find in the jubilee sermons were based on methods of historical interpretation that can be traced back to the early Protestant reformers. Central to Lutheran historical thought was the idea of human history as a manifestation of God's plan of salvation: the apparent contingency of human affairs is only an illusion, since God controls all things according to a universal plan that can only be revealed through faith. Although man is totally dependent on God, as part of his creation, he has an important role as an instrument of the divine plan: «Man cannot initiate history, so he is obliged as a creation of God to work on his behalf in the implementation of his will. Through man God works in history according to his worldly and spiritual powers.»<sup>486</sup>

Being a direct manifestation of God's will, human history acquired great theological importance for the early Protestant reformers. According to Hans-Jürgen Schönstadt, Luther and his associates, influenced by the key dogmatic principle of «sola scriptura», considered the Bible as the supreme source of historical interpretation. In contrast to any other works of history, which were written by fallible humans, the Bible contained God's own clear words about the character and course of history. The faith in the Bible as the only unquestionable source of historical interpretation was, furthermore, strengthened by the confessional clashes in the sixteenth century, which led to a «starren Biblizismus».<sup>487</sup> The reformers' favoured method of interpreting the Bible as historical source was what has later been called typological interpretation («heilsgeschichtlich-typologischen Deutung») or figural interpretation («Figuraldeutung»), which was based on the fundamental idea that everything that has happened and will happen, from the creation to the end of the world, is already prefigured in the Bible in the form of prophetic statements and «biblisch-heilsgeschichtlicher

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<sup>485</sup> «[...]hvorved Forfatteren vel betiener sig af Historien, dog ikke fordyber sig saaledes deri, at han skulde forglemme, at han holdt en Prædiken.» *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om lærde og curieuse Sager, Num. XXXVI. Den 3 Sept. 1750*: 282.

<sup>486</sup> Wriedt 1996: 34.

<sup>487</sup> Schönstadt 1979: 87.

Ereignisse». In order to acquire knowledge about the fate of the church, one had to take these divine promises seriously and seek evidence of their fulfilment in the concrete course of human history.<sup>488</sup>

The approach had evolved from an ancient form of biblical exegesis, first developed by Paul, in which persons and events in the Old Testament were seen as prefigurations («figura») that were fulfilled by events and persons in the New Testament.<sup>489</sup> Figural interpretation differed from allegorical interpretation in that the former established a connection between two actual events in real historical time, while in the latter a historical event was taken to refer to an abstract quality, or a mystical or ethical system.<sup>490</sup> Later, influenced by Augustine, figural interpretation developed from a two-staged scheme (Old Testament as *figura*, New Testament as fulfillment) to a three-staged scheme: «the Law or history of the Jews as a prophetic *figura* for the appearance of Christ; the incarnation as fulfilment of this *figura* and at the same time as a new promise of the end of the world and the Last Judgment; and finally, the future occurrence of these events as ultimate fulfilment.»<sup>491</sup> The Protestant reading of history was a result of this extension of figural interpretation, in which the Christian Church was seen as the continuation of the New Covenant. As a consequence, figural interpretation became a method the reformers could use to interpret contemporary history as part of salvation history. In this way, for instance, the Pope was seen as the actual fulfilment of the Antichrist prophesied in the Old Testament (Dan 11, 36) and the New Testament (Thess 2,3).<sup>492</sup> Scripture thus provided the necessary tools to recognize God's work in the seemingly chaotic events of human history, and to distinguish it from the work of the Devil.<sup>493</sup> In essence, this approach meant that the preachers identified the real historical events or prophecies in the Bible as prefigurations («Figuren») of all historical events or persons that either fulfilled or obstructed God's plan of salvation for mankind. Whenever the rule of God's word—that is, the Protestant faith—was taught freely and God's plan of salvation was visible, they saw biblical events or prophecies as prefigurations of historical events and persons that realized God's plan of salvation for humanity. And, conversely, whenever God's word (the Protestant faith) was repressed and a false doctrine opposed to the Protestant understanding of the Scriptures was taught, the preachers saw the rule of

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<sup>488</sup> Schönstadt 1979: 89.

<sup>489</sup> Auerbach 1984: 49 ff.; Schönstadt 1979: 90.

<sup>490</sup> Auerbach 1984: 53 ff.

<sup>491</sup> Auerbach 1984: 41, Schönstadt 1979: 91. Augustine's extension of figural interpretation to postbiblical history is discussed in Schiffman 2011: 112 ff.

<sup>492</sup> See Schönstadt 1979: 106 ff. for an analysis of the Antichrist-motive in jubilee sermons in 1617.

<sup>493</sup> Schönstadt 1979: 95

Satan and therefore a structural identity with those historical events, persons or prophecies in the Bible that stands in «Bund mit den Mächten des Bösen gegen Gottes Heilshandeln».<sup>494</sup>

Prophecy also provided an overarching structure and periodization to the Lutheran-orthodox view of history. Martin Luther and Phillip Melancthon subscribed to the Jewish apocalyptic idea that world history lasted for six thousand years, divided into three phases of two thousand years each. The last period, ushered in by the birth of Christ, would end with the Second Coming. In the final thousand years of history, Satan would rule the world in the guise of the Antichrist. As Schönstadt points out, this periodization of history gave an enormous eschatological importance to contemporary history, since it meant that more than three quarters of world history had already passed, and that the Antichrist had already appeared.<sup>495</sup> The sense of immediacy was only strengthened by the assumption, also derived from Jewish apocalyptic thought, that God would shorten the final period for the benefit of his elect. This notion meant that the final judgment was even closer at hand. The eschatological actualization of the Reformation was underpinned by a second historical periodization, derived from the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue made of four metals in the Book of Daniel. Following a patristic exegetical tradition, Luther and Melancthon interpreted the four metals as a reference to the four great monarchies who had followed each other in a sequence in the course of world history: the Assyrian, the Persian, the Greek and the Roman empires. The Roman Empire was believed by the reformers to have lived on in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. In Nebuchadnezzar's vision, the statue had one foot of clay and one foot of iron. This was interpreted as a reference to the weakening of German imperial power, from the period of Charles the Great and the Ottonian dynasty (iron), to their weaker successors (clay). For the reformers, this added to the sense of impending apocalypse since, according to Daniel, the end of the Roman Empire signalled the end of the world.<sup>496</sup>

The method of «heilsgeschichtlich-typologischen Deutung» was, according to Hans-Jürgen Schönstadt, the dominant way of interpreting the history of the Reformation among Lutheran preachers during the jubilee in 1617. In his study of academic texts from the Reformation jubilee in German universities in 1717, however, Harm Cordes shows that the German Lutheran theologians seldom interpreted the persons and events of Reformation history typologically during this jubilee. Furthermore, the few examples he has found of theologians employing the method lacked «theologischer Überzeugungskraft», and they used it only with great restraint and mostly in the form

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<sup>494</sup> Schönstadt 1979: 96

<sup>495</sup> Schönstadt 1979: 104.

<sup>496</sup> Schönstadt 1979: 104-106.

of general observations.<sup>497</sup> Part of the explanation for this lies in the fact that the Emperor had issued a decree that restricted the use of biblical texts in confessional polemics, in order to prevent religious conflict peace in the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>498</sup> Cordes argues, however, that the typological method had in any case experienced a general loss of meaning («allgemeinen Bedeutungsverlust») in the course of the hundred years since the previous jubilee, and had been replaced by other approaches to interpreting the Reformation in light of Scripture. A central method was to use the Bible as a yardstick for the assessment of historical events, without the biblical text and the historical event necessarily being connected to each other as promise («Verheißung») and fulfilment («Erfüllung»). Instead, structural analogies between biblical texts and historical events were used to interpret and evaluate history in light of the Bible.

Schönstadt's and Cordes' respective studies of the two Reformation centenaries in 1617 and 1717 show that a significant development in Lutheran conceptions of history took place in the course of the seventeenth century. The most important change seems to have been a gradual move away from the eschatological world-view that had been so important for the first generations of Lutherans, in which the Protestant Reformation was seen as a fulfilment of biblical prophecies and a sign of the approaching Second Coming. In the eighteenth century, divine Providence was still seen as the directing force behind the Reformation, Luther was still considered to be God's instrument and the continuance of the Lutheran Church for two hundred years was still ascribed to God's protecting hand. However, these ideas were no longer connected with expectations of the imminent end of the world.<sup>499</sup> After this de-eschatologization of history, the Lutheran theologians no longer confronted modern historical events with biblical events to establish connections between prophecy and fulfilment. Instead, they found structural analogies between biblical and modern events that confirmed whether or not the actions and claims of historical actors were in accordance with God's commands.<sup>500</sup>

These reflections are highly relevant also in the Dano-Norwegian context. There are indeed few signs of eschatological thinking in the jubilee sermons, whilst the practice of reading the events and persons of worldly history in light of their accordance and similarity with relevant passages in the Bible was legion. The Danish-Norwegian clergymen were intimately familiar with this method of historical interpretation and applied it on the history of the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway.

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<sup>497</sup> Cordes 2006: 131-133.

<sup>498</sup> Cordes 2006: 39, 134.

<sup>499</sup> Cordes 2006:304.

<sup>500</sup> Cordes 2006:306.

Events taking place in the kingdoms' remote or recent past were interpreted in light of structurally reminiscent narratives from the Bible, particularly the historical books of the Old Testament. Analogies were drawn between the sacred history of the Israelites in the Old Testament, God's own people, and the history of the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway. The Oldenburg monarchs were compared to the kings of Israel and Judah, such as David, Solomon and Josiah. The neighbouring kingdom of Sweden and other historical rivals were compared with Phillistines, Moabites or other enemies of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.<sup>501</sup> The product of the applications of biblical narratives to the worldly history of the kingdoms was the suggestive and powerful notion that the people of Denmark-Norway was in fact a chosen people, and that their kings were elected and protected by God. The notion that God protected and assisted a modern European kingdom in the same way that he had protected the Israelites was in no way limited to Denmark-Norway, but can be found in many European countries in the early modern period.<sup>502</sup> As Nils Ekedahl points out, the tendency to view the nation in terms of analogies with the Old Testament Israelites was particularly prominent in Protestant countries, where the Old Testament-inspired notion of «God's chosen people» was used in the construction of early modern national identities.<sup>503</sup>

Later on in the study, we shall return to the specific implications of this method of historical interpretation for how the clergy spoke of the events of national history. For now, I shall only make one last general observation about the ways in which the clergy interpreted the past in their sermons, which has to do with the royal government's direct influence on the structure and content of the sermons. I have pointed out that the clergy interpreted events in the worldly history of the kingdoms in light of structurally similar narratives in the Bible. Since the ministers' historical account was an amalgam of two different narratives, one worldly and one biblical, it follows that the choice of Bible verse had great significance for the end product. For instance, a Danish monarch would have appeared in a very different light if he were likened to king Rehoboam, than if he was compared with Rehoboam's father, king Solomon. In this light, it is significant that the clergy did not select the verses themselves. The Danish and the Norwegian Law stated that the clergy should explain «the prescribed texts» in their sermons. Under normal conditions, this meant that the sermon should be based on the so-called pericopes, the bible verses that were allotted to every sunday and holiday throughout the church year. In the case of the jubilees, as well as other

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<sup>501</sup> For an extended discussion of this method of interpretation, see Viken 2014: 181-185.

<sup>502</sup> For the Netherlands, see Schama 1997: 51-125; Regan 1996; For Sweden, see Ekedahl 1999; Ekedahl 2002; Ericsson 2002; For England, see Cressey 1989; Colley 2003: 29 ff.

<sup>503</sup> Ekedahl 2002: 54.



special events such as royal funerals and anointment ceremonies, bible verses were selected that were seen as particularly fitting for the occasion. The task of selecting these verses was delegated to the bishops of Zealand, Christen Worm (1711-1737), Peder Hersleb (1737-1757) and Ludvig Harboe (1757-1783). These men usually proposed a list of texts and psalms to the king, who then selected the ones they found the most appropriate for the occasion. The bishops then wrote special collects and prayers to be read before and after the sermon. All of this was printed and distributed to the other bishops in Denmark and Norway in good time before the jubilee. These instructions provided the clergy with the necessary information on which they could base their own sermons. With this process, the government gave a clear signal to the clergymen about how they wanted them to approach the topic at hand, and ensured that the rank-and-file ministers' interpretations of the past became much more uniform than they otherwise would have.

### Sermon manuscripts

Many sermons have survived from the jubilees, both in print and manuscript form. Thanks to official correspondence before and after the events it is possible to reconstruct how many of these texts came into being, and also some of the reasons why they were collected and stored. Uncovering these processes may also help to establish the precise functions of these texts and the context for which they were written. The primary audience of a sermon was obviously the congregation. When a sermon was written down and passed on to others, however, it acquired new functions and reached other audiences. The transition from the original communicative setting could also involve various forms of editing, which raises the question of the degree of correspondence between the original form of the sermon as an oral medium and its new life as a written medium, which is the only version available to us today. We can make a first distinction between sermon manuscripts and printed sermons.

Most of the sermon manuscripts that have survived belong to one of three collections: In the Regional State Archives in Oslo there is one collection of sermons from Akershus diocese, written for the bicentenary in 1736.<sup>504</sup> Two collections of manuscripts from the jubilees in 1749 and 1760, both from Zealand diocese, are kept by the Danish National Archives.<sup>505</sup> In 1736, the bishops in Denmark and Norway were required to send their own sermons, as well as the Latin orations

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<sup>504</sup> SAO/A-10378/F/Fa/L004.

<sup>505</sup> LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67; LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede D1-69.

delivered in the cathedral schools on the second day of the jubilee, to Copenhagen.<sup>506</sup> The collection from Akershus, however, contains only sermons written by ordinary parish ministers for the morning service on the first day of the jubilee, which means that they were not compiled because of this instruction. A letter to the clergy in Akerhus in which bishop Hersleb gave his subordinates detailed instructions for the upcoming jubilee shows that he was aware that the order did not apply to parish ministers but that he wanted them to send their sermons to him anyway.<sup>507</sup> The same thing happened in 1749, when Hersleb had become bishop of Zealand. This time, the king instructed the bishops to send their own sermons, the deans' sermons and the Latin orations from the cathedral schools.<sup>508</sup> Hersleb wrote a letter to the deans in Zealand and instructed them to send to him, in addition to their own sermons and the Latin orations, one copy of every parish minister's sermon. When Hersleb explained the reason for this, he referred to his collection of sermons from the previous jubilee. He wrote that he wanted to «bind them together in some volumes, and keep them as a remembrance, just like I have all the jubilee sermons and orations from Akershus diocese.»<sup>509</sup>

Hersleb gave, moreover, exact specifications for the format of the sermon manuscripts. On such occasions, he explained, some wrote their sermons in octavo, some in quarto; some used «postal paper» while some used regular writing paper. Since such variations only made it more difficult to bind them together, Hersleb wanted every minister to write their sermons «in quarto, on ordinary writing paper, with margins on both sides and [a line] above and below, for the sake of the binding.»<sup>510</sup> This instruction was probably based on former experiences—the volume from 1736 contains sermons in all sorts of formats and paper qualities, which often makes the sermons quite difficult to read. The sermons from 1749 are not bound together, but most of them are in quarto format, individually bound and often with colourful and decorative covers. In 1760, the new bishop of Zealand, Ludvig Harboe, followed his predecessor's example when he instructed all ministers in his diocese to send their sermons to him, so that he could pass them on to the Danish Chancery.<sup>511</sup>

Most of the handwritten manuscripts can thus be accounted for by official correspondence. The few manuscripts that are not part of these three collections have probably either been sent

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<sup>506</sup> SAB. Björgvin Biskop. Brev 10. 1735-1739: Royal rescript to bishop Ole Bornemann, 21 July 1736.

<sup>507</sup> Faye 1865: 107.

<sup>508</sup> SAB. Björgvin Biskop. Brev 13. 1748-1752: Royal rescript to bishop Erik Pontoppidan, 6 June 1749.

<sup>509</sup> «[...]i nogle Bind til sammen indhæfte, og til en Amindelse giemme, ligesom jeg af Aggershusens Stift har alle de i same Stift holdne Jubel-Prædikener og Orationer.» LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.1-21-22.: Letter to the deacons of Zealand and Bornholm, 16 August 1749.

<sup>510</sup> «[...]alle og Enhver skrive eller lade skrive dem in Quarto, paa ordinair Skrive-Papiir, med Margine paa begge Sider ud ad, og [Linie] oven og unden, for Indbindingens Skyld;» *ibid.*

<sup>511</sup> LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.1-33: Letter from bishop Harboe to the ministers of Zealand diocese, 14 June 1760.

directly to the Danish Chancery, a member of the royal family or a government official, or they could have been separated from the collections for some incidental reason.<sup>512</sup> It is also possible that these texts are remnants of the great numbers of sermons by the bishops and deans that were sent to the Danish Chancery, which I have not managed to find.<sup>513</sup> In any case, we can conclude that a substantial number of clergymen were instructed to submit their sermons after the jubilees in 1736, 1749 and 1760. All of the surviving sermon manuscripts were thus written, and submitted, on direct command.

The specific situation in which the sermons were created must affect how we interpret these texts. For many clergymen and schoolteachers, it would probably have been a cause of anxiety to know that their sermon or oration was going to end up in the Danish Chancery, potentially even before the eyes of the king himself. In the wake of the jubilees, individual ministers and schoolteachers excused the poor quality of their sermons and speeches. The rector of the school in Kongsberg, Friderich Breum, asked bishop Hersleb before the jubilee in 1736 if he could deliver his oration in Danish rather than Latin. He preferred Danish because he had never before delivered such an oration, because he lacked a library that could provide the necessary materials, because he feared that he would not be able to please a «curious auditorium» and «most of all, since both the bishop himself is going to see the oration and since it will be sent to the Chancery [...]».<sup>514</sup> In 1760, the minister of Trondenes Simon Kildal submitted his sermon manuscript to bishop Gunnerus. He humbly asked the bishop if he could please read the sermon before he sent it to Copenhagen, «so that, in case any mistakes has been made against my will, the same could be corrected.»<sup>515</sup> Ole Ross, minister in Ørkedal, wrote to bishop Gunnerus about his sermon that «if the particular exposition I have made about the Lord's name should not find the approval of everyone I still hope that, in this

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<sup>512</sup> The Royal Library in Copenhagen has a collection of 8 handwritten manuscripts from the two last jubilees. This contains, among other things, five sermons written by deans in Norway. See *Taler og Prædikener holdte ved Jubelfesterne 1749 og 1760* (Kall 467 kvart); One of the handwritten sermons from 1760, by Povel Matthias Bildsøe of Holmen church in Copenhagen, was dedicated to the king's aunt princess Charlotte Amalia as a «small token of gratitude» for the favours she had shown him. See *D: Povel Matthias Bildsøes Tvende Hellige Taler* (GKS 2813 kvart).

<sup>513</sup> We know, for instance, that bishop Ole Tidemand in Bergen sent his own sermon, the diocesan dean Jens Rennord's sermon, the dean in Sunnfjord Niels Lund's sermon, rector Jens Boalth and conrector Johannes Ohmsen's Latin orations delivered in the cathedral school, and the teacher at Seminarium Fridericianum Christian [sic] Holberg Arentz' Danish oration. None of these manuscripts have been found. SAB. Björgvin Biskop. Kopibok 7. 1758-1762: Letter from bishop Tidemand to Johan Ludvig von Holstein, 11 November 1760; See also SAT. Nidaros Biskop. Kopibok. No. 3. c 1760-1763: p. 808.

<sup>514</sup> SAO/A-10378/D/Db/L0002. Friderich Breum to bishop Hersleb 24 August 1736.

<sup>515</sup> «Jeg udbeder mig af Deres Høyærværdighed den Gunst, at Du ville see den igiennem, førend den nedsendes, paa det at, saafremt en eller anden Feil imod min Villie har indsneget sig, sammme da maatte blive rettet.» SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Simon Kildal to bishop Gunnerus, 28 October 1760.

as well as in everything else, nothing incorrect or offensive is found.»<sup>516</sup> All three letters reveal a certain anxiety about saying the wrong things, making mistakes and not fulfilling the standards of superiors. Their anxiety was probably not justified: the total number of sermons sent to the Chancery would have amounted to many thousands of pages. Who among the members of the central administration would have had enough leisure, time or interest to read all of this? It is probably safe to say that most of these sermons have not been read before now. At least one minister, Peder Drejer of Hadsel deanery in Nordland, realized that his sermon would most likely not be read. In a letter to bishop Gunnerus, Drejer wrote that he had the honour to send the bishop his «meditations on the prescribed text for the jubilee», and that he expected to find a «mild censor» in the bishop. Drejer added: «And then I know: no one else will look at them.»<sup>517</sup> Drejer was probably closer to the truth in his appraisal of the situation, but this does not mean that the nerves of the others were any less real. The obligation to send sermons to Copenhagen must have contributed in shaping the content of the manuscript sermons.

### Printed sermons

Many ministers decided to go one step further with their jubilee sermons, and had them printed and published to a larger readership. This is only true, however, of the two final centenaries in the eighteenth century. While no less than 38 clergymen had their sermons printed after the jubilee in 1749 and 11 after the one in 1760, only two men decided to do so in 1717 and 1736.

In 1717, the sole vicar to publish his sermons was Hans Trojel, the parish minister of Vor Frelzers church in Copenhagen, who published four sermons bound together in one volume. There are two probable reasons why Trojel's sermons are the only ones that have survived from the bicentenary in 1717. First, the practice of printing sermons does not seem to have been quite so widespread in 1717 as it would become later in the century. This probably explains why Trojel prefaced his sermon with a long and elaborate justification for why he had had it printed.<sup>518</sup> Secondly, Hans Trojel himself appears to have been more than usually preoccupied with gaining royal favour. Not only did he present a copy of his four jubilee sermons to Frederick IV with a handwritten

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<sup>516</sup> «Skulle den særdeles Forklaring jeg har gjort over Herrens Navn ikke finde alles Bifald; saa haaber jeg dog, at derudi saavelso det øvrige, intet urigtigt eller anstødeligt skal findes.» SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Ole Ross to bishop Gunnerus, 2 November 1760.

<sup>517</sup> «Jeg har her og den ære, at indsende Mine Meditationer, over Jubelfæstens Anordnede Text; formoder at finde Dem, en facil Censor; Saa veed jeg nok: ingen Anden seer paa Dem» Dahl 1897: 9.

<sup>518</sup> Trojel 1718: b3r.

dedication asking for pecuniary support, he also attempted to encourage the king to come to his church and attend the thanksgiving and prayer day service on 5 November in person: Trojel published an «Evangelical jubilee song» that was sung to music by the congregation on the thanksgiving and prayer day, a copy of which Trojel sent to the monarch with a handwritten note where he tried to convince Frederick IV to honour his church with a visit. Trojel argued here that Vor Frelser's church was the only church that the king's father Christian V had built, and the only church in which the congregation had used their own money on music and «printed solemnity» for the jubilee.<sup>519</sup> Trojel's desire for royal favour eventually became his downfall: together with his companion Peter Ryssel, the vicar later tried to convince the king that a group of high-ranking officials in Copenhagen planned to dethrone the king in a *coup d'etat*. An investigating commission established that the conspiracy was a pure invention, and Trojel was sentenced to death for crimes against the majesty (DL 6-4-1). The queen interceded on Trojel's behalf and the king mitigated the punishment to life imprisonment on the fortress Munkholmen in Trondheim, where the defrocked Trojel died in 1738.<sup>520</sup> Trojel was therefore not a run-of-the-mill clergyman by any means, and his book of printed sermons from 1717 seems to be the exception that proves the rule: publishing jubilee sermons had not yet become a normal practice for ordinary clergymen. In 1736, moreover, the only surviving printed sermon was written by a bishop, Eiler Hagerup (the elder) in Trondheim.

The change is therefore quite dramatic when we consider the jubilees in 1749 and 1760, which were both followed by hectic activity amongst clergymen who wanted to print and publish their jubilee sermons. In both cases, a number of sermons did indeed reach the market. These were, however, only a very small percentage of all the sermons that were actually delivered during the jubilees. The great majority of the ministers were clearly content with the more limited audience that was their congregation. The publication of a sermon was, in other words, not a very common thing to do, which raises the question of exactly what motivations lay behind the decision to publish, and whether there were any special reasons why these particular sermons were printed and published. In his book on the history of Norwegian preaching, Olav Hagesæther claims that it was mostly

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<sup>519</sup> «Har den döde Luther kunde formaet saa meget: at Deris Kongelig Majt hafer nu i Mandags nest afviget æret den döde Moders Vor Frue Kirke med Deris Kongl. Majts höye Nærværelse? Den lefvende Trojel da ogsaa maatte allerunderdanigst formaae Deris Kongelig Majestæt til at ære nu paa Fredag förstkommendis den lefvende Söns Vor Frelsers Kirke med samme Deris Kongl: Majts höye Nærværelse, endog som det er den Eeniste Evangeliske Kirke Deris Kongl: Majst Hr. Fader Sal: og Höylovlig Ihukommelse Kong Christian den Femte her i Staden hafte bygget; Vel og den Eeniste Kirke i Staden der med sin egen Meenigheds Bekostning denne Jubel-Fest saa höytidelig til Deris Kongl: Majts Fornøyelse med Musique og prentet Solennitet celebreret». See handwritten note enclosed in Hans Trojel, «Evangeliske JUBEL-Sang/For det Efter Reformationen Ved Sl: Doct. MORTEN LUTHER Fuldente Andet Hundrede Aar» in Hans Trojel, *Det andet evangeliske Jubel-Aar, forrestillet i endeel smukke Vers.* (Royal Library in Copenhagen, Location 2,-214 4).

<sup>520</sup> Bruun 1870: 375-377.

exemplary preachers («mønsterpredikanter») who published their sermons in this period. Only near the end of the eighteenth century did ordinary ministers («den jævne prest») begin to publish either single sermons or sermon collections.<sup>521</sup> Michael Bregnsbo makes a similar point, based on a statistical analysis of all sermons printed in Denmark in the period 1750-1848. He claims that the preachers who published their sermons were probably not typical and that the sermons were probably of higher quality than what one would normally hear in Danish churches. Certain geographical areas, notably Copenhagen and Zealand, and certain offices, such as bishops and court preachers, are overrepresented.<sup>522</sup> The list of published sermons from the jubilees seems to largely fit this general pattern. Not surprisingly, we find published sermons from some of the most influential churchmen of the day, such as the bishop of Zealand Peder Hersleb, the Trondheim bishops Friedrich Nannestad and Johann Ernst Gunnerus, and the court preacher Johann Andreas Cramer, who was in fact the most industrious sermon writer in the period.<sup>523</sup> Among the sermons printed in Denmark, moreover, sermons written by ministers in Copenhagen are indeed overrepresented.<sup>524</sup> On the other hand, a substantial portion of published sermons was written by quite unknown clergymen, some of whom had never published anything before and would never publish anything again. It is highly doubtful whether all of these can be described as «exemplary preachers». It is more likely that the special nature of the jubilees themselves induced more ministers to publish their sermon than would normally have done so. Bregnsbo has also shown that certain years saw a sharp increase in the number of published sermons and explains that these surges were often stimulated by special holidays or political events (royal funerals or anointment ceremonies, peace treaties and so on).<sup>525</sup> Special events, such as a jubilee, seem to have provided a legitimate opportunity or excuse for a wider group of clergymen to publish their work than usual.

In some cases, the ministers explicitly stated the motives behind the decision to publish in the preface to their jubilee sermons. One such explanation was that others had encouraged them to do so. Gerhard Treschow, for instance, claimed that his many members of his congregation had encouraged him to print his sermon, while Søfren Lemvigh's sermon was prefaced by a short verse ostensibly written, anonymously, by the three men who had convinced him to publish it. The verse

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<sup>521</sup> Hagesæther 1973: 194.

<sup>522</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a: 28.

<sup>523</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a: 19.

<sup>524</sup> 9 out of 23 printed sermons from Denmark are written by ministers based in Copenhagen. 5 out of 23 are from Zealand outside of Copenhagen. 6 are from Jutland, 1 is from Funen and 1 from Falster. One sermon is printed anonymously. If we add together the sermons from Copenhagen and Zealand, approximately sixty per cent of the sermons are from the diocese of Zealand.

<sup>525</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a: 23.

suggested that humility would otherwise have prevented Lemvig from doing so.<sup>526</sup> Professions of humility and personal reluctance to publish were rhetorical commonplaces in the period and, as Michael Bregnsbo has pointed out, such statements may well reflect false modesty.<sup>527</sup> In some cases, however, they may well be true: the minister Peder Lorenz Hersleb claimed in an autobiographical sketch that he did not feel confident enough to publish anything and that he would not have published his jubilee sermon if not a «dear man» had praised it and encouraged him.<sup>528</sup>

Neither can we exclude the possibility that the printed jubilee sermons actually answered a popular demand. A special case in this regard is Simon Wolf, minister on the island of Strinda in Sør-Trøndelag, Norway. In the dedication to his 280-page sermon from the jubilee in 1760, Wolf claimed that his congregation had not only requested that it be printed, they had even collected the money to pay for it: [...] no sooner had I delivered it in church, where you were gathered in great numbers and with a fiery devotion, before some of you came to me in my own house and requested it to be printed and published, yes no sooner had I given my permission to do so before you decided between yourselves to collect and pay the money that was needed for it [...].<sup>529</sup> Wolf's dedication even suggests that he paid back the favour by giving copies of his sermon to his parishioners.<sup>530</sup> Again, it is difficult to know whether these claims were true or not. There are examples of ministers in the eighteenth century who distributed their printed sermons to their congregation, so it is certainly possible.<sup>531</sup> In any case, Wolf's dedication was written not only for the eyes of Bakke parish. The story of the humble loyal parishioners who spent part of their meagre income to pay for the

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<sup>526</sup>«Hvad har vel holdet ham, høygunstig/Ven! at ikke/Sin Jubel=Tale hand til Pressen for lod/skikke? Vi giætte det; men er det Hoffart af en Mand/At gjøre det bekiendt, som undervise kand?» Lemvig 1750; Treschow 1749; Trojel 1718: a3r; See also the preface in Nimb 1751 and the title page of Gabriel Heiberg's sermon from 1749: «Written on commandment from high authorities, printed after encouragment from some friends.» Heiberg 1749.

<sup>527</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a: 46; According to Arnold Hunt, «images of bashful preachers forced into print at the insistence of their friends» was also a conventional excuse for print publication of sermons in early modern England. Hunt 2010: 127.

<sup>528</sup> Rørdam 1877-80: 672.

<sup>529</sup> «thi snarere havde jeg ikke holdt den i Guds Huus, hvorhen I paa Jubel=Fæstens Dag ret i Hove=Tal og med en fyrrig Andagt forsamlede Eder, førend I og for en Deel indfandt Eder hos mig i mit eget Huus, og anmodede mig om dens Udgivelse i Trøkken, ja snarere havde jeg ikke dertil givet mit Samtykke, førend I og imellem Eder selv indbyrdes overlagde at skyde tilsammen og udrede de Penge, som dertil behøvedes [...]» Wolf 1760: 4.

<sup>530</sup> Wolf wrote that the sermon was dedicated to the congregation «who really owns both the text and its author, the former as your legally aquired property, the latter as you dutiful servant in the Gospels.» He also wrote that they could now read with their eyes, for their own reflection and edification, the sermon that they had previously heard with their ears. Wolf 1760: 4.

<sup>531</sup> Johan Nordahl Brun wrote in his funeral sermon over the parish minister Michael Stub Arentz that the latter had handed out his own publications for free to his congregation. Brun 1799: 11-12; Niels Glatwed wrote on the title page of his jubilee sermon that it had been preached to his congregation on 28 October 1749 and written down «for the edification of the congregation on 19 June 1750.» Glatwed 1750; Peter Abildgaard's sermon from Røros copper mine's centenary in 1744 was printed in 300 copies and distributed to the miners. Dahle 1894: 160.

publication of a sermon became part of the message of the text itself- it was a moving story of loyalty to the monarch and faith in God.

Many sermons were dedicated to the king himself, members of the royal family or other important political figures.<sup>532</sup> The general motive behind such dedications was obviously a hope of gaining the attention of the dedicatee. The minister may, for instance, have nourished hopes of establishing a client-relationship to a powerful and influential person, or to maintain an already existing relationship. In those cases where the king was the dedicatee, we can surmise that hopes for promotion to a better living was an important motivating factor.<sup>533</sup> There was tough competition amongst the clergy for the most financially rewarding parishes. After the introduction of absolutism in 1660, all new church appointments had to be approved by the monarch. In effect, this meant that there was a strong incentive to attract the king's attention—the Danish Chancery was flooded by petitions from ministers and theological students asking for either a particular living or for their first appointment.<sup>534</sup> In this context, publishing a well-written sermon full of enthusiastic praise for the king was an elaborate way of bypassing the queue of applicants. Normally, this strategy was not stated explicitly. In one case from 1717, however, the preacher was more direct than usual. Hans Trojel sent copies of his collection of four jubilee sermons to king Frederick IV, crown prince Christian and princess Sophie Hedvig. On the king's copy, there is a short handwritten verse in Danish where Trojel points out that he has no «shelter» (i.e. does not own his own house), is up to his knees in rent, has no income, and asks for the king's support.<sup>535</sup>

If the decision to print a sermon could be motivated by the preachers' hopes of promotion, financial support or patronage, it is doubtful whether this was a realistic strategy. Shortly after the tercentenary in 1749, the preacher Jacob Bagger sent his sermon to his superior Peder Hersleb, the bishop of Zealand. Accompanying the sermon was a letter where Bagger asked the bishop a few questions. Bagger wrote that he intended to print his sermon and dedicate it to the king. He stated that his reason for doing the former was that he wanted to contribute in keeping the precious blessing commemorated by the jubilee alive in the memories of all faithful subjects. Bagger's reason for wanting to do the latter was that he hoped that this could make the king remember his name if he

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<sup>532</sup> See Jacob Bagger 1750 (dedicated to the king), Mathias Bildsøe 1750 (to the head secretary of the Danish Chancery Johan Ludvig Holstein), Hans Mossin 1749 (to princess Charlotte Amalia), Mathias Hwiid 1749 (to the king), Peder Lorentz Hersleb (the king), Broder Brorson 1760 (the king) Ole Ross 1760 (the king).

<sup>533</sup> Viken 2014: 18.

<sup>534</sup> Appel & Fink-Jensen 2009: 319-320.

<sup>535</sup> «Jeg har selv ey Hytte-Læe/ Ved Huus-Leye gaer i Knæe/ Præste-Løn har jeg oc icke/ Kongen kand mig begge skicke». Ilsoe 1999: 610.



ever applied for a new calling. Bagger therefore wanted to know whether the bishop deemed his sermon as worthy of being printed, and whether it was permitted to dedicate it to the monarch. He also wanted the bishop to write a short preface, as this would both make it more attractive for potential buyers and increase the possibility that a publisher would pay the cost for the printing.<sup>536</sup> Hersleb's reply is a remarkably candid admission about the sermons' lack of efficacy as a stepping-stone to professional success. The social position of its author makes the letter especially interesting: Hersleb was the leading clergyman in the Danish church at the time and moved in the highest political circles. The bishop wrote back to Bagger that he was over-worked, not least because he had been ordered to publish his own sermon, but he had found the time to read Bagger's sermon in bed and thought that it was «good, proper and pleasant». The minister was free to dedicate it to the king; everyone was allowed to do so, so this would not require any permission in advance. Then Hersleb gave his realistic, and sobering, appraisal of the effectiveness of such activities:

I have no way of knowing what effect this would have on your promotion in the future, but I have observed that this is hardly considered or not considered at all, yes it is hardly remembered two days thereafter, and will maybe not be read or looked at other than the moment it is delivered, because his Majesty is obstructed with dedications, verses, orations, so it cannot be remembered. [...] I also think there will be many more that let their sermons be printed on this occasion, and who dedicates them; I already know about a few.<sup>537</sup>

Hersleb encouraged Bagger to print the sermon since he was certain that «the public would find it pleasing», but he advised him to hurry up and find a printer since there was talk of collecting the best sermons and publishing them in one volume, entitled *Hilaria Oldenburgico Danica*. If this plan became publicly known, no printer would bother to print Bagger's sermon.<sup>538</sup>

It is not so surprising that clergymen believed that the publication of a sermon could be the first step on the road to promotion. Some of the most prominent clergymen in the period, bishop Hersleb among them, had been promoted by the king after having preached for him in person and

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<sup>536</sup> LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.3-268: Letter from Jacob Bagger to Peder Hersleb, 10 November 1749.

<sup>537</sup> «Hvad Effect det i sin Tiid kunde giøre til Deres Befordring, det kand jeg ikke viide, saavidt har jeg observeret, at der reflecteres gandske lidet eller intet derpaa, ja neppe ihukommets [to] Dage derefter, maaskee ikke læses, eller sees paa, uden det Øyeblik det overleveres, thi hands Majestet bliver obstrueret med Dedicationer, Vers, Orationer, saa det kand ikke erindres. [...] Jeg tenker og at der bliver vel mange fleere, som lade deres Prædikener trykke, og dedicere, ved denne Occasion; Jeg veed allerede nogle.» LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.1.21-22: Letter from Peder Hersleb to Jacob Bagger, 15 November 1749.

<sup>538</sup> LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.1.21-22: Letter from Peder Hersleb to Jacob Bagger, 15 November 1749; Hersleb gave the same advise to Andreas Bredenberg, another minister who sent his sermon to the bishop: he wrote that Bredenberg should publish the sermon while the jubilee was «still fresh in people's memory» (Letter from Peder Hersleb to Andreas Bredenberg, 29 November, 1749).

made a good impression.<sup>539</sup> For a clergyman sitting in a rural parish without direct access to the monarch, awareness of this possibility of social climbing might have tempted them to achieve the same result through ersatz means, namely by way of a sending a printed sermon to Copenhagen. As Hersleb suggested, the tsunami of panegyric publications that were published in the period must have worked against them. I have at least not found any instance of a minister being promoted on the basis of a printed sermon.

Before a manuscript could be printed, it had to receive an imprimature from the local bishop or the theological faculty, a procedure that ensured that only politically correct and theologically sound texts could reach the book market. The bishops, however, could also take an active part in arranging or encouraging the printing of sermons from their diocese. For instance, bishop Niels Dorph of Akershus diocese appears to have told all the deans in his diocese to arrange the printing of their sermons themselves with their own money and send them to him. We know this because one of them, Peder Jespersen Nyrop of Nordrehov parish, pleaded the bishop for dispensation from this expense because he could not afford it, and asked whether Dorph could please pay it for him. If not, Nyrop promised to do it himself, after the bishop had approved his sermon.<sup>540</sup> It must have been taken care of somehow, because Nyrop's sermon was indeed published. Out of sixteen printed Norwegian sermons from the tercentenary in 1749, fourteen came from Dorph's diocese. Thirteen of these, including Nyrop's and the bishop's own, are bound together in a book that is kept by the Norwegian National Library.<sup>541</sup> These are probably all printed on the order of the bishop. One of the deans, Peder Kinck, stated explicitly on the title page that the sermon was printed according to a «high command».<sup>542</sup> We cannot know for certain who arranged the binding, but it is reasonable to assume that it was the bishop himself. What we do know is that Dorph sent at least some of these printed sermons to Copenhagen, where they were deposited in the Royal Library.<sup>543</sup> As late as 1770, moreover, a Trondheim newspaper advertised «A collection of jubilee sermons, delivered in 1749, by

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<sup>539</sup> When Christian VI heard Broder Brorson preach, he promoted him to the post of diocesan dean in Ribe, and the year later he was made bishop of the same diocese.

[http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Dansk\\_Biografisk\\_Leksikon/Kirke\\_og\\_tro/Biskop/Broder\\_Brorson](http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Dansk_Biografisk_Leksikon/Kirke_og_tro/Biskop/Broder_Brorson), Retrieved 03.11.2015; Niels Dorph was moved from a rural church in Norway to a ministry in Copenhagen after having preached for Christian VI on his journey to Norway. Dorph later became bishop of Akershus. Giessing 1779: 506; Peder Hersleb was reportedly given the post as minister at Frederiksborg castle after he had preached before Frederick IV. Lindhardt 1939: 66-67.

<sup>540</sup> SAO/A-10378/D/Dc/L0002. Letter from Peder Jespersen Nyrop to bishop Niels Dorph, 29 December 1749.

<sup>541</sup> The sermons are written by Peder Jespersen Nyrop, Hans Leganger, Jonas Scheen, Niels Dorph, Peder Debes, Gerhard Winge, Jens Aalborg, Niels Stockflet, Peder Kinck, Morten Leigh, Niels Coch, Niels Kongsberg and Ole Hannibal Hof.

<sup>542</sup> Kinck 1749.

<sup>543</sup> DRA. DK. D99-10: p. 788.

the deacons of Akershus diocese, thirteen in number.»<sup>544</sup> This volume, sold at the price of 1 Riksdaler and 1 ort, must be the twelve deans' and Dorph's own sermons, which shows that these sermons were indeed also sold together.

A less comprehensive effort was made in 1760 by bishop Johann Ernst Gunnerus. In a letter to Ludvig Friederich Broch, the minister of Hitra and dean of Fosen, the bishop commended him on his well-written jubilee sermon, encouraged him to print it, and even offered to help him with doing so. The bishop wrote that this would have to happen soon, however, since the deans Ross and Rosenvinge were going to send their sermons to Copenhagen anytime.<sup>545</sup> Gunnerus' initiative resulted in three sermons from Trondheim diocese: his own, Ross' and Broch's sermons.<sup>546</sup> Bishop Jens Christian Spidberg in Kristiansand diocese seems to have planned to do something similar, but this plan did not come to fruition, for reasons unknown.<sup>547</sup> The bishops' efforts to coordinate the publication of sermons from their diocese should probably be interpreted as a way of publicly demonstrating loyalty to the monarchy, akin to bishop Ludvig Harboe's project for the creation of a jubilee medal from the clergy.

### The transition from oral to written medium

Another question that must be considered is whether the sermons, either in manuscript and print, are accurate renditions of what the ministers actually said in church to their congregations. For if the sermon as originally delivered differs radically from the written version that has survived down the centuries and is accessible to us today, our sources to the actual communication taking place on the parish level would be correspondingly limited.

In previous investigations of Danish and Norwegian sermons from this period the general question of the correspondence between the orally delivered sermon and the written versions has been addressed in various ways. Olav Hagesæther claims that is «probably not possible to draw an absolutely accurate picture of the preaching that has sounded in our country in the first half of the

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<sup>544</sup> Tveterås 1950: 124, Rian 2014a: 288.

<sup>545</sup> SAT. Nidaros Biskop. Kopibok. No.3.C 1760-1763. Letter from Gunnerus to Broch, 19 January 1761.

<sup>546</sup> «Rosenvinge» must be Peter Kaasbøll Rosenvinge, parish priest in Selbu in Sør-Trøndelag. I have not found any printed jubilee sermons written by him.

<sup>547</sup> Spidberg's request to print the deans' sermons was granted by the head secretary of the Danish Chancery, Johan Ludvig Holstein, on 16 May 1761, provided they were censored and approved by the bishop in advance. DRA. DK. D99-16: p. 250.

eighteenth century.»<sup>548</sup> As already mentioned, Hagesæther does not consider the printed sermons as typical or representative of ordinary preaching. He claims that the surest knowledge of the actual conditions is gained through sermon manuscripts that were written without any thought on publication, and he mentions several existing collections of manuscripts as examples. Among these, he includes bishop Hersleb's collection of sermons from the bicentenary in 1736.<sup>549</sup> Hagesæther does not, however, discuss the correlation between the handwritten documents and the sermon as it was delivered orally in church. Michael Bregnsbo analyses exclusively printed sermons, and he studies them primarily as sources to the clergy's own views on society and the state. The nature of the sermon's original communicative context is therefore largely secondary in his study. Using results from modern communication studies, Bregnsbo does identify various factors that may have contributed to reducing the efficacy of the sermons in conveying information to the audience. He also points out that the actual size of the audiences might often have been quite small, due to the low attendance in church reported by clergymen in the period. Bregnsbo does not, however, discuss the degree of which the printed sermons correspond to how they were originally delivered.<sup>550</sup>

This is, however, a major methodological question in Øystein Idsø Viken's doctoral thesis, since he is primarily interested in the sermons as a source to what the ministers in Norway actually told their congregations in the eighteenth century. He identifies several challenges in this regard. Printed sermons could be edited, improved and adapted to the written format. Both printed and manuscript sermons could be censored by the bishop or self-censored by the preacher. When a sermon was written down after it had been delivered, some of the original content may have been left out or forgotten. Extemporization from the pulpit may not have been included in the written manuscript. Aspects of the «original rhetorical quality in the situation between preacher and congregation might also have been lost in the transition from oral to written medium.»<sup>551</sup> Viken points out that contemporaries were well aware that there could be a divergence between a sermon in its written and spoken form. At the same time, it was an ideal to reproduce the sermon as it had been originally delivered. This explains why some preachers added testimonies that the sermon was a

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<sup>548</sup> «Det vil neppe være mulig å tegne et absolutt nøyaktig bilde av den forkynnelse som har lydt i vårt land i første halvdel av 1700-tallet.» Hagesæther 1973: 194.

<sup>549</sup> Hagesæther 1973: 194.

<sup>550</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a: 94-98

<sup>551</sup> «Noko av den opphavlege retoriske kvaliteten i situasjonen mellom predikant og kyrkjelyd kan [...] seiast å ha gått tapt ved overføringa frå munnleg til skriftleg medium.» Viken 2014: 22-23; See also Holtz 2009: 271.

faithful reproduction of the original sermon: «[t]he attachment of testimonies indicates that editing of manuscripts was so common that one felt the need to free oneself from the suspicion of revision.»<sup>552</sup>

Viken's observations are all relevant with regards to the jubilee sermons. We find that several ministers claimed, often on the title page, that their sermons were identical to what they had spoken to their congregation. A typical phrase is the one written by the chaplain Godsche From on the title page of his sermon: «[The sermon is] delivered with God's help to God's congregation in St. Peder's church in Slagelse as it is here submitted in the deepest humility.»<sup>553</sup> Niels Glatwedt wrote in his dedication to the king that his sermon was published «in every piece without the smallest addition or change, as it was delivered.»<sup>554</sup>

However, correspondence among clergymen after the jubilees reveals that sermons, both in print and in manuscript, could go through various stages of revision in the transition from speech to writing. In the case of manuscript sermons, it appears that some ministers wrote down the sermons only after they had delivered them or, at least, that they wrote out a copy in full text based on notes in shorthand. After the bicentenary in 1736, rector Friderich Breum wrote to bishop Hersleb that he had spoken to the minister Wilthagen, who had asked him to send his apologies to the bishop for not having submitted his sermon yet. The reason for the delay was that poor Wilthagen «has had so many official duties, and has so weak eyes that he cannot see when he writes by candle-light, but he will strive to finish it as soon as possible.»<sup>555</sup> Wilthagen had, in other words, either not written the sermon in extenso or not written it down on paper at all. Others excused themselves for being late in submitting their sermons because they had had too much work to do, or because they had to write out a full copy («reenskreven») of it first.<sup>556</sup> The dean of Bornholm, Jens Buchhave, asked bishop Peder Hersleb that his jubilee sermon be considered a draft, «since time, my office and my poor

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<sup>552</sup> «Vedlegginga av vitnesbyrd tyder på at manusendring var så vanleg at ein kjende seg nøydd til å fri seg frå mistanken om revidering.» Viken 2014: 22.

<sup>553</sup> «Er og for Guds Meenighed i St Peders Kirke i Slagelse ved Guds Biestand forklaret saaledes, som den her i dybeste Underdanighed bliver fremlagt.» See also Godsche From, David Plesmer, Iouchum Friderich Zarth, Knud Arild Friis in LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede D1-67.

<sup>554</sup> «[...] i alle Stykker uden allerringeste Tillæg eller Forandring, som den da blev holdt.» Glatwedt 1750.

<sup>555</sup> «[...] ti baade har han haft mange Embedets Forretninger, og har svage Øyne, at hand ei kand see at skrive ved Lys, men med det første vil hand stræbe at gjøre den færdig.» SAO/A-10378/D/Db/L0002. Friderich Breum to bishop Hersleb, 9 November 1736.

<sup>556</sup> SAO/A-10378/D/Db/L0011. Morten Leigh to bishop Hersleb, November 6th 1736; See also SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Peder Dreyer to bishop Gunnerus, October 18th 1760; SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Letter from Hans Bruun, 10 December 1760.

health have not permitted me to rewrite it, I hope it is not perceived as a fault that that my thoughts are submitted in the clothing that they have.»<sup>557</sup>

None of these statements give us any certain indication of the state of the original manuscripts, or whether such a manuscript actually existed at all. Øystein Idsø Viken points out that from 1737, the authorities required as a minimum that the ministers at least wrote down a shorthand manuscript before the service. The norm was that the preacher wrote down the entire sermon beforehand, memorized it, and then delivered it without reading from the manuscript.<sup>558</sup> In reality, there were all sorts of different practices, including some preachers who read the sermon directly from the paper and others who improvised extensively on the pulpit.<sup>559</sup> We may suppose that the more prepared and complete the sermon was before the service, the more it would have corresponded to what was actually said from the pulpit. We may also reasonably assume that the more time it took from the sermon was delivered till it was written down in full, the less it would resemble what was actually said from the pulpit. If these assumptions are sound, it follows that, in cases like the examples cited above, there is a chance that the sermon manuscripts eventually submitted to the bishop could have differed quite a lot from the original version.

In some cases, the ministers admitted that the manuscript was not identical to what had been said in church. On 14 January 1761, Ludvig Friderich Broch wrote to bishop Gunnerus, blaming the late submission of his sermon on a painful kidney stone. He also confessed that «when I started copying it, it became longer than it was when I delivered it.»<sup>560</sup> The phrase «skrive den af» implies either that Broch had either used a shorthand manuscript, which he then augmented while writing the complete version, or that he copied a full manuscript and added new parts as he wrote the version that he send to the bishop. Ole Lange apologized to bishop Hersleb that his text was full of deletions, and explained that other occupations had prevented him from writing the final copy as properly as he would have liked. He excused, moreover, the many Bible citations in the text:

The reason there is so many citations is that they have occurred to me in the course of my meditation and writing, and then thrown in, and accordingly included as a support of the truth; but

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<sup>557</sup> «Men beder i største Underdanighed, at det Exemplar, som Deris Høvedle Høyærværdighed er opoffret, antages som en Klak, thi Tiiden, Mit Embede og Min Svaghed har ei tilladt mig at self skrive den om igien, haaber det ei naadig optages, at Mine Tanker fremsendes i de Klæder, de har.» LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.3-418.

<sup>558</sup> Georg Hansen cites a case from Denmark where a member of the congregation criticized a minister for reading from his sermon from a manuscript. This made the congregation lose respect for the minister and his learning. The minister was also reprimanded for this. Hansen 1947: 109.

<sup>559</sup> Viken 2014: 17; See also Hagesæther 1973: 161.

<sup>560</sup> «Jeg tilstaaer at da jeg kom i værk med at skrive den af, blev den vidloftigere end den blev forestillet.» Dahl 1897: 4.

few of them were read out in the sermon, as I find this unnecessary and unedifying, and only apt to confuse the mind from the meaning of the matter.<sup>561</sup>

Another clergyman, Carl Christian Eller of Strø parish on Zealand, submitted a manuscript sermon that lacked the application («application»), the part of the sermon that normally dealt most directly with the historical topic of the jubilees. Instead, he wrote a short paragraph in Latin where he explained to bishop Harboe why the sermon lacked an application. According to Eller, the first part of the sermon had been so long that he had instead improvised a short application. He had also kept his application short to accommodate it to his simple and unlearned audience. Instead, Eller gave the bishop a very short resumé of his application.<sup>562</sup>

In the case of the printed sermons, there would have been even more editing involved. Whereas the manuscripts were merely subject to self-censorship from the preacher himself, the printed sermons had to be censored by the bishop or the professors at the Faculty of Theology before they could be published. Due to a lack of sources to this process, however, we do not really know the precise amount and character of the emendations suggested or demanded by the bishops or the professors. In the Faculty of Theology's censorship protocols, we find that all but one of the jubilee sermons that were censored by the professors was accepted without any revisions. This suggests that the censorship process had little effect on the published sermons, apart from the possibility that the minister weighed his words more carefully in the knowledge that his sermon would be censored. The only exception is a sermon by the castle preacher in Akerhus, Otho Holmboe: *En Christelig Opmuntring til at holde en hellig og glædelig Jubel-Fæst*. The sermon was given an imprimature by the German court preacher and extraordinary professor J.A. Seydlitz, provided that Holmboe omitted parts of the sermon where he allegedly used the word of God in a way that was «impermissible for a servant of the church».<sup>563</sup> Unfortunately, I have not found Seydlitz' notes or his

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<sup>561</sup> «at der findes saa mange Citationer, er skeet, fordi de under Meditation of Skrivning ere mig indfaldne, og saa opkastede, og altsaa hosskrevne til een Bestyrkelse i Sandheden, men den allermindste Deel ere udi Prædiken blevne opregnede, som jeg holder unødigt og til ingen Opbyggelse, men vel til at forvirre Sindet fra Materiens Sammenheng.» SAO/A-10378/D/Db/L0011. Letter from Ole Lange to bishop Hersleb, 19 November 1736.

<sup>562</sup> «Exegesis fusius ore prolatam excepit Applicatio pro re nata extemporanea, quid quod brevissima /:cum sermo exceptis Præfatione et precibus dicentem per integræ horæ spatium cum dimidio, et quod excurrit detinuerit:/ et quæ respectu Auditorii plebeji et minus eruditi simplicissima continebat votivam omnigenæ prosperitatis appreciationem in Regem Regiamq. stirpem gloriosissimam ejusq. conservationem, perennitatem et numerositatem indubiam nunquam cessuram simul et seriam excitationem ad summas Deo Optimo Maximo referendas gratias pro Absolutissimo Regimine sponte olim oblato, pieq. in posterum tuendo, quod enim semel placuit, semper placebit.» C.C. Eller, *Concio Jubilæa, in memoriam Absolutissimi per integrum seculum imperii penes Reges Dania ex Norvegia gloriosissimos, habita die 16 Octobris 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69.

<sup>563</sup> «Imprimatur, omissis haud paucis quæ ab usum verbi divini, ministro ecclesiae cumprimis indignum, aperte produunt.» DRA. Københavns Universitet, Det Teologiske Fakultet. 3106-01.

copy of the sermon, so I do not know what Seydlitz meant with his critique. The sermon was eventually published, however, with imprimature by professor Peder Rosenstand-Goisce.<sup>564</sup> It is reasonable to assume that Holmboe followed Seydlitz' advise before submitting the sermon to a new round of censorship, in which case it would mean that the process has changed the sermon from its original state.

There are also few sources to the censorship process in those cases where the sermons were censored by the bishops. This scarcity of sources may suggest that the bishops had no objections against the sermon manuscripts since, if there had been any problems, it would probably have led to some correspondence. I have found only one case where a bishop actually prevented a subordinate from publishing his sermon. In 1760, the personal chaplain of Askvoll, Stephan Middelböe, asked bishop Ole Tidemand for his opinion about whether his jubilee sermon could be published, and whether the bishop could write a short preface to the sermon.<sup>565</sup> Tidemand replied that he had read it for a couple of hours, but that he could not bear to read longer than to page 30 since he found that there was no hope of the remainder being any better. He therefore returned the sermon to Middelböe and advised him to wait publishing until his «power of thought» had matured and his writing style had improved.<sup>566</sup> Tidemand objections thus had to do with the poor quality of the sermon, rather than any political or theological reasons.

The preachers themselves would in any case have wanted to make as good an impression as possible in their public writings, either before a general public or in the eyes of the authorities. The desire to impress, or the fear of making a fool of oneself, has no doubt led the preachers to make an extra effort in preparing their manuscripts for print. In a letter to bishop Ole Tidemand in which he submitted a manuscript version of his jubilee sermon, Gabriel Heiberg admitted this in no uncertain terms:

Your worthiness will find it badly written and the materials thrown messily together, but to avoid appearing insubordinate or negligent by holding it back for too long I must submit it as it is. It has become longer than I had originally planned; But if I should let it be printed, which I indeed had intended, I must for a great part revise it, and bring it into better shape; but I fear for the costs, and harsh criticism from the journalists.<sup>567</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> *Opmuntring* is one of two sermons in Holmboe 1749.

<sup>565</sup> SAB. Björgvin biskop. Brev frå presteskabet 5. 1760. Letter from Stephan Middelböe to bishop Tidemand, 8 November 1760.

<sup>566</sup> SAB. Björgvin Biskop. Kopibok 7. 1758-1762: p. 201.

<sup>567</sup> «Deres Høyærværdighed finder den ilde skrevet, og Materialerne kastede u-ordentlig tilsammen, men for ikke at siunes ulydig eller forsømmelig, ved at holde den altfor længe tilbage, maa jeg lade den avgaae saadan som den er. Den er bleven vidløftigere, end jeg havde tænkt; Men dersom jeg skulde lade den gaae i Trøkken, som jeg vel havde foresatt mig, maa



Heiberg suggested that he would have shortened and revised his lengthy sermon before it could be considered fit for print, but writing for the reading public could also mean adding new material to a sermon that had not been part of the original sermon. In a letter to bishop Ludvig Harboe in 1760, Jacob Bagger admitted that his sermon manuscript had been augmented to make it more suitable for print:

I have made it more extensive, and added something here and there that was not spoken: the reason for this was that, since I let my first jubilee sermon for 28 October 1749 be printed, I also planned to let this one see the light, and I have therefore thought that there should be something in it for everyone's reflection.<sup>568</sup>

A special case is the sermon published by Marcus Frideric Bang, chaplain in Trondheim Cathedral. On 20 October 1749, bishop Nannestad wrote a letter to his diocesan dean where he divided the tasks for the upcoming jubilee between the clergy in Trondheim. In the cathedral, the chaplain Bang would preach during the early morning service («Froprædiken»), Nannestad himself during the morning service («Høymæsse») and diocesan dean Jacob Thode during the evening service («Aftensang»)<sup>569</sup>. Bang must have complained almost immediately about this division of labour, for the following day the bishop sent the chaplain a letter where he confirmed that this was indeed how it was going to be. From the bishop's letter, we can gather that Bang had supposed that he would hold the evening service sermon and that he had already written it based on the prescribed Bible verse, 2 Samuel 7, 11. Bang's supposition was based on the royal decree of 25 April 1749, which stated that the bishop would deliver the morning service sermon in the cathedral, the parish priests would deliver the same in the parish churches, while the chaplains would deliver the sermons for the early morning and evening service.<sup>570</sup> According to Nannestad, this instruction was based on the conditions in Copenhagen, where there were two chaplains for each church and where, consequently, they could deliver one sermon each. Bang had wanted someone else to deliver the

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jeg for en stor Deel retouchere den, og see at bringe den i bedre Orden; Men jeg frögter for Omkostningerne, og for Journalisternes sterke Critique.» SAB. Björgvin Biskop. Brev frå presteskabet 6. 1761. Letter from Gabriel Heiberg to bishop Bornemann, 19 February 1761.

<sup>568</sup> «Jeg har udført den noget vidtløftigere, og indført hist og her eet og andet, som ikke blev talet: Aarsagen dertil var, at siden jeg lod min første Jubel-Prædiken til den 28 Octobr 49 trykke, havde jeg og i sinde, at lade denne komme for Lyset, og har derfor tenkt, at der i den burde findes noget til Eftertanke for Alle.» LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispembede. B.3-268: Letter from Jacob Bagger to Ludvig Harboe, 28 November 1760.

<sup>569</sup> SAT. Trondhjems biskop. Kopibok No.2. 1746-1751. Bishop Nannestad to Jacob Thode, 20 October 1749.

<sup>570</sup> SAT. Nidaros biskop. Pk. nr. 126. Forordninger og reskripter 1746-1749. Letter from Frederick V to bishop Nannestad, 25 April 1749.

early morning sermon but this was not acceptable, since the early morning service was always the task of the chaplain. Bang had evidently also complained that the instruction about the division of labour came too late. Nannestad did not accept the complaint, because «[w]hen a man has 8 days to prepare even for an extraordinary sermon it cannot be called too late.»<sup>571</sup> The bishop added that he had actually imagined that his instructions from the day before was superfluous, since he «could not believe that brothers should argue about rank and precedence in their holiest official duties.»<sup>572</sup> He concluded the letter by admonishing the chaplain to accept that Thode delivered the sermon for the evening service. Judging by the published account of the celebrations in Trondheim, anonymously written by Nannestad himself, this is indeed what happened: «For the evening service, the diocesan dean Mag: Jacob Thode preached in the cathedral over the prescribed text.»<sup>573</sup> It is therefore somewhat surprising that Bang later published *two* sermons from the same jubilee: the one he delivered during the early morning service and the one he *did not* deliver during the evening service.<sup>574</sup> Although there is nothing in the published text itself that suggests it, we must conclude that only the first of the two sermons were ever actually delivered orally to the congregation in Trondheim. The second sermon must be based on the manuscript Bang had written before the jubilee, but was not allowed to deliver by the bishop.

In some cases, divergences between the spoken and printed versions of sermons are obvious and easy to identify, even though we only have access to the latter. One notable aspect is the length of the sermons. The preachers were obliged by law to limit their sermons to under an hour. As Øystein Idsø Viken points out, this limit was not always respected in practice, and there are many sermons from the eighteenth century that clearly exceeds this limit.<sup>575</sup> This is also true of the jubilee sermons. In some cases, the minister claimed that he preached longer than usual because of the special nature of the occasion.<sup>576</sup> This means that we cannot automatically conclude that a very long sermon has been expanded from the original version. Nonetheless, a few of the sermons are so long that they cannot possibly have been delivered as they appear in print. Among the largest is Simon

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<sup>571</sup> «Naar en Mand haver 8. Dage til at betenke sig end og til en usædvanlig Prædiken, bør det ei kaldes forsilde.» SAT. Trondhjems biskop. Kopibok No. 2. 1746-1751. Bishop Nannestad to M.F. Bang, 21 October 1749.

<sup>572</sup> «[...]ti jeg kunde ikke tro at Brødre skulde trætte om Høyhed og Fortrin i Deres helligste Embeds Forretning.» SAT. Trondhjems biskop. Kopibok No. 2. 1746-1751. Bishop Nannestad to M.F. Bang, 21 October 1749.

<sup>573</sup> Nannestad 1749b.

<sup>574</sup> The University's printer Johann Jørgen Høpffner in Copenhagen published the sermons together in one volume. Bang 1749.

<sup>575</sup> Viken 2014: 24. See also Hagesæther 1973: 125, 198.

<sup>576</sup> During the jubilee in 1749, Hans Adolph Brorson preached for three hours, and would have preached longer if a catarrh in the throat had not made him lose his voice. Hansen 1947: 107; See also Wolf 1760: 235; Scheen 1749: [22]; Trojel 1718: 141.

Wolf's sermon from 1760, which is 235 pages long, and Jens Nimb's from 1749, which is 209 pages.<sup>577</sup> If we suppose that it would have taken approximately two minutes to read one page, the preachers would have used almost eight and seven hours respectively.

Otho Holmboe stated explicitly in the text itself that a great number of pages had not been included in the original sermon. He wrote that, since the simpler parts of his congregation did not know the history of the Oldenburg kings, he would talk about each king briefly. In a footnote, however, he added: «As short as this history is written, the time did not allow an oral explanation of anything but the most important and edifying from each king's history.»<sup>578</sup> The historical section of Holmboe's sermon is 68 pages long, out of a total of 138 pages, and consists of a detailed account of each king's reign and a comparison with a Jewish monarch from the Old Testament. A substantial amount of these pages was thus never delivered to the congregation.

Another significant difference between the sermon as an oral and written medium are the paratexts. Many sermons contain footnotes that would obviously not have been read aloud in the church service. Sometimes, the footnotes are mere references to the works the preacher had used to collect materials for his sermon, while in other cases they contain substantial amounts of additional information. The footnotes had different functions. Simon Wolf's sermon included a few footnotes containing extra historical information that supplied relevant background information to support the arguments in the main text. He added, for instance, a chronological table of all the Danish absolute monarchs from Frederik III to Frederik V, as well as a lengthy summary of Ludvig Holberg's account in *Danmarks og Norges Beskrivelse* (1729) of the introduction of absolutism in 1660. Both of these footnotes were presented as a help to the «simple reader» which did not already know these things.<sup>579</sup> Matthias Hwiid's sermon included, among other things, a table of all the months in the year with a list of all the divine blessings that had been showered on the Oldenburg kings in each month, a list of all the European royal houses that were related to the Oldenburg dynasty and a list of the Oldenburg dynasty's military victories.<sup>580</sup> In such cases, the footnotes may have been intended as a supplement to readers who did not already know these things. In other cases, however, the footnotes appear to be specifically directed towards a highly educated readership. Some of the printed sermons contain footnotes with quotes in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and modern European languages, references

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<sup>577</sup> The text is 280 pages, but the first 45 pages contain the dedication and the intimation that was read the Sunday before the jubilee. Wolf 1760.

<sup>578</sup> «I hvor kort denne Historie end er forfattet, tilloed dog Tiden ikke mundtlig at udføre, uden det Vigtigste, og meest Opbyggelige af hver Konges Historie.» Holmboe 1749: 37.

<sup>579</sup> Wolf 1760: 238, 247-249.

<sup>580</sup> Hwiid 1749: 8-9, 19, 23.

to learned works and classics, and discussions of various historical or theological matters. In its review of Povel Matthias Bildsø's sermon, the journal *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om Lærde og Cuireuse Sager* wrote that «what could need any illumination is illustrated with philological, historical and other comments».<sup>581</sup> Many of the comments in question are philological discussions of biblical translations, with quotes in Greek and Hebrew. The level of knowledge required to appreciate these footnotes is a clear indication that they were intended as a supplement to the advanced reader, rather than as assistance in understanding the text. To give a taste of this sort of discussion, I can quote a random footnote from Otho Holmboe's sermon. In the main text, Holmboe spoke of king Solomon's great wisdom that manifested itself, among other things, in his sending of ships to Ophir and Tharsis. In the footnote, Holmboe wrote:

Ophir was in India, as Bochartus, Prideaux and others have shown. Tharsis was in Spain, which can be deduced from 2. Macc. 8, 3. and also by the grave and great tombstone which was discovered near Saguut in Spain in 1480. On the stone was written in Hebrew: This is *Adomiram's*, Solomon's servants grave, who came here to collect taxes. vid. *Villalpand & Reinbek*; In Spain there has also been a city called Tartessus.<sup>582</sup>

When a preacher sat down to write such excursions, he must have had a learned audience in mind, and written for a segment of the population that would appreciate discussions of more or less obscure topics from the Bible or ancient history. A learned readership would, moreover, not only have appreciated the information itself, but would also have been able to appreciate the quality and learning of the author and all the work he had put into the sermon. We know that other ministers read jubilee sermons. Simon Wolf, for instance, referred to seven different previously printed jubilee sermons from the previous jubilee in his own sermon.<sup>583</sup> Jubilee sermons, moreover, were regularly reviewed in the journal *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om Lærde og Cuireuse Sager*.<sup>584</sup> A university-educated and learned audience would most likely want other things from a sermon than an audience of non-educated tradesmen, artisans or peasants. This is probably what Jacob Bagger referred to when he

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<sup>581</sup> «[...]hvad som kunde behøve nogen Oplysning, er illustreret med philologiske, historiske og andre Anmerkninger.» *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om Lærde og Cuireuse Sager* No. XX. den 14 May. 1750.

<sup>582</sup> «Ophir har været i Indien, som Bochartus, Prideaux og andre har viist. Tharsis har været i Spanien, som sluttes af 2 Macc. 8, 3. item af den Grav og store Liigsteen, som blev funden til [Saguut] i Spanien Ao. 1480. paa Steenen var paa Hebraisk skrevet: Dette er *Adomiram's Salomons* Tieneres Grav, som var kommen hid at indfordre Skat, vid. *Vallalpand & Reinbek*; I Spanien har og været en Stad, som kaldtes Tartessus.» Holmboe 1749: 101.

<sup>583</sup> Wolf 1760: 235, 239.

<sup>584</sup> By modern standards, these texts were basic summaries of the content and structure of the sermons, rather than critical reviews. There nonetheless seems to have been a popular demand for such reviews: according to the editor, some of his readers had requested that he review all of the jubilee sermons that he received. *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om lærde og cuireuse Sager*, Num. XXXIV, 20 Aug. 1750: 267.

wrote that he had expanded his sermon so that «there should be something in it for everyone's reflection.»<sup>585</sup> My impression is that the former were the primary audience of most printed sermons, and that this often shaped their intellectual ambitions and rhetorical style.

After this review of the circumstances surrounding the production and distribution of the sermons, we can begin to say something about their characteristics and functions as a medium of centennial commemoration. We have seen that the sermons had various functions and primary audiences according to different stages of production and refinement. In its original state, namely the version that was delivered orally in the church on the day of the jubilee, the congregation was the sole audience of the sermon, and its ostensible purpose was their religious edification. As Øystein Idsø Viken has pointed out, certain aspects of this original communicative situation are forever lost to us: the tone of voice of the preacher, extemporization, unexpected interferences, the mood of the audience and so on.<sup>586</sup>

In the second stage of production, the handwritten manuscript, the sermon had a new primary audience: the bishop, possibly the officials in the Danish Chancery and, potentially although highly unlikely, the king himself. In this stage, I would argue, the sermon acquired new functions. We have evidence that the sermons were collected as a future remembrance of the jubilee itself. In addition, the collection of the sermons was a way for the government to control the contents and quality of the clergy's preaching. Whether or not anyone ever actually read these sermons is an open question, but the fact that they had to be submitted would have probably have affected the contents of the sermons. I have therefore voiced reservations against considering the manuscript sermons as faithful reproductions of the sermon in its original form: there is documentary evidence that suggests that the ministers did indeed revise their sermons before submitting them to their superiors, and the very fact that the sermons were going to be sent to Copenhagen increases the possibility that they were carefully written to meet the expectations of superiors. None of the existing sermon manuscripts from the jubilees have the form of shorthand notes, which would probably have been a closer approximation to what the preacher actually used in church. While these observations do not necessarily mean that the manuscript sermons do not correspond to what was said in church, they entail that we cannot assume that they do. In the absence of other contemporary sources, the

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<sup>585</sup> «Jeg har udført den noget vidtløftigere, og indført hist og her eet og andet, som ikke blev talet: Aarsagen dertil var, at siden jeg lod min første Jubel-Prædiken til den 28 Octobr 49 trykke, havde jeg og i sinde, at lade denne komme for Lyset, og har derfor tenkt, at der i den burde findes noget til Eftertanke for Alle.» LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. B.3-268: Letter from Jacob Bagger to Ludvig Harboe, 28 November 1760.

<sup>586</sup> Viken 2014: 23.

manuscript sermons are, nonetheless, the category of source that gives us the closest approximation of the original delivery of the sermon.

In the third stage of production, the sermons underwent even more revisions and acquired several additional functions. Preachers could, among other things, print their sermons to demonstrate their learning or competence, to gain the attention of the king in hope of promotion or, what was the ostensible purpose of the printed sermons, to contribute to the edification of the greater public and to perpetuate the memory of the jubilees and the events that they commemorated. The preacher reached a much larger audience with a printed sermon, but this also meant that he increased the possibility of criticism and public disapproval. This probably explains why relatively few preachers printed their sermons. It also means that the printed sermon was probably written with even greater care and self-censure than the manuscript sermons. I would argue that most of the printed jubilee sermons are probably not completely accurate reflections of what the preacher said in church on the day of the jubilee. The general structure of the sermons may be the same, as well as much of their content, but they had probably been subject to various degrees of expansion and revision.

### The jubilee church services

Whereas the available sources allow a great deal to be said about the circumstances surrounding the production of the jubilee sermons, I have not managed to find much information regarding their delivery or the audience reception. This lack of sources is unfortunate, but not surprising. As the editors of a recent anthology on British sermons point out, the element of the sermons as a performance is integral to preaching, but difficult to reconstruct:

While there is some comparatively fragmentary evidence of the reception of the sermon, it is tiny and highly individualistic. So like other performances, theatrical, liturgical and political, sermons are fossils: their real substance has gone, they can only partially be recovered in the disturbance of material around them and in the changed forms in which they survive.<sup>587</sup>

Eyewitness reports from a later and better documented event, the Reformation tercentenary in 1817, show that such accounts could have provided relevant information about matters such as the size of the audience, the mood of the audience and the atmosphere in the church at the time the sermon

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<sup>587</sup> Francis & Gibson 2012: xiii.

was delivered, as well as the quality of the delivery of the sermon.<sup>588</sup> These dimensions of the church services would have had a significant impact on what the audience managed to grasp from the jubilee sermons, as well as on their receptivity to what the minister had to say. In the Norwegian clergyman Frederik Schmidt's account of his impressions from the jubilee service in Vor Frue church in Copenhagen in 1817, for instance, we find that Schmidt did not hear most of bishop Münter's sermon, and that the audience, despite the bishop's own enthusiasm and expressive body language, were not «particularly warm or moved».<sup>589</sup> I have not found similar reports from the eighteenth century. There are in few reliable accounts at all of what went on in the parish churches in the kingdoms during these jubilees and how the services were actually executed in practice. Despite the scarcity of sources, I shall still try to say a few words about the execution of the jubilee church services. Most of the information comes from Norway, where I have searched most systematically in libraries and archives for sources about the celebration of the centenaries in churches.

The official instructions from Copenhagen stated that there should be music where it was possible, and ringing with the church bells, as usually happened on «the three great holidays», Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.<sup>590</sup> We can suppose that such measures contributed many places to making the jubilee church services more solemn than regular Sunday services. In the towns, there is also some evidence of festive illumination of the churches. In Ålborg in 1717, the town's cathedral church St. Budolphi was decorated with «lit candles in the chandeliers just like for Christmas» for the duration of the entire jubilee.<sup>591</sup> In the afternoon church service during the centenary in Røros in 1744, not only the chandeliers were lit, «but lights were also lit everywhere, where there was room.»<sup>592</sup> The account books of two churches in the town of Bergen in Norway also show that money was spent on extra lighting in the church. In 1749, Nykirken paid 11 riksdaler and 8 skilling for candles

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<sup>588</sup> Many of these accounts are quoted in Olaf Kolsrud's study of the tercentenary. An excellent example is the reactions to bishop Bech's sermon in Vor Frelser's Church in Christiania on the first day of the jubilee. Here we learn first of all that the church was chock full. According to one witness, the sermon pleased the audience and was mostly good, but it ended with a much too long speech about education and schools. Another witness thought the sermon itself was acceptable, but that it was too long and the delivery too «cold». When speaking about his plans to establish a Luther memorial school, the bishop had referred to his own pecuniary difficulties, which had not been well received among the audience. Another example is the verdicts on rector Rosted's speech, which one witness described as delivered so softly that no one could hear it, while another described it as «dry». See Kolsrud 1917: 269, 271.

<sup>589</sup> Hancke 1868: 322.

<sup>590</sup> See for instance SAB. Björgvin biskop. Brev 13. 1748-1752. Letter from Frederick V to bishop Pontoppidan, 25 April 1749.

<sup>591</sup> Wulff 1891-93: 326.

<sup>592</sup> «Aftensangen begyndte Klokken 4 om Eftermiddagen, da der ey allene udi Kirkens Kroner, men og overalt, hvor der kunde findes Plads, vare Lys antændte.» Abildgaard 1744: 30.

that burned «during all three sermons both in the chandeliers and the pews.»<sup>593</sup> Domkirken paid 7 riksdaler, 2 skilling for candles in the chandeliers, as well as money to the ringer.<sup>594</sup> Illumination of the churches is also reported from various churches during a later jubilee, the tercentenary in 1817.<sup>595</sup> Although few in number, the geographical and chronological distribution of these instances suggest that illumination of churches might well have been a widespread practice. In those places where it happened, extra lighting in the church would have helped create an extra festive atmosphere, enhancing the association between the jubilees and the three great holidays of the church year.

In some churches, the jubilees occasioned the acquisition of new liturgical objects, some of which were inscribed with short notices about the events themselves. Donations occasioned by jubilees are also known from Electoral Saxony in the eighteenth century.<sup>596</sup> In Efteløt church, south of Kongsberg in Norway, the Reformation bicentenary in 1717 was commemorated with a wooden tablet inscribed with the following poem:

Praise and jubilee honour to God/for his Word and pure teachings/we have had two hundred years/of the power of the true faith/therefore king Frederick the Fourth/who firmly protects God's birds/has considered it best/that we celebrate a jubilee/on the last day of October and the first fifth and seventh of November/after the birth of Christ/here is therefore written/that one thousand seven hundred/and seventeen [years] have passed/in our small almanac/praise and eternal thanks to God.<sup>597</sup>

A similar wooden tablet was made in Lunder church in Ringerike in Norway to commemorate the Reformation tercentenary in 1817. The inscription that describes the celebration of the jubilee appears to have been painted over a similar inscription from 1717.<sup>598</sup> In 1737, the year after the

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<sup>593</sup> «Octobr: 28 som var Jubeldagen ladet brende Lys i alle 3 Prædikener baade i Lyse-Cronerne og Stoelene». SAB. Stiftamtmanden i Bergen. Rekneskapar for Nykirken. 1746-1751.

<sup>594</sup> SAB. Stiftamtmanden i Bergen. Rekneskapar for Domkirken. 1748-1752.

<sup>595</sup> See note 21 in Lysaker 1973: 396; Written on a wooden tablet in Lunder church (Ringerike, Norway) commemorating the jubilee: «The church was lighted with 24 candles arranged in candelabra on the altar, pulpit and organ». Christie & Christie 1986: 167; In a book of fairytales, legends and stories from Hardanger (1903), Theodor Sjursen Haukenæs relates an anecdote from one of the jubilees in the first half of the nineteenth century. According to Haukenæs, the vicar Bendix Bendixen Røtting told his congregation to dress in their finest clothes, and asked every peasant to bring their own tallow candles in iron candlesticks. The candles were fastened to the wall before the service. See Haukenæs 1903: 92-96.

<sup>596</sup> See note 349 in Flügel 2005: 114.

<sup>597</sup> «Gud skeepriis og Jubel ære/for sit Ord og Reene Lære/Vi To hundred aar har haft/Til den Rette Troens Kraft/Derfor har Kong Friedrich Fierde/som Guds Fugle fast omgierde/I agt taget Dette best/AT vi holdte Jubel Fest/Paa den Siste Dag Octobris første, Femt og siunds Novembris/Effter Christi Fødsel Aar/her saaledes Skrevet staaar/Til et Tusind Og Siuhundre/Fulde Sytten er udrundne/I vor Liden Almanach/Gud hav Lov og ævig Tach». [http://norgeskirker.no/wiki/Eftel%C3%B8t\\_kirke](http://norgeskirker.no/wiki/Eftel%C3%B8t_kirke) 12.01.2015.

<sup>598</sup> According to an online inventory, «traces of an older inscription can be traced underneath» the inscription from 1817. Since the latter includes a description of the dates and bible verses of the jubilee in 1717, it seems likely that this



Danish-Norwegian Reformation bicentenary, the old church in Kautokeino in Finnmark was decorated with the so-called *jubilee tablet* («Jubelfest Taflan») a copper engraving fastened onto a wooden tablet, commemorating the introduction of the Reformation in Norway. Although information about this object is scarce, it is reasonable to assume that it was acquired in connection with the bicentenary the year before.<sup>599</sup> The vicar of Ullensvang church in Hardanger donated two objects to his church in connection with the Reformation bicentenary in 1717: a crimson altar cloth with silver embroidery and a tin case for the communion oblates.<sup>600</sup> In Bragernes church in Drammen, a gilded communion chalice was bought for the money that the congregation had offered during the bicentenary in 1717. The chalice bore an inscription that commemorated the bicentenary.<sup>601</sup> The congregation in nearby Strømsø donated the collect from the same jubilee (271 riksdaler) to pay for a new clock on the bell tower.<sup>602</sup> An interesting but rather more uncertain case is the decoration of Vestre Moland church in Øst-Agder in the south of Norway. In a topographical description from 1785, Johann Michael Lund wrote that there were portraits in the choir of «all the kings of the Oldenburg dynasty to and including Frederick V».<sup>603</sup> A new sacristy was built in 1749, the interior of which was decorated in 1750. If the portraits in the choir were acquired around the same time, there is a possibility that the purchase was occasioned or at least inspired by the tercentenary of the Oldenburg dynasty in 1749. The old church in Kviteseid church in Telemark has an identical series of portraits, only with eleven rather than twelve portraits, which apparently arrived there at the same time as in Vestre Moland, «most likely around 1750».<sup>604</sup>

The most comprehensive and well-documented example of an effort to combine the celebration of a jubilee with the beautification of the church comes from Ønslev church in Falster, Denmark. On All Hallows' Eve in 1717, the first day of the Reformation bicentenary, the vicar Mogens Knudsen Hosum hung up a tablet between two windows on the southern wall of his church, bearing the names of the nine ministers that had preceded him since the Reformation. Over the names was a Danish verse that described how the church had received new windows for the

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information actually came from the older inscription. [http://www.norgeskirker.no/wiki/Lunder\\_kirke](http://www.norgeskirker.no/wiki/Lunder_kirke). Retrieved 12.01.2015.

<sup>599</sup> Steen 1969: 52.

<sup>600</sup> Bendixen 1911: 510.

<sup>601</sup> «Thi saa ofte som I æde af dette Brød, og dricke af denne Kalck, da forkynder Herrens Død indtil hand kommer. 1 Corint: XI v.26.–Til Guds Ære Og Jubel Fæstens ihukommelse Som holdtis Alle Helgens Dag Aar 1717. Er denne Kalck og Disck Til Bragnæs Kircke Offererit». Alsvik & Gjesdahl 1974: 66.

<sup>602</sup> Kolsrud 1917: 291-292; Alsvik 1942: 104; Ingstad 1980: 221.

<sup>603</sup> Lund 1785: 221.

<sup>604</sup> [https://lokalhistoriewiki.no/index.php/Kongebilder\\_i\\_Moland\\_kyrkje](https://lokalhistoriewiki.no/index.php/Kongebilder_i_Moland_kyrkje) 23.01.2014.

jubilee year, giving light in the house of the Lord.<sup>605</sup> The year before the jubilee, a new gallery («pulpitur») was erected and decorated with paintings and verses. A painted inscription associated the renovation with the Reformation bicentenary.<sup>606</sup> Finally, Hosum collected five paintings of previous ministers and their wives, which he repaired, supplied with inscriptions and hung on the walls in the new parish school. Hosum's inscription on the oldest of these paintings, depicting Hans Knudsen Bech, suggests where he had found the inspiration to renovate and decorate the church for the bicentenary. According to the text, Bech had «built the congregation with his mouth, pen and his own example, disrupted Satan's kingdom by persecuting witches, built many things in the church, mostly with his own hands, for the first jubilee».<sup>607</sup>

What can all of these acquisitions tell us about the celebration of the jubilees? Apart from being interesting cultural expressions in their own right, they do also to indicate that the jubilees could represent something out of the ordinary in the communal life of the parish. They are one of the few signs that suggest that the jubilees were something more than a slightly augmented church service. If either the minister or members of his congregation went to the trouble of purchasing expensive objects or decorating the interior of the church for the occasion, it is not far-fetched to assume that the jubilees were seen to be important events. In addition, the fact that most of the decorations were placed on prominent locations inside the churches or, in the case of liturgical objects and bell tower clocks, were actively used on a weekly basis, ensured that the the jubilees themselves became inscribed in the collective memory of the local community.

Another category of sources that brings us somewhat closer to events at the local level is the parish registers. I have searched through the entire catalogue of digitalized parish registers in the Norwegian National archive to find out whether they mention anything about how the centenaries were celebrated in the churches of Norway. Generally, the accounts of the events in these books are quite sparse, mentioning them only with a few words. In many cases, there is merely a short entry between the Sunday before and after the jubilee.<sup>608</sup> Others do not even mention the jubilee, but merely note baptisms or funerals on the same day. Since the jubilees took place in the middle of the

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<sup>605</sup> «Man har til jubel år nye vindver ladet gjøre/Giv lys i Herrens huus og gård et helligt liv at føre».

<sup>606</sup> «Kom Noa due med fredens ole blade/Så skal vort jubel år os gjøre dobbelt glade/Dog skal den iisfugl i den mægtige Herrens skygge/Ved det oprørte hav sin rede sikker bygge./Forfærdiget på nye til jubelfesten år 1717».  
[http://danmarkskirker.natmus.dk/uploads/tx\\_tcchurchsearch/Maribo\\_1282-1296\\_01.pdf](http://danmarkskirker.natmus.dk/uploads/tx_tcchurchsearch/Maribo_1282-1296_01.pdf) Retrieved 10.11.2015.

<sup>607</sup> «[Hr. Hans Knudsen Bech] opbygde meenigheden med lærdom ved mund og pen samt levnets eksempel, nedbryde Sathans rige ved hexer at forfølge, bygde og det meest med egen hånd i kircken adskilligt til 1ste jubelfest».  
[http://danmarkskirker.natmus.dk/uploads/tx\\_tcchurchsearch/Maribo\\_1282-1296\\_01.pdf](http://danmarkskirker.natmus.dk/uploads/tx_tcchurchsearch/Maribo_1282-1296_01.pdf) Retrieved 10.11.2015.

<sup>608</sup> For instance Øyestad parish in Norway in 1749. See Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070702630237.jpg> Retrieved 02.12.2015.

week, we therefore know that the congregation must have been gathered to celebrate them on these days, although the minister does not mention it. In some instances, the entries are a bit longer, giving some basic information of the purpose of the jubilee. In Ullensvang in Hardanger, for instance, Niels Winding wrote the following brief statement: «Tuesday, 28 October a jubilee and thanksgiving feast was celebrated everywhere in these kingdoms and lands according to the command of our most merciful king, in honour of God's most holy name, for having protected the seed of the royal house in 300 years on the royal throne: a mild government over these kingdoms; On the same day there was a sermon in Ullensvang church.»<sup>609</sup>

In a very few cases, the parish registers provide some information about church attendance during the jubilee services. In Melhus in Trøndelag, for instance, the minister wrote that he had celebrated the jubilee in 1760 with the «entire parish» («med samtlige Allmue»).<sup>610</sup> The minister of Hjartdal in Telemark wrote that the jubilee in 1749 was celebrated with «singing, prayer and invocations, praise and thanksgiving, as well as a speech to the attending large assembly, of the entire parish». <sup>611</sup> In Tranøy in Troms, the jubilee in 1760 was attended by «the majority of the parishioners.»<sup>612</sup> The minister of Ulvik in Hardanger wrote in 1760 that he had held the jubilee church service for «the whole parish in Ulvik». <sup>613</sup> In Alstahaug in Nordland, the parish had come in «great numbers» to the jubilee service in 1749, «even though the weather was bad.»<sup>614</sup> In Vinger in Hedmark in 1736, the minister had read the short Reformation history (see chapter 5) in the annex church on the second day of the jubilee, where there was «a very large assembly of people.»<sup>615</sup>

It is impossible to say for certain whether these cases were unusual, or if it is rather a coincidence that only these ministers mention the high attendance in their churches. If the

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<sup>609</sup> «Tirsdagen d: 28 Octobris blev efter Vores aller-naadigste Konges Befalning over alt i disse Riger og Lande helligholdet en Jubel-og Taksigelses Fest Guds allerhelligste Navn til Ære fordi hand i 300 Aar hafver bevaret det Høy-Kongelige Huuses Sæd af den Oldenborgiske Stamme paa den Kongl Throne: en Mild Regiæring over disse Lande; samme Dag blev der prædiket i Ullensvangs Kirke.» Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070522630604.jpg> Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>610</sup> Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070917610035.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>611</sup> «[...]Sang, Bön og Paakaldelse, Lov og Taksigelse samt een Tale til den tilstødeværende folke-riige Forsamling af heele Gieldet [...]». Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20061212310378.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>612</sup> «Den 16 Octobr blev Jubel-Fæsten celebreret ved Tranöe Kirke i de fleeste af Meenighedens Overværelse.» Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070605610408.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>613</sup>«[...] holdt jeg Guds Tieniste for hele Præstegieldet udi Ulvig.» Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070523620578.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>614</sup> «da Almuen var i Mengde tilstede skönt Veiret var slemt.» Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20071015630047.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>615</sup> «Ligesaa ved Annexet, hvor en meget folkerig Forsamling var». Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070603160437.jpg> Retrieved 02.12.2015.

eyewitness accounts from the Reformation tercentenary in Norway in 1817 can serve as a valid comparison, it is likely that the latter is indeed the case. During this jubilee, several of the churches were indeed chock full.<sup>616</sup> Church attendance was mandatory according to a royal decree of 12 March 1735, but we know from various sources that the congregations did not necessarily follow this injunction. In the course of the eighteenth century, the total amount of church services was in fact reduced to meet the actual conditions of declining church attendance.<sup>617</sup> This low church attendance can have different explanations. One possibility is that people simply found the church services boring, and that peasants and other working people wanted to relax and enjoy themselves when they finally had a day off from work.<sup>618</sup> Another explanation is that work itself prevented people from attending church, particularly in those parts of the year when they had to work far away from home. According to one vicar, the rural population of Norway, except for the old and pregnant, only took communion in the spring and fall since they were in the mountain with the livestock in summer and in town to sell their produce in winter.<sup>619</sup> In the early months of the year, parts of the male population in coastal areas were also absent due to seasonal fishing. Few of these factors, however, would have affected the jubilees, all of which were celebrated in the months of October and November, so they would not have interfered with any seasonal work.<sup>620</sup>

It also seems likely that the extraordinary character of the jubilees could have contributed to higher church attendance. In his jubilee sermon from 1749, David Plesmer addressed his congregations in Jyderup and Holmstrup parishes directly: «I see you today, my beloved, gathered in larger numbers than usual.» Plesmer told them that he was assured that they had not come to hear news, like the Athenians, nor to «hear an historical account of the famous deeds of the Danish kings». The sole purpose of the jubilee, wrote Plesmer, was to give thanksgiving offerings to the

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<sup>616</sup> For instance Claus Pavels account from the Cathedral church (Domkirken) in Bergen on the third day of the jubilee: «It is said that it has never been so full». Kolsrud 1917: 269, 281, 284, 286,

<sup>617</sup> A rescript of 1 May 1739, for instance, reduced the amount of weekly sermons considerably. The introduction to the rescript stated that many bishops and ministers had complained that several of their sermons, particularly those delivered in the early morning, noon and on Wednesdays, were attended by few people or by no one. Berg 1841: 719. See Fæhn 1994: 229-238. Bregnsbo 1997a: 59; Viken 2014: 45-47.

<sup>618</sup> Viken 2014: 47, 103.

<sup>619</sup> Fæhn 1994: 208.

<sup>620</sup> Bishop Claus Pavels of Bergen diocese made a point out of this in the invitation he wrote for the Reformation tercentenary in October/November 1817: «The jubilee occurs in a time of year when most of those among us can have no valid excuse either for their worldly business or their absence from God's house, except if stormy weather should prevent anyone from daring to voyage on the raging seas. The growth of the soil has been harvested; as far as I know, these months are not appropriate for fishing far away from home. I therefore do not know about anything pertaining to your worldly livelihood that might prevent you from preparing the eternal salvation of your immortal souls with thanks, prayers and godly promises». Kolsrud 1917: 324.

Lord.<sup>621</sup> The court preacher Johann Andreas Cramer made a similar observation when he claimed that the extraordinary and unusual nature of the centenary in 1760 had led much more people than usual to attend the churches of Copenhagen on this day. Although Cramer himself did not consider this to be a particularly noble motive to visit church during the jubilees, he is probably correct in supposing that it did play a part in boosting attendance.<sup>622</sup>

The actual execution of the jubilees on the parish level was dependent on various more or less coincidental circumstances. In some instances, the instructions for the jubilees reached the ministers too late for the celebrations to take place on the stipulated date. This was particularly a challenge in the north of Norway. In 1717, at least four parishes celebrated the thanksgiving and prayer day, originally to be held on 5 November, from a week to a month later than intended.<sup>623</sup> In Buksnes in Nordland in 1736, the minister could not hold the jubilee service in time since the mail from the dean did not arrive before the bells had rung the third time on the day of the jubilee, so «there was no time to copy the relation about the success of the Reformation in Denmark or to prepare for the sermon.»<sup>624</sup> The minister of Vadsø in eastern Finnmark complained in a letter to bishop Gunnerus that he had not received the instructions before 7 November 1760, due to a delay in the post. Since he had not dared to celebrate the jubilee on another date than what the king had commanded, he wanted new instructions from the bishop. In the end of May 1761, more than seven months after the jubilee was supposed to have taken place, bishop Gunnerus replied that Sylow should arrange the celebration of the jubilee service as fast as possible, «since it is better to do it late than never» and that, if this happened again in the future, the jubilee should be arranged on the

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<sup>621</sup> «Jeg seer Eder i Dag, m.E., i een meer end sædvanlig stoor Mængde forsamlede, jeg forsikrer mig dette om Eder, at I ikke, som de Athener, komme for at höre Nyt Act.17. ei heller ere forsamlede for at höre een historisk Opregnelse af de Danske Kongers berømmelige Bedrifter. O forbyde Gud at enten Eders Sind eller mit Arbeide paa denne Tid og dette Sted skulle være saa henvendt! Men vi ere sammenkaldede og forsamlede i Herrens Huus at fornye Riget, at ofre Takoffer for Herrens Ansigt 1.Sam.11». David Plesmer, *J.N.J. Concio Jubilæa Hab: d: 28. Oct: 1749 Text Psal: 89. v.1-6.*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [3].

<sup>622</sup> «Die Versammlung in unsern Tempeln waren an diesem Feste größer und zahlreicher, als sonst. Ich weiß wohl, daß das Außerordentliche und Ungewöhnliche viel Antheil daran hat, und diejenigen, die von keinen edlern Gründen bewogen worden sind, die Feyerlichkeit des Gottesdienstes zu erhöhen, haben freylich gerechte Ursachen, sich zu demüthigen.» Cramer (ed.) 1770: 519

<sup>623</sup> The parishes of Dverberg and Hadsel celebrated it on 26 November, Ofoten on 12 November and Buksnes on 13 December.

<sup>624</sup> «[...]Profsten Herr Bings Express kom ikke her til Stedet förend mand ringede 3die Gang saa der var verken Tid til at udskrive Relationen om Reformationens Success i Danmark, eller at bereede sig til Prædiken.» Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20071106610656.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015; The jubilee in Folda and Saltdal in Nordland was not celebrated before 14 November and 8 December, respectively, probably for the same reason. Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20071031610121.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015; Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20071119640618.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

following Sunday.<sup>625</sup> If it took Gunnerus' letter as long a time as Sylow's letter to return to Vadsø, the centenary for the introduction of absolutism in 1660 would not have been celebrated before the spring of 1762.

The weather could also have a major impact on the celebrations. Many parishes along the coast of Norway, particularly in the northernmost parts of the country, actually never celebrated some of the jubilees at all. The dean Johannes Irgens wrote to bishop Gunnerus in 1760 that the jubilee had been celebrated at the correct time in his deanery Tromsø, but only to «a very small audience, since a very hard and harsh weather occurred, with wind and snow; but at that time of year nothing else is to be expected.»<sup>626</sup> Likewise, the minister of Gildeskål in Nordland, Peder Bruun, wrote that the celebration of the jubilee had not in fact taken place in most parts of the area, «due to the terrible weather that occurred on the prescribed day». In his own parish, not a single soul had been able to reach the church, but he had celebrated the jubilee as soon as the weather allowed it.<sup>627</sup> The same thing happened in Borge in Nordland, where the parishioners never came to the church because of the bad weather. The minister had instead led a private devotion and prayer in his own household, and delivered a short jubilee speech the next Sunday, after the ordinary church service.<sup>628</sup> Bad weather is a purely coincidental factor, but it must also be included as part of the history of centennial commemoration in the eighteenth century. It certainly occurred often enough to limit the impact of the jubilee in coastal areas.<sup>629</sup> If people could not attend the church service, they would not be able to hear the carefully crafted church prayers, collects and sermons that described the history of the kingdoms.

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<sup>625</sup> SAT. Trondhjems Biskop. Kopibok No. 3.c. 1760-1763. Letter from bishop Gunnerus to Sylow, 26 May 1761.

<sup>626</sup> «skjønt for ganske faa Tilhørere, siden det just indfalt et meeget haart og strengt Veyr af Vind og Snee, dog paa den aarsens Tiid kand intet andet her os vente.» SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Letter from Johannes Irgens to bishop Gunnerus, 9 November 1760.

<sup>627</sup> «Jubel-Fæstens Holdelse skal paa de fleeste Stæder her i Landet ikke være skeed formedelst det forskrekkelige Vejr som indfaldt paa den anordnede Dag [...]». SAT. Nidaros biskop. Brev fra prestene 1760. Letter from Peder Bruun to bishop Gunnerus, 10 December 1760.

<sup>628</sup> Digitalarkivet: <http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20071105630365.jpg>. Retrieved 02.12.2015.

<sup>629</sup> In Folda (Nordland) the jubilee in 1717 was poorly attended because of bad weather, and in 1760 it was cancelled because of a storm (<http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20071031610121.jpg>). The jubilee in 1760 was also cancelled in Edøy (<http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070913650015.jpg>) and Sande annex on Herøy (<http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20050426020174.jpg>), both in Møre og Romsdal, and Rødøy in Nordland (<http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20050426020174.jpg>). It was delayed because of bad weather in Veøy (<http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070904660441.jpg>) and Grip in Kvernes (<http://www.arkivverket.no/URN:NBN:no-a1450-kb20070912650672.jpg>), both in Møre og Romsdal. All retrieved 02.12.2015.

## Civic celebrations

The majority of the population celebrated the jubilees only by attending church and listening to a sermon. In urban settings, however, the events were usually more extensive and elaborate. In Copenhagen and the provincial towns, the centenaries normally entailed some form of entertainment and public display involving fireworks, processions, speeches, dinner parties, balls, and so on.<sup>630</sup> The municipal authorities organized many of these events, but private individuals could also contribute to the festivities by decorating their homes with so-called *illuminations*. In a voluminous work on «ceremonial science» («Ceremoniel-Wissenschaft»), the German philosopher Julius Bernhard von Rohr devoted an entire chapter to illuminations. He defined illuminations («Illuminationen») as «arrangements of candles, lamps and torches with which, together with paintings and other appropriate decorations, entire buildings or specific parts of buildings, or also plazas, gardens etc. are lit up.»<sup>631</sup> A modern scholar defines illuminations as «any façade decoration or outdoor installation using a combination of variegated lamps and transparencies».<sup>632</sup>

The art of illumination was a central element of civic celebrations and festivals in eighteenth-century Europe. They had long been an element in the festival culture of European courts, but had increasingly made an entry into the municipal culture of cities in the Holy Roman Empire in the late seventeenth century.<sup>633</sup> In the first half of the eighteenth century, they apparently still had the air of novelty about them. The Saxon rector Christian Schöttgen wrote a short historical treatise on the history of illuminations at the occasion of king Friedrich August II's return to Dresden from Poland. The majority of the text was a learned discussion of the earliest instances of illuminations, with examples from ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and the first Christians. Near the end of the text, however, Schöttgen tried to identify when the practice had originated in modern Europe. Apart from a few scattered examples from France and Rome in the Middle Ages and the renaissance, he had not found much evidence before the end of the previous century. He suspected that the art of illumination had not begun in Germany before this time, and also presented evidence that suggested

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<sup>630</sup> The Reformation bicentenary in 1736 is an exception in this regard, for reasons that are discussed in chapter 5.

<sup>631</sup> «Die Illuminationen sind gewisse nach den Regeln der Bau-Kunst und Perspective ausgesonnene Stellungen der Leuchter, Lampen und Fackeln/mit welchen nebst der Malerey und andern darzu kommenden Auszierungen bey nächtlicher Weile ganze Gebäude, oder besondere Stücke der Gebäude/ oder auch Plätze, Gärten u.s.w. erleuchtet werden.» Von Rohr 1733: 838.

<sup>632</sup> Doderer-Winkler 2013: 2.

<sup>633</sup> Flügel 2005: 160.



that the practice of combining lighting with images and symbols had been regarded as a novelty at the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>634</sup>

The construction of illuminations during jubilees also seems to have begun in the early eighteenth century: Wolfgang Flügel mentions an illumination created by a burgher in the town of Löbau in Saxony in 1717 as one of the first instances of a private citizen using this medium during a jubilee.<sup>635</sup> The first recorded instance that I have found in Denmark-Norway is the illumination that decorated the city hall in the town of Ålborg during the Reformation bicentenary in 1717.<sup>636</sup> There are no recorded instances of illuminations during the Danish Reformation bicentenary in 1736, for reasons that will be discussed in chapter 5. In the last two jubilees in the eighteenth century, however, jubilee illuminations were legion.<sup>637</sup>

Illuminations varied enormously in size, artfulness and price: humbler subjects contributed to celebrations and festivals by placing candles in the windows of their houses, while the more affluent paid large sums of money to artists and artisans who covered their houses with large imaginative displays made of paper, wooden beams, canvas and other perishable materials. According to Christian Schöttgen, the fact that both the poor and the rich could contribute with their own illuminations made them one of the best means to demonstrate devotion to the ruler. He claimed that the demonstrations of affection from both rich and poor were equally satisfactory to princes: «Der Arme steckt sein Pfennig=Lichtgen an, welches grossen Herren eben so wohl gefällt, als wenn er grosse und kostbare Sachen vorstellte. Der Reiche machts, wie er will, der Arme, wie er kann.»<sup>638</sup> Schöttgen's further discussion shows, however, that illuminations had other functions than being mere acts of humble devotion to the prince. They could also be an effective means of social differentiation and unmasking, as they brought people's intellectual capabilities to the public light and led false flatterers to reveal themselves:

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<sup>634</sup> «Es ist auch zur Zeit noch nicht gewiß aufgemacht, wenn die Mode aufgekommen, bey denen Illuminationen gewisse Bilder und Devisen vorzustellen. Denn zu alten Zeiten waren nur Illuminationen mit Lichtern, Fackeln und Lampen. Als die Stadt Magdeburg a. 1701. ihre Illuminationen, die sie am Crönungs-Tage des ersten Königs in Preußen angestellt, in Kupfer stechen und drucken ließ, schreiben sie ausdrücklich in der Vorrede, daß dergleichen in ihrer Stadt noch nicht gesehen worden.» Schöttgen 1736: 29.

<sup>635</sup> Flügel 2005: 160.

<sup>636</sup> *Hilaria Evangelica* (Der I. Theil) 1719: 64; See also Johannsen 2013: 215-216.

<sup>637</sup> See below and Johannsen 1985.

<sup>638</sup> Schöttgen 1736: 30.



Man siehet, was Leute von Einfällen sind: Man siehet, wo Simplicius wohnt: Man siehet, wem etwas fehlet: Man siehet, wer gut schmeicheln kann, mit welchem letztern doch grossen Herren, die von Gott mit Weißheit begabt sind, am allerwenigsten gedienet ist.<sup>639</sup>

For Schöttgen, the social unmasking was a positive side effect of the illuminations. At the same time, however, the public nature of the illuminations meant that they should also be treated with a degree of care. Schöttgen feared that foreign countries would ridicule Saxony if people unfamiliar with writing poetry and making inventions (i.e. the inscriptions and emblems on the illuminations) were allowed to publicly demonstrate their crudeness and lack of taste. The world was only too ready to cast judgement on such things: «Die heutige Welt ist delicat, und beurtheilet eine jede Sache zum schärfsten.»<sup>640</sup> It was therefore preferable, wrote Schöttgen, that such people were helped by other, more competent person to refine their thoughts.<sup>641</sup>

Julius Bernhard von Rohr, too, pointed out that the art of illuminations could involve an element of competition and differentiation. He stressed the economical and social, rather than the intellectual dimension:

Nachdem die Bewohner der Häuser die andern an Stand, Ansehen, Einkünfften, oder Devotion gegen ihre Landes-Herrschaften übertroffen, nachdem thun sie es den andern an sinnreichen und kostbahnen Illuminationen zuvor. Einige illuminiren die gantzen Häuser, sie lassen alle Zimmer mit sehr vielen Christallinen Leuchtern, und alles von der Hauß-Thüre an, biß unter das Dach in der schönsten Ordnung mit großen und kleinen Lampen erleuchten, andere aber nur einige Stockwercke, oder gar nur etzliche Fenster.<sup>642</sup>

The cost and splendour of an illumination was proportionate to its maker's social position, respectability, wealth and devotion to the prince. Paying for a costly illumination was, in other words, a way of demonstrating one's loyalty and social position. In her account of the jubilee celebrations in Copenhagen in 1749, the author Charlotte Dorothea Biehl describes the illuminations in a way that reveals their functions as a conspicuous display of wealth and love for the king:

[...] one can truthfully say that the inhabitants rejoiced for the opportunity to demonstrate their love, and this is true of both strangers and natives. The Spanish minister Marquis Puerto's illumination cost him almost 4000 riksdaler. The magistrate's in front of the Town Hall and the merchants' in

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<sup>639</sup> Schöttgen 1736: 30.

<sup>640</sup> Schöttgen 1736: 30.

<sup>641</sup> Schöttgen mentioned one other point that should be considered with regards to illuminations: the fact that the people spent great expenses on illuminations should not be interpreted as a sign that they were wealthy and could therefore pay more taxes. Schöttgen 1736: 30-31.

<sup>642</sup> Von Rohr 1733: 843-844

front of the stock exchange were even more expensive, and each and every one strove to distinguish oneself in ones own house.<sup>643</sup>

Although the ostensible purpose of illuminations was expressing ones devotion to and love for the prince, they clearly communicated on multiple levels at the same time. The cost and splendour of the illumination, as well as the artfulness, wit and learning it displayed conveyed information about the person who had had it made. As we shall see below, the competitiveness and conspicuous demonstration of loyalty, wealth and learning inherent in the practice of illumination was continued and raised to a national level in newspapers and printed publications after the jubilees.

The images and inscriptions on the illuminations on private houses most often expressed a highly conventional royalist message. Consider, for instance, the illumination on the façade of Niels Eriksen's house in Gøtther's street near Kongens Nytorv in Copenhagen in 1749: on the outside of Eriksen's house was an image of king Frederick V on his throne, dressed in white Roman garb with a crown on his head. Round his head was a shining halo. In his right hand was a sceptre, in the left the globus cruciger. On the right side of the king were the Danish coat of arms and a short verse: «Fifth FRIDRICH, 12<sup>th</sup> king/of the Oldenburg house/third jubilee year has passed/God himself cares for the royal house.» On the left side was the Norwegian coat of arms and another verse: «That it may never end/ before the world ends/ and always remains happy too/ which is why God must be praised and honoured/now and forever.»<sup>644</sup> Eriksen's illumination was relatively simple compared to many others, but its fawning adoration of the present king and his ancestors is fairly typical of what we find in the descriptions of private illuminations from the jubilees.

This does not mean, however, that illuminations were always completely devoid of more controversial content. During the centenary of the introduction of absolutism in 1760, there are indications that the illuminations in Copenhagen were more contentious and politically charged than what was normal on such occasions. Before this centenary, the king had given signals that he did not want his subjects to spend large amounts of money on the festivities, including paying for illuminations. He stated that he wanted the jubilee solely to be a solemn thanksgiving to God. Both the Royal Academy of Arts and the magistrate in Copenhagen had plans for spectacular illuminations

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<sup>643</sup> «[...]man kan med Sandhed sige, at Indbyggerne iubilerede over at finde en nye Leylighed til at lægge deres Kierlighed for Dagen, og det fremmede saa vel som indfødte. Den spanske Minister Marquis Puertos Illumination kostede ham henimod 4000de Rdr. Magistratens for Raadhuset og Kiøbmændenes ved Børsen var endnu langt kostbarere, og enhver i sær stræbede tillige at udmærke sig i sit eget Huus.» Bobé 1909: 27.

<sup>644</sup> «Femte FRIDRICH, 12te Konge/ Af den Stamme Oldenburg,/ Tredie Jubel-Aar er omme, /Gud selv bær for Stammen Sorg.»; «At den aldrig endes maae, /Førend Verden skal forgaae, Lyklig og at være/ Hvor for Gud skee Priis og Ære/ Nu og evindelig.» Berling 1749: 46.

and ephemeral architectural constructions, but the king turned down their plans.<sup>645</sup> According to contemporary witnesses, however, this decision was not well received in Copenhagen. Apparently, the burghers felt that a chance had been taken from them to express their joy that the Danish nobility had lost their power a hundred years before. The fact that the king celebrated the jubilee at Fredensborg castle outside of the city was considered further proof that the noble ministers that surrounded the king wanted to dampen the celebrations. At the Theological Faculty at the University of Copenhagen, the prohibition against illuminations caused a minor student protest. The alumni at *Regentzøen*, one of the student colleges, had written the inspectors asking for permission to pay for an illumination for the upcoming jubilee. When the inspectors had advised them not to do this, the alumni reacted with dissatisfaction. It had even gone so far that someone threw an unsigned letter into Professor Rosenstand Goiske's gate, in which the students expressed their anger against the faculty and made threats. Prochancellor Erik Pontoppidan wrote a letter to the head secretary of the Danish Chancery, Johan Ludvig von Holstein, asking him what to do and pleading that this incident should not have any negative consequences for the students. Von Holstein instructed him to tell «some of the best alumni» that although the king was pleased of hearing of their good meaning and intentions, he did not want them or any other of his subjects to pay any useless expense, and that he rather wanted them to give thanks and pray to God.<sup>646</sup>

If the student protest had had been an isolated case, the small incident would not have merit our attention. But there are other cases from the same jubilee that suggests that there might have been more at stake. An anonymous eyewitness was extremely dissatisfied with the king's absence from Copenhagen and the lack of festivities. He blamed the nobility for this, and claimed that they had ruined the jubilee since they had no honour from what had happened in 1660. According to the eyewitness, the illuminations were mostly small and insignificant. He did, however, describe some of the illuminations that had been made. An illumination in Nyhavn, one of the best ones according to the witness, carried an image of a birdcage. On one end, a man in clerical dress used a bishop's staff to chase a flock of predatory birds with golden combs into the cage. On the other end, a man in ordinary clothes took the birds out of the cage and clipped their wings. The inscription read. «The yoke once laid upon our shoulders we now break asunder/ your wings we cut.»<sup>647</sup> On a house in

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<sup>645</sup> Johannsen 1985: 113; Kryger 1991: 257.

<sup>646</sup> DRA. DK. D99-15: p. 1191.

<sup>647</sup> «Det Aag som før var lagt paa Halsen af os her/ Vi knekker nu i tu, og Eders Vinger skiær.» Note that this inscription bears a striking resemblance to Charlotta Dorothea Biehl's phrase when she claimed that the nobility did not tolerate any reminder of their historical defeat: «[...]men at den ikke engang kan taale at erindres om, at der var en Tid i Danmark,

Springgaden, an illumination showed an image of large animals, «some with their feet stretched out and half-dead, others with their heads cast down towards the ground, with their horns ripped off and their claws clipped, with these words: Evanuit Terror, and this device: Where is your power now, who made us afraid before?/ You shall never again butt us with your horns.»<sup>648</sup> Karin Kryger points out that this illumination, as well as others with similar messages, was extremely aggressive towards the nobility, and that this critical tone was something that had never been seen before at similar festive occasions. In the past, the political messages displayed on temporary decorations had always been followed the premises of the absolute monarchy. According to Kryger, this was the first time the burghers used art to express their political interests.<sup>649</sup>

Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen writes about the same illuminations that they «stood out from the rest [of Frederik's reign], by virtue of their unusually satirical and controversial themes». She stresses, however, that although the illuminations were critical in tone, they were still firmly within the bounds of absolute monarchical ideology and were «rooted in an unshakeable faith in the excellence of absolutism.» Although the nobility was sharply criticised, she writes, the absolute monarch was praised unconditionally.<sup>650</sup> Bøggild Johannsen has a valid point. The harsh tone of the illuminations could perhaps be considered inappropriate, but their message was not actually in opposition to the message of the centenary. The introduction of absolutism *had* weakened the nobility, and it *was* indeed cast as a liberation of the lower estates. In this sense, the illuminations actually suggest support for the ideology of royal absolutism among the burgher estate in Copenhagen. The negative reactions against the restrictions on illuminations, as well as the fact that some burghers paid for illuminations anyway, indicates that the citizenry considered it a right to demonstrate their love and devotion for the sovereign on these occasions. When they were denied this right, they reacted with anger against the king's noble ministers, which was a common and semi-acceptable trope of political criticism in the ancien régime.<sup>651</sup>

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da man kastede dens Aag af og stækkede dens Vinger.» Bobé 1909: 76.; Suhm 1794: 68; Kryger 1991: 258; Johannsen 1985: 122.

<sup>648</sup> «[...]nogle med udstrakte Been, og som halvdøde, andre med nedslagne Hoveder paa Jorden, hvis Horn vare afrevne, og Klørerne afklippede, med disse Ord: Evanuit Terror, og denne Devise: Hvor er nu Eders Magt, som før gjorde os bange? I skal os aldrig meer med Eders Horn Stange.» Suhm 1794: 68.

<sup>649</sup> Kryger 1991: 259.

<sup>650</sup> Johannsen 1985: 113, 122.

<sup>651</sup> Langen 2011: 67-71.

## Official illuminations and entertainments

The practice of illumination was the most important way in which private citizens could contribute to the centennial celebrations. It was the municipal corporations in Copenhagen and the provincial market towns, however, who paid for the largest and most expensive illuminations and temporary decorations. Although made on behalf of the inhabitants of the towns and paid for by the town coffers, these constructions were of a semi-official nature. Before 1660, the municipal authorities in Denmark and Norway had had a degree of independence from the crown. After the introduction of absolutism, however, they were brought firmly under royal control. Copenhagen and the provincial towns were governed by two organs: the so-called *magistrate*, which was a group of four or five people directly appointed by the king, and a larger group of *elected men*, who were normally recruited from the town's wealthiest merchants and traders. The magistrate received wages from the Crown, while the elected men were supposed to represent the interests of the burgher community. The municipal contributions to the jubilee celebrations were typically planned and organized by the magistrate, and approved by the elected men. In the diocesan towns, the diocesan governor could also be involved.<sup>652</sup> The illuminations and temporary decorations commissioned by the municipal corporations in the towns could be expensive to make and required the involvement of many different parties in all parts of their production. We shall take a closer look here at two particularly well-documented examples, and see how these constructions came into being.

The most spectacular and costly example of all jubilee illuminations is the so-called *Honour Temple* commissioned by the magistrate in Copenhagen in 1749. The temple was a massive octagonal structure placed in the centre of the Old Market Square (Gammeltorv), measuring 28 meters in height and 20 meters in diameter. A contemporary account described it as the «Chef d'Oeuvre» of the jubilee and called it «the rarest of its kind ever to be seen in the North».<sup>653</sup> The temple was also, without a doubt, the most expensive of all illuminations constructed for the centenaries: the construction, maintenance and disassembly of the structure cost the Magistrate no less than 7051

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<sup>652</sup> In Trondheim in 1760, for instance, the diocesan governor and the magistrate took the lead in arranging the centenary. They summoned the 12 elected men to a meeting on 1 September 1760 to discuss «what kind of festivities the town, to demonstrate its most humble duty and joy, can arrange and pay for, for the [...] jubilee on the upcoming October 16.» The elected men agreed on behalf of the town to pay the cost. SAT. Trondheim magistrat. Eneveldet 100 år. 1760 Bd. 1. («Extract af Trundhiems Raadstue Protocol den 1ste September 1760, angaaende Jubel Fæstens Holdelse den 16de October förstkommende.»)

<sup>653</sup> Berling 1749: 2.

riksdaler, an incredibly large sum at the time. The account books and correspondence of the magistrate give an impression of the human and material resources that went into making the Honor Temple. The construction of the temple itself cost a little more than 6884 riksdaler. It would probably have cost even more, had the magistrate not been granted permission from admiral Suhm to borrow canvas and rope from the naval docks at Holmen.<sup>654</sup> Small sums of 2-6 riksdaler went to lighting, wine for the musicians that had entertained during the jubilee, and guards that had watched the illumination to make sure that it did not catch fire. The sum of 10 riksdaler went to an unfortunate naval seaman, Jacob Biörensén, who had fallen down during the construction of the temple and become a cripple.<sup>655</sup> After the jubilee, the disassembly of the temple and the transport and sorting of the materials cost another 132 riksdaler. The materials were eventually sold at an auction for 474 riksdaler, making the sum total cost of the illumination 6576 riksdaler.<sup>656</sup>

The Latin inscriptions on the honour temple were designed free of charge by the royal librarian, professor Bernhard Møllmann.<sup>657</sup> The sculptor Simon Carl Stanley made the sculptures, while the artist J.C. Holzbecher designed the temple and supervised its construction.<sup>658</sup> Their design was so densely packed with information that the curious observer would probably have had to spend several hours to take it all in. On each of the cardinal points of this massive structure were open portals, over which was the Danish royal coat of arms and the motto of Frederick V: *Prudentia et Constantia*, or «By Prudence and Constancy.» On both sides of each portal were plaster statues of female personifications of the Virtues: faithfulness, obedience, devotion, service, temperance, gratitude, joy and hope. On each of the other four walls were three panels with short Latin inscriptions describing the reigns of each of the twelve Oldenburg monarchs. The structure was topped by a leaden dome, on four of which sides were openings bearing the inscription «Temporis Felicitas». On top of the dome was an octagonal pedestal embellished with the Oldenburg coat of arms and a Latin inscription («Aeterni Data Pignora Certa Caelitus Imperii»). Atop the pedestal, on the pinnacle of the structure, was a large, illuminated royal crown. Upon entering one of the portals, the spectator could rest her gaze upon six images bearing Latin inscriptions, three on each side of the portal walls. In the eastern portal she would have seen, for instance, an image of a king holding a

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<sup>654</sup> KSA. Københavns magistrats arkiv. Rådstueskriverens kontor. MC 235: no. 57; KSA. Københavns magistrats arkiv. Rådstueskriverens kontor. MC 406: no. 177.

<sup>655</sup> One other labourer that fell down during the construction did not survive. Needless to say, none of this was reported in the newspapers. KSA. Kæmnerens arkiv. 309: 98; KSA. Københavns magistrats arkiv. MC 115: 624.

<sup>656</sup> KSA. Kæmnerens arkiv. 309: 97, 98.

<sup>657</sup> KSA. Københavns magistrats arkiv. Rådstueskriverens kontor. MC 235: No.95.

<sup>658</sup> Erichsen (ed.) 1999: 162.

sceptre in his left hand and extending his right hand towards a woman with a burning heart in her hand, a child at her breast and another child with a joyous expression, with the heading: «Rex Idem Patriaeque Pater» («He is both king and the father of the fatherland»). Inside the temple, in the centre of the structure, was the Caritas fountain, a freshwater fountain erected by Christian IV in 1609.<sup>659</sup> On the inside walls, moreover, were images of all the Oldenburg monarchs, each image flanked by two historical devices describing the major achievements of each reign. The recent reign of Christian VI, for instance, was summed up with an image of the central parts of Copenhagen including the new castle, symbolising the improvement of the city («Decvs Urbis Restitutvm et Avctvm») and an image of the goddess Minerva, a ship, a peasant at the plough and geni performing various arts, symbolising the facilitation of economy, trade, the arts and manufacture («Oeconomia, Commercium, Artes, Manufacturarum Operum Fabricarum Instaurata»).<sup>660</sup> Walking in and around the structure, the spectator could review three hundred years of dynastic history summed up in pithy inscriptions and pregnant, allegorical imagery.<sup>661</sup> Provided she was familiar with Latin, she would be reminded, for instance, that Frederik II had «brought Ditmarschen to obedience» and «secured the peace with the Peace of Stettin.»<sup>662</sup> The former inscription was illustrated by an image of Mars, the god of war, holding a shield in the left hand and, in the right, extending a mural crown towards a female sitting on the ground surrounded by weapons and a banner with the Ditmarschen coat of arms. The latter was illustrated by a woman holding an olive branch, leaning towards a cliff, at the foot of which lay weapons and banners. For those with some familiarity with classical imagery and allegory, Möllmann's inventions offered an abundance of information, a set of highly concentrated images to decode.

In Trondheim in 1760, the city's illumination was much cheaper and simpler than the one in Copenhagen eleven years before, but it was quite impressive nonetheless. The magistrate commissioned a fireworks show in two acts, and a large illumination of the façade on the city hall. The fireworks show, which cost 270 riksdaler and was made by the military engineer Jens Tommer, consisted of a combination of rockets, cannon shots, and fireballs that were launched from an entrenchment on Møllenberg on the outside of Christiansten fortress. The centrepiece of the show was a fireworks display in two acts. The first act displayed Frederik III's monogram over the year

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<sup>659</sup> Adriansen 2011: 39.

<sup>660</sup> For a contemporary description of the temple, see Berling 1749. The iconography of the temple is analyzed in Johannsen 1985.

<sup>661</sup> These had been invented by the historian and royal librarian Bernhard Möllmann. KSA. Rådstueskriverens kontor. Kopibog 1749. No. 95.

<sup>662</sup> «Ditmarsia ad Officium Redire Coacta» and «Securitas Pvblica Pace Stettinensi».

1660. On the left side read the words «God gave», while on the right side read the word «Sovereign». This referred to the introduction of absolutism in 1660, which was the topic of the jubilee. The second act displayed Frederik V's monogram and the year 1760. On the right side read the words «God gave», while on the left side read the word «jubilee».<sup>663</sup> The illumination was a «frontispiece» that covered the front façade of the City Hall. It cost 550 riksdaler to make, and was constructed by the painter Mathias Dall. The 26 painted images and devices referred «partly to the introduction of absolutism, partly to the present jubilee and partly to the restitution of the town and district of Trondheim in 1658 and 1660».<sup>664</sup>

The historian and rector of the Cathedral school in Trondheim, Gerhard Schøning, had designed the inscriptions and images.<sup>665</sup> The magistrate later gave Schøning a plot of land outside of Trondheim as an appreciation for a job well done.<sup>666</sup> Much the same as had been the case with Bernard Møllmann's Latin inscriptions on the honour temple in Copenhagen in 1749, rector Schøning's designs for the illumination on the City Hall would probably have been completely understandable for only a small portion of the audience. To be able to fully decode the Latin inscriptions and the allegorical imagery, one would have to be able to read Latin and have at least a rudimentary knowledge of the last 100 years of Danish-Norwegian history. One image, for instance, consisted of a table upon of which lay a crown missing one of its jewels, which a hand reached down from the clouds to insert, over which read the words «restituta», and beneath the table: 25 May 1660. How many of the spectators would understand that this was a reference to the restitution of Trondheim County to the kingdom of Norway, following the Peace of Copenhagen? And how many would understand the meaning of a snake biting its own tail with the inscription «Æternumque manebit»?<sup>667</sup> Or an image of two hands holding a document ripped in two, with a seal hanging underneath and the words: «Intensa rumpitur»?<sup>668</sup>

In his study of the public stagings of the Danish absolute monarchy in the period 1660-1746, art historian Daniel Johansen discusses the central question of what segments of the population the royal propaganda in the period was actually aimed at. One of his main arguments is that the period saw a gradual transformation of the royal images, from «an allegorical framework surrounding the

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<sup>663</sup> *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No. 91. *Fredagen den 14de November 1760*.

<sup>664</sup> *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No. 91. *Fredagen den 14de November 1760*.

<sup>665</sup> SAT. Trondheim magistrat. Eneveldet 100 år. 1760 Bd. 1. Letter from the magistrate to rector Schøning, 3 November 1760.

<sup>666</sup> Erichsen 1911: 187.

<sup>667</sup> A reference to everlasting government.

<sup>668</sup> A reference to the annulment of Frederick III's charter in 1660 (see chapter 7).



king, to an easily comprehensible and straightforward depiction of the king's political achievements and abilities [...]. According to Johansen, the increase of more accessible and simplified representations of the monarch was an expression of the rulers' growing will to take larger parts of the population into consideration as a potential audience.<sup>669</sup> In practice, however, the two forms of representation continued in parallel. The façade decorations, church interiors and monuments that are Johansen's main objects of study communicated to different audiences at the same time. Johansen claims, for instance, that the embellishments on Nørreport (the northern city gate in Copenhagen built by Christian V in the early 1670s) spoke to two different audiences: the commoners of Copenhagen would recognize and understand the king's portrait and his monogram. For a learned audience, writes Johansen, the city gate was a «much more detailed affair».<sup>670</sup>

Much the same seems to be the case with jubilee illuminations such as those in Copenhagen and Trondheim. Designed by Latinate scholars with an impressive knowledge of national history, the inscriptions on the illuminations required fairly advanced knowledge of the interested spectator. In their letter of appreciation to rector Schøning for his work with the designs, the magistrate in Trondheim gave a description of what we can suppose was their idea of the primary audience of the illumination: Schøning's inventions had been met with approval, wrote the magistrate, by the «town's most distinguished, knowledgeable and discerning inhabitants.»<sup>671</sup> Implicitly, one gets the sense that the magistrate did not have much interest in the opinion of the town's non-distinguished, uneducated and injudicious inhabitants. This does not mean that there was not something for everyone—one did not have to know Latin to be impressed by the pyrotechnical show on Møllenberg entrenchment or to appreciate the painted images, coloured lights and the sheer sensory spectacle of the illumination.<sup>672</sup> What it *does* mean, however, is that the primary function of the illuminations commissioned by the municipal authorities was not to educate the uneducated classes about the virtues of the monarchs or the origins of the royal dynasty or the form of government. The

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<sup>669</sup> «[...] en dreining fra en allegorisk ramme rundt kongen til en letfattelig og nøktern skildring av kongens politiske prestasjoner og evner[...]. Johansen 2014: 340.

<sup>670</sup> Johansen 2014: 124.

<sup>671</sup> Og særdeles da vi have fornummet det Bifald, Byens højforlemme, kyndige of skiönsomme Indvaanere, med Fonöyelse, har givet de, som meldt udvalgte betydelige Sindbilleder [...]. SAT. Trondheim magistrat. Eneveldet 100 år. 1760 Bd. 1. Letter from the magistrate to rector Schöning, 3 November 1760.

<sup>672</sup> The fact that these displays communicated on multiple levels at the same time is also observed by Robert Schneider in his study of public ceremonies in eighteenth-century Toulouse: «[...] one must not dismiss the enthralling effects of a great fireworks display as mere artifice, for these were impressive technical achievements combining sophisticated pyrotechnics with architectural and sculptural splendors. [...] Moreover, the Latin mottoes that always graced the fireworks scaffolding provided educated spectators with an edifying text to decode amid the smoke and flame, while those not versed in Latin were reminded that there was more to the ceremony than met their eyes.» Schneider 1995: 172-173.

spectacular display might have offered entertainment for everyone, but the texts and images on the illuminations seems to have been made both by and for the cultural elites.

### Experiencing centennial commemoration: eyewitnesses in Copenhagen

As the art historian Mårten Snickare points out, scholars studying ceremonies and festivals in the past should be cautious of equating the carefully crafted *messages* the ceremonies were intended to convey, as they appear in allegories, inscriptions, emblems and visual programs, with their *meaning*. According to Snickare, the meaning of the event is properly understood only if one approaches it as an emotional, rather than as a purely intellectual experience. Meaning is created in the act of participation, in experiences such as being part of a large crowd, of witnessing the monarch in person, of being overwhelmed by «grandeur, pomp and extravagance», rather than in the elaborately designed rhetorical messages and visual programmes that are more readily available to the historian in the form of drawings, engravings and written descriptions.<sup>673</sup> This does not mean that studies of the latter are not important, it is rather a reminder of an obvious but easily forgotten point: that the subjective experience of ceremonies, rituals, spectacles and festivals in the past is an important dimension that cannot be automatically inferred from those sources that primarily inform us of the messages their ceremonies were intended to communicate.

Is the meaning of rituals and ceremonies in the subjective sense described by Snickare available to the historian in the archives? One possible way to approach the problem is to search for *ego documents*, that is documents containing personal reflections such as diaries, letters, memoirs, and so on.<sup>674</sup> One of the values of such sources, especially if they were not originally intended for publication, lies in the fact that they are less likely to be constrained by political pressure and censorship. They are therefore more likely to say something about the actual performance of the commemorations, whether there were mistakes made, the mood of the crowd, and so on. And, last but not the least, they show how individual observers reacted to the commemoration, what feelings it evoked and what part of the experience stood out as noteworthy and important. They could contain, in other words, supplementary and possibly even corrective information to what documents intended for the general public can tell us.

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<sup>673</sup> Snickare 1999: 18.

<sup>674</sup> Van Eijnatten 2009b: 344.

Ego documents from eighteenth century Denmark-Norway are generally quite rare. In part, the lack of extant sources written in a private capacity is due to the fact that only a relatively small part of the population was able to write. In part, this is also result of the fact that much less care has been put into preserving such texts, compared to the efforts made to preserve the archives of the official administration.<sup>675</sup> An additional factor is the political risks involved in writing diaries in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. People were probably careful to avoid writing down something down that might incriminate them at a later stage: the spectacular downfall of the royal favourite Griffenfeld in the late seventeenth century was a paradigmatic case of how personal notes could be used against you.<sup>676</sup> Consequently, there are not many documents from the eighteenth century in which the Danish-Norwegian jubilees are described with candour by individual observers. There are, however, a few, which may be utilized for the purposes outlined above.

Unfortunately, the few available diaries from Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century contain an often disappointingly scarce amount of information. This is particularly true if one is looking for subjective impressions and emotions, which were rarely written down. Before 1800, diaries were often used primarily as a mnemonic device, to help the writer remember the events he or she had experienced many years after they had taken place.<sup>677</sup> This means that an event such as a jubilee might be described merely with a short sentence. It is still possible, however, to glean small pieces of information from such entries. Take, for instance, the young nobleman Otto Ludvig Raben. In October 1749, the nineteen-year old Raben, who served in the Royal Life Guard at the time, participated in the celebrations of the dynastic tercentenary in Copenhagen. His impressions of the event are summed up in one single sentence in his diary: «The jubilee was celebrated for three days, and I was there to see the superb illuminations.»<sup>678</sup> If nothing else, the diary entry tells us that Raben perceived the illuminations as a primary point of interest. Raben did not, however, comment on the message of the tercentenary in general, or the inscriptions on the illuminations in particular.

The 17-year-old naval cadet Peter Schiønning was another diarist that witnessed the dynastic tercentenary in Copenhagen. Although it is quite sparse, his entry provides a bit more information than Raben's diary. Schiønning wrote: «The 28, 29 and 30 October 1749. There was a jubilee for

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<sup>675</sup> Feldbæk 1982: 15, 18-19.

<sup>676</sup> Koudal 2007: 12.

<sup>677</sup> Koudal 2007: 12.

<sup>678</sup> «Jubilæet blev fejret i tre dage, og jeg var der for at se de superbe illuminationer.» Koudal 2007: 33; The diary was originally written in French. The quote is translated to the Danish by Jens Henrik Koudal.

[empty]. Inspected the illuminations in the evening and copied many inscriptions.»<sup>679</sup> There are in fact many similar entries in Schiønning's diary where he mentions that he and his family went out to see the illuminations in the city on special occasions.<sup>680</sup> The impression one gets from his diary is that the inspection of illuminations was a quite common event for burgher families in Copenhagen. We note, moreover, that Schiønning was apparently interested in the illuminations not only as a spectacular display, but also in the information that they conveyed. Eleven years later, Schiønning participated in the centenary for the introduction of absolutism. On 16-18 October 1760, he wrote: «The first jubilee in the king's kingdoms and lands was celebrated in memory of the sovereignty that was offered to the king 100 years ago.»<sup>681</sup> This time, Schiønning spent the jubilee days at the opera and theatre. On 20 October, he saw a «musical piece» written for the occasion, a comedy and ballets and, finally, a fireworks show. The latter appears to have been not completely successful: «The parterre and the boxes were completely filled with smoke, so that in the end one could not see anything.»<sup>682</sup> Despite the botched fireworks, however, Schiønning seems to have appreciated the jubilees as a pleasant diversion.

In the writings of the author and playwright Charlotta Dorothea Biehl (1731-88), there is much more information about the centenaries, as well as a higher level of reflection on their meaning. In 1783-84, Biehl wrote a series of «historical letters» after a request from her younger friend, the courtier Johan von Bülow. In the first of these letters, Biehl described the reign of Frederick V, including her memories of the tercentenary in 1749 and the centenary in 1760. Biehl's descriptions are rather brief and impressionistic, but they contain very interesting information about the mood of the public on these occasions. In Biehl's account, the two events are compared and contrasted sharply against each other: whereas the tercentenary was celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm by both the king and the inhabitants of Copenhagen, the centenary in 1760 was a rather

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<sup>679</sup>«Den 28. 29. og 30. Oktober 1749. Var Jubel Festen for [tomt] Besaa om Aftningerne Illuminationerne og udskrev adskillige Inscriptioner.»

<http://natmus.dk/historisk-viden/temaer/militaerhistorie/soeofficeren-peter-schioennings-liv/kilder/peter-schioennings-dagbog/1749>. Retrieved 03.01.2015.

<sup>680</sup> See for instance 26 November 1740 (Christian VI moved into Christiansborg castle), 28 November 1740 (the queen's birthday), 30 November 1740 (the king's birthday) and 11-13 December 1743 (crown princess Louise's formal entry) and 18 December 1743 (Louise's birthday).

<sup>681</sup> «Blev holdt den første jubelfest i Kongens riger og lande, i Anledning af Souverainiteten som for 100 Aar siden blev offereret Kongen.»

<http://natmus.dk/historisk-viden/temaer/militaerhistorie/soeofficeren-peter-schioennings-liv/kilder/peter-schioennings-dagbog/1760> 03.01.2015.

<sup>682</sup> «Parterre og logerne blev gandske fulde af røg, saa at man til sidst intet kunne se omkring sig.» <http://natmus.dk/historisk-viden/temaer/militaerhistorie/soeofficeren-peter-schioennings-liv/kilder/peter-schioennings-dagbog/1760/> 03.01.2015.

dark and gloomy affair that only served to increase the widening gulf between king and subjects. The contrast between the two jubilees thus symbolizes the falling popularity of the king among his subjects, which was the central motive in Biehl's narrative. Biehl herself was sympathetic towards Frederick V, whom she depicted as good-hearted but weak and easily corrupted, but her letters charted the young king's increasing sexual depravity, alcoholism and declining health. The first jubilee was celebrated in the early years of Frederick's reign, a time when «it seemed as if the heavens had poured all of its blessings over the land through the new government; it was the most desirable and best of times».<sup>683</sup> The cultural life in Copenhagen blossomed and the king was married to the popular queen Louise. In her account of the tercentenary in 1749, Biehl described how the king interacted with his subjects: he spoke to assembled companies of the citizen militia in person, gave them tickets to the opera, and drove around the city in his carriage with the queen to see the illuminations.<sup>684</sup> According to Biehl, these interactions had a such a tremendous effect on the citizens that «if the king had demanded everything they owned, they would gladly have left their houses naked for his sake.»<sup>685</sup>

Eleven years later, conditions had changed radically. Queen Louise had died in childbirth in 1752, and the new queen Juliane Marie was not nearly as popular as her predecessor. The king had sunk into personal depravity and his sexual escapades were publicly known in Copenhagen. Worst of all, the outbreak of the Seven Years War (1756-63) forced the Danish government to mobilize the army and navy, which led the state into severe financial difficulties. According to Biehl, «the year 56' was the last year Denmark felt true joy and thought itself happy.»<sup>686</sup> In this situation, the king's decision to spend the jubilee days in Fredensborg castle outside of the city was not well received by the inhabitants of Copenhagen. In addition, Frederick had asked his subjects not to celebrate the jubilee with any festivity, ostensibly because he did not want to ruin themselves on the expenses. According to Biehl, the king's decision to refuse the inhabitants of Copenhagen the opportunity to demonstrate their affection had led to frustration and anger. The burghers had looked forward to

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<sup>683</sup> «Det syntes, som om Himlen havde udøst al sin Velsignelse over Landet ved den nye Regiering; det var de ønskeligste og beste Tider [...]» Bobé 1909: 20.

<sup>684</sup> Like most royal acts in the eighteenth century, even this seemingly spontaneous action was governed by convention. Julius Bernhard von Rohr discusses the practice in his *Einleitung zur Ceremonial-Wissenschaft Der großen Herren*: «Soll eine Illumination in einer ganzen Stadt geschehen, so geben sich die hochfürstlichen Herrschafften das Vergnügen, fahren in der gantzen Stadt mit ihrer Hof-Suite herum, und besehen die Erfindungen. Wenn der Anfang damit geschehen soll, wird entweder unter Trompeten und Paucken-Schall angekündigt, oder aus den Thürmen ersehen, mit denen das Anzünden der Feuer-Lampen und Fackeln angehet.» Von Rohr 1733: 842.

<sup>685</sup> «[...]at om Kongen havde forlangt alt, hvad de eyedede og havde, saa var de med Glæde gaaet nøgne fra Hus og Hiem for hans Skyld.» Bobé 1909: 28.

<sup>686</sup> «Anno 56 var det sidste Aar, hvori Danmark folte sand Glæde og troede sig lykkelig.» Bobé 1909: 71.

seeing the nobility forced to rejoice in their historical defeat, the introduction of absolutism, but this change had been deliberately taken from them. Rumours had it that the nobility dominated the king and that they did not tolerate being reminded that «there was a time in Denmark when their yoke was thrown off and their wings were clipped.»<sup>687</sup> All of these factors had a detrimental impact on the celebrations:

The effect of this was that the three days appointed to the holiday resembled a funeral more than a jubilee. One who did not know better and compared the two events that occurred in a period of eleven years, could not possibly have imagined that it was the same people and the same king, but would have good reasons to believe that a usurper had exterminated the beloved dynasty and seized the throne, and that the people by their marked indifference demonstrated their mourning over the lost ones and their disapproval of the current [ruler].<sup>688</sup>

Interestingly, Biehl's remarks on the city's joy in 1749 and its dissatisfaction in 1760 are partly corroborated by another source. In an edition of Nørnissum's Danish chronicle owned by the historian Peder Suhm in the late eighteenth century, someone had written a short account of the jubilees in 1749 and 1760.<sup>689</sup> Like Biehl, this writer described an enthusiastic crowd in 1749: the herold who announced the jubilee ended his proclamation with the sentence «God preserve the king and protect his royal house until the end of the world», and added the words «God hear it». The surrounding crowd responded to this with a «shout of joy».<sup>690</sup> Despite this initial enthusiasm, however, the writer nonetheless gives the impression that the jubilee in 1749 was only a limited success. He claimed that there was not any great splendour, and that «we had expected that it would have been different for such a jubilee.»<sup>691</sup> The weather was bad with rain and strong winds, so «there was no particular pleasure at this time».<sup>692</sup>

These critical remarks, however, were nothing compared to the negative verdict on the jubilee in 1760. The anonymous writer was clearly discontented with how the event had been handled by the authorities. Just like Charlotta Dorothea Biehl, he claimed that the burghers were very

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<sup>687</sup> «[...]men at den ikke engang kan taale at erindres om, at der var en Tid i Dannemark, da man kastede dens Aag af og stækkede dens Vinger.» Bobé 1909: 76.

<sup>688</sup> «Virkingen heraf blev den, at de tree til Høytideligheden udnævnte Dage meere lignede en Sørge Fest en et Iubileum. Den, der ikke vidste bedre og sammenlignede de to Høytideligheder, som i en Tiid af elleve Aar fulgte paa hinanden, kunde umelig forestille sig, at det var det samme Folk og den samme Konge, men havde største Føye til at troe, at en Usurpateur havde udryddet den elskede Konge Slægt og bemægtiget sig Thronen, og at Folket ved sin udmerkede Koldsindighed bevidnede sin Sorg over de tabte og sin Misfornøjelse med den nærværende.» Bobé 1909: 76.

<sup>689</sup> *Nørnissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart); The pages that describe the the jubilee in 1760 was printed in Suhm 1794.

<sup>690</sup> *Nørnissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart).

<sup>691</sup> «Ellers var der ikke stor Stadtz, vi hafde ventet at det skulde blevet anderledes til saadan een Jubel-Fest [...]» *Nørnissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart).

<sup>692</sup> «Ellers var det meget skidet veierlig samme Dage Regn og Blæst saa der var ikke synderlig Fornøjelse den Tid.» *Nørnissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart).

disappointed with the king's absence from the city. Copenhagen would never forget, he wrote, that the king had not been present during the first jubilee for the introduction of absolutism. For the same reason, the illuminations in the private houses had for the most part been small and insignificant. The nobility was given the blame for the decision to keep the king away from the city: «God forgive those who were to blame for this; which can easily be surmised. NB. The nobility, which is well known in history, had no honour from this blessed celebration, only the clergy and the burghers of Copenhagen.»<sup>693</sup> It did not help that the weather so bad, with rain and terrible storms, that many ships were destroyed and many people drowned.<sup>694</sup>

We can only conclude that two of the very few existing eyewitness accounts from the jubilee in Copenhagen in 1760 bear witness to a hostile attitude to the nobility and a total lack of festive mood in the capital. We have no way of knowing for certain whether these were widespread sentiments, or whether they were restricted to the burghers of Copenhagen. It is probably no coincidence, however, that two independent accounts are so unanimous. They stand as a corrective to the idealized accounts published in the newspapers, in the sense that the former speaks of a discontented populace where the latter speaks only of harmonious celebrations.

### Reports of public rejoicing: the jubilees in the newspapers

In the weeks after the jubilees in 1749 and 1760, the newspapers in Copenhagen reported extensively from the festivities in Denmark, Norway and the Duchies. Most of the largest provincial towns in the kingdoms were mentioned, with fairly long descriptions of the proceedings: the pages were filled with detailed accounts of parades, cannon shots, illuminations, fireworks, musical concerts and banquets. In some cases, printed supplements were distributed along with the newspapers.<sup>695</sup> The celebrations in individual towns were also described in special booklets that were printed and published after the jubilees.<sup>696</sup>

What was the purpose of all of these reports? All of them paint a very flattering picture of the jubilee celebrations and resemble each other in their highly idealised descriptions of how loyal

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<sup>693</sup> «Gud forlade dem som var Skyld der i ellers kand det gjerne sluttet NB: Adelen som nok er bekiendt i Historierne hafde ingen Ære for saa vidt af denne velsignede Fest, men Geistligheden og Kiöbenhavns Borgerskab.» *Nornissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart).

<sup>694</sup> *Nornissums danske Krønike* (NKS 892 kvart).

<sup>695</sup> «Aalborg Byes Allerunderdanigste Jubel=Fryd» in *Kiöbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender No. 98, Decembr.* The celebrations in Trondheim, Christiansand, Christiania, Horsens and Arendal were described in special supplements in *Kiöbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender* in 1760 (*Anbang til de Kiöbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender. No.91, No. 95, No.100*).

<sup>696</sup> See for example Kothert 1749; *Aalborg Byes Allerunderdanigste Jubel=Fryd* 1749.

citizens demonstrated their patriotic joy. In his history of the newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* (originally: *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidender*), T. Vogel-Jørgensen points out that the supplements describing local celebrations seems to have been paid for by the towns themselves. He mentions two possible reasons for why they did this: it might have been a form of tourism commercial, or they might have been the expression of a wish to draw the royal gaze towards the town.<sup>697</sup> The former explanation seems highly unlikely. Domestic tourism was virtually non-existent in the eighteenth century, and the reports from the jubilees did not really have much to say about the towns themselves, only the celebrations. The latter explanation, on the other hand, is definitely on the mark. The reports resemble a «who's who» of local dignitaries and royal officials, while ordinary people are either absent, mentioned in a brief sentence or two, or appear as extras in processions or other collective manifestations of joy.

The mining town of Kongsberg in Norway is a good example. According to *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidender*, the jubilee in 1760 started with the firing of 81 cannonshots at daybreak on 16 October. When the bells rang for morning service, the cannons once again fired. When the salvos ended, the citizen militia fired their muskets on the market square. At the same time, the miners paraded from director («Berghauptmand») Helzen's house to the church with lamps in their hands. In the midst of the miners walked the director, the board («Oberbergamtet») and the mining officials. In the evening, «the windows of the finest residents were illuminated in various ways.»<sup>698</sup> On the second day of the jubilee, after a new round of cannonshots, organist Clausen played a cantata and Professor Becker delivered a speech on the natural merits of an absolute monarchy compared with other forms of government. In the afternoon, 34 male and female guests had supper at director Helzen's house where they toasted to the king and the royal family. In the evening, there was a ball in a designated house, which was decorated with an appropriate illumination. On the third day, after yet another round of cannonshots, director Helzen once again had a dinner party. Because of a storm, the final and grandest part of the celebration had to be postponed until 19 October: an illumination and fireworks show created by the seminarists (the students at the mining school in Kongsberg) was displayed on an open field. The illumination was a wooden building covered in spruce branches that showed «a history of the last century after the sovereignty». While a few seminarists lit the lamps, 600 miners led by their foremen marched onto the field and then accompanied the rest of the seminarists to their designated areas, where they lit the fireworks. The fireworks display consisted of three acts,

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<sup>697</sup> Vogel-Jørgensen 1949a: 77.

<sup>698</sup> «[...]om Aftenen vare de bødste Indvaanernes Vinduer paa adskillig Maade illuminerede.» *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidender* No. 88. November 3rd. 1760



lasted for three hours, and was allegedly witnessed by «almost 10.000 people, both of the residents of the town and many strangers.»<sup>699</sup> Afterwards, the miners marched past the directors house and the houses of each of the mining officials, where they shouted «Vivat king Friderich the Fifth.»<sup>700</sup>

Thus ended the celebrations in Kongsberg. We note that the description centred almost exclusively on the social elites of the town, particularly the director. The miners played their part as an obedient collective entity. The jubilee celebration was arranged as a local manifestation of the ordered social hierarchy that centered on the king in Copenhagen. Similar examples could be multiplied: in Kristiansand, the diocesan governor was the main character of the reports, while in Christiania it was vice-stattholder Bentzon. In the report from Skivehus County on Jutland, the local baron Verner Rosencrantz enjoyed pride of place.<sup>701</sup> Everywhere, the wealthy and privileged were invited to dinners and balls where they listened to speeches and toasted the king. The general populace were represented either as recipients of alms, as crowds of spectators, or as humble creators of humble illuminations («over alt var endog i de ringestes og fattigstes Huuse en Art af Illumination anstukken.»)<sup>702</sup> The newspaper reports demonstrated and affirmed the social hierarchy in a society obsessed with rank and status.

The rigid preoccupation with social hierarchy is illustrated nicely by a case where the reporting went awry. On 31 October 1760, the Copenhagen newspaper *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* gave a short «preliminary» account of the celebrations in Trondheim. The report mentioned the splendid illuminations on the outside of Town Hall, the fireworks on Møllenberg, the good weather on the occasion and the lights and illuminations which could be seen all over town. Among the people contributing to the festivities, only two persons were mentioned by name: «Among those who had paid for illuminations, the painter Peter Hoff and the wig-maker Meldahl deserves to be mentioned.»<sup>703</sup> The preliminary report did not state why these two persons deserved special mention, but this seemingly innocent reference to the two artisans was not well received by officials and burghers in Trondheim. In a letter to the postmaster Mandrup Alstrup, the magistrate in Trondheim claimed that the report was a satire designed to make «persons of rank and circumstance» in Trondheim look bad: if these two poor artisans («2de uformuende Haandværksmænd») deserved to be mentioned, as the article claimed, readers would think that people of a higher station («af bedre

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<sup>699</sup> «[...]i Overværelse av henimod 10000 Mennesker, baade af Stædets Indvaanere og endeel Fremmede.» *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No. 88. November 3rd. 1760

<sup>700</sup> *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No. 88. November 3rd. 1760

<sup>701</sup> *Anhang til de Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No.95. 1760.

<sup>702</sup> *Anhang til de Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No. 95. 1760.

<sup>703</sup> *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* No.87, October 31st. 1760.

Stand og Vilkaar») in Trondheim had only made cheap and simple illuminations. The magistrate had sent the newspaper a note intended to counter the preliminary account, but this text was rejected by the printer and sent in return.<sup>704</sup> As a conclusion to this unfortunate case, the magistrate could only state that «the respective inhabitants of the town must now digest or despise and then forget that insult which they indeed have claimed to have been the dealt by [the preliminary account]». <sup>705</sup>

The element of competition inherent in the art of illuminations, as described above, explains why it was simply not acceptable for the social elites to see a simple wig-maker and painter being highlighted in the press. The magistrate later paid for the production and distribution of an official account of the celebrations in Trondheim. The text, written by the rector Gerhard Schöning who had also designed the magistrate's illuminations, was published as an appendix to *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende* on 14 November 1760, and cost 10 riksdaler and 20 skilling to print and distribute in Denmark and Norway.<sup>706</sup> Schönings text shows what the magistrate wanted the general public to know about the jubilee in Trondheim. Out of two pages, the first page-and-a-half was dedicated to the fireworks on Møllenberg and the illuminations on the front of the Town Hall. After a detailed description of the latter, the text mentioned «the illuminations, which could be seen in many houses, both in those of distinguished and of simple people, of the magistrate and others, but particularly in the diocesan governor Rantzow's house [...]».<sup>707</sup> Rantzow's illuminations was the only private one that was described, and the rest of the account was centred around events that took place in Rantzow's house: on the second day of the jubilee, «the most distinguished person's of rank and stature of both sexes were invited to diocesan governor Rantzow's house, where they were served a splendid dinner[...]», and on the third day, Rantzow invited the «town's clergy, as well as the magistrate and the most distinguished burghers and merchants». Needless to say, the account did not mention the painter Hoff and the wig-maker Meldahl at all.<sup>708</sup>

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<sup>704</sup> SAT. Trondheim magistrat. Eneveldet 100 år. 1760 Bd. 1. Letter from postmaster Mandrup Alstrup to the Magistrate, 23 January, 1760.

<sup>705</sup> «[...] Byens respective Indvaanere efterhaanden maa fordöye eller foragte og siden glemme den Fornærmelse, som de virkelig har udladt sig at være tilföyet ved den i Avisen No 87 imodtagne foreløbende Beretning [...]». Trondheim magistrat. Eneveldet 100 år. 1760 Bd. 1. Letter from the magistrate to Mandrup Alstrup, 26 January 1760.

<sup>706</sup> *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende No. 91. Fredagen den 14de November 1760*: For a manuscript version of the text, see: Trondheim magistrat. Eneveldet 100 år. 1760 Bd. 1.

<sup>707</sup> «[...]de andre Illuminationer, som saaes i adskillige baade fornemme og ringe Folkes, Magistratens og andres Huse, men i sær Hr. Stiftsbefalingsmand Ranzows Hus [...]». *Kiøbenhavnnske Danske Post-Tidende No. 91. Fredagen den 14de November 1760*.

<sup>708</sup> A small difference between the two accounts supports the magistrate's suspicion that the preliminary account on 31 October was indeed satirical. According to the preliminary account, the fireworks were «even more pretty to watch, since the weather was very good». In the later official account, however, things looked different: «Both of these days, like the first, the illumination in front of the Town Hall was lit; and although the weather was very rough, everything happened

I have so far argued that a primary motive behind the newspaper reports and the special jubilee booklets was the self-promotion of distinguished persons, institutions and towns. If we turn from the producers of the texts to their readers, however, we find that the reports had a function that was no less important: the newspapers broadcast information about the jubilees to a much wider part of the population. Such medial propagation of jubilee descriptions had several important aspects. First of all, it meant that more people could partake in the events that centred on king and court in Copenhagen. If one purchased the publisher E. H. Berling's description of the celebrations in Copenhagen in 1749, for instance, one got information about the king's movements during the jubilee, as well as a fleeting glimpse of the magnificent banquets at court, the theatres and Italian operas and the luxurious clothing of the Knights of the Elephant and the Dannebrog.<sup>709</sup>

Another important function of such reports was that the reader was served relatively detailed information about various aspects of the jubilee that they might otherwise not have learnt about. The inscriptions on all the jubilee medals were described in the newspapers following the centenaries. Although the ownership of the medals themselves were limited to an exclusive group, in other words, the message they conveyed were broadcast to everyone that had access to a newspaper. Illuminations were also described in detail, particularly in the special publications, and the meaning of various allegorical images and Latin inscriptions were often explained. Gerhard Schøning, for instance, wrote short explanations of all his inventions on the illumination on the City Hall in Trondheim in his account of the centenary that was later published in a Copenhagen newspaper. Such explanations would have assuaged the lack of comprehension for people who could read Danish, but who was not competent in Latin or trained in decoding symbols and allegories.<sup>710</sup>

## Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have examined the primary media of public commemoration in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway and discussed why, how, under which conditions and by whom these media were produced. Throughout the entire chapter I have repeatedly touched upon the question of the nature and degree of the government's control over the various media. The production of commemorative

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without the smallest damage or danger.» The weather was indeed terrible along the entire northern coast of Norway in mid-October 1760. Readers who knew this would therefore know that the preliminary account was ironic.

<sup>709</sup> Berling 1749.

<sup>710</sup> Anna Maria Forssberg cites an example from Stockholm in 1701 where a similar publication was printed with the stated purpose that it would allow people who did not know Latin to understand the Latin inscriptions on the illuminations. See Forssberg 2014: 69.

medals was the area where the monarchs themselves were most directly involved. Various corporations and institutions could produce jubilee medals of their own, but most, if not all, of these initiatives were either stimulated by high-ranking royal officials or at least approved by such persons in advance. One of the primary functions of commemorative medals was to memorialize the king and his glorious deeds for all eternity. In the case of the jubilee medals, this meant capturing in precious metal the monarch's pious thanksgiving and devotion to the God who had protected king, church and his royal dynasty. As items of beauty and value, the gold and silver medals were also used as exclusive gifts to other princes, foreign dignitaries and royal officials. The smaller and cheaper variety, which had inscriptions in Danish rather than Latin, was thrown out to the crowds during the jubilees. Although limited in number, the jubilee medals also had a certain propaganda value, since their inscriptions and images were described in domestic and foreign newspapers and journals.

The design and construction of illuminations was not directly regulated, at least with regards to those commissioned by private persons. According to contemporaries, illuminations gave all the king's subjects, rich and poor, a chance to publicly demonstrate their love and appreciation of the sovereign. As we have seen, there was also a strongly competitive element to the practice: the commissioning of expensive and impressive illuminations was a way of publicly demonstrating wealth and learning. The newspaper reports and printed descriptions that followed in the wake of the centenaries strengthened this competitive element and made it into a competition between local communities to catch the approving gaze of the monarch. I have not found any indications that illuminations had to be approved in advance, or that the central government commanded corporations or private persons to make them. Consequently, we may conclude the illuminations were the least state-controlled of the media involved in centennial commemoration. During the centenary in 1760, this lack of direct control became manifest when burghers in Copenhagen used the art of illumination to make assertive attacks on the nobility. The largest, most expensive and most spectacular illuminations, however, were commissioned by royally appointed municipal councils. In these cases, the illuminations have a semi-official quality, although they were made without direct interference from the central government.

The jubilee sermon was the only medium that reached the majority of the population. The sermons were also influenced by the dictates of the royal government in all stages of their production. The bishops of Zealand decided the Bible verses and the fundamental topic of the sermons. After three of the centenaries (1736, 1749 and 1760) some or all of the clergy were required to send their sermon manuscripts to their superiors. Ministers wanting to publish their sermons had

to submit them to censorship. The decision to publish itself, however, was almost always made by the minister himself. In its original setting, the sermon was intended to edify and instruct the preacher's immediate audience, his congregation. When the preacher decided to print and publish his sermon, the ostensible purpose was nominally the same, only on a much larger scale. In practice, however, we find that various additional factors played in. Chief among these, I would argue, was the desire to attract the attention of the king or other men of power, with the hope of achieving a promotion or other material benefits.

If we turn from the producers of the media to their audience, our knowledge becomes much more uncertain. I have used the few existing eyewitness accounts in an attempt to balance the printed contemporary accounts of the centenaries. Apart from some scraps of evidence that suggests that the illuminations were a major point of interest for the spectators, the most significant finding was the negative emotions of two independent eyewitnesses of the celebrations in Copenhagen in 1760. Paradoxically, this negativity was not incompatible with the basic theme of the centenary. The anger and frustration was directed against the nobility, who were given the blame for not letting the burghers of the city properly celebrate their historic defeat. Although these sources indicate that the centenary itself was a failure, they inadvertently suggest that the burghers of Copenhagen subscribed to the grand narrative of the centenary itself, which celebrated the historical alliance between the king and the lower estates to shackle the power of the Danish nobility.

We know even less of how the many thousands of churchgoers in the kingdoms perceived the commemorations. The surviving sermons are of course an important source to what took place in the churches, but they are not necessarily trustworthy reproductions of what the minister actually said to his congregation. In any case, it is not certain that the congregation would have understood, remembered or accepted what the clergyman told them. In practice, the infrastructure and available communications technology made the flow of information from the centre to the peripheries dependent on coincidences and the vagaries of local circumstance. Some places the church service were conducted by an experienced minister in a large, warm and well-lit main church. Other places it might have been conducted by a new chaplain or a theological student in a tiny, cramped and cold annex church. The jubilee service might not even take place at all, due to bad weather or other coincidental factors. A jubilee church service might be executed in a solemn fashion, or it could be done slovenly and without due reverence. The church organization was not, in other words, a propaganda machine that could produce one streamlined and unified message to all the king's subjects.

## Chapter 5: Religious Renewal and Royal Remembrance: The Bicentenary of the Danish Reformation in 1736

In 1753, the 55-year-old bishop of Bergen, Erik Pontoppidan, wrote his memoirs. Looking back on his time as a court preacher in Copenhagen, he recollected the celebration of the bicentenary of the Danish Reformation in 1536. Pontoppidan's brief remark about the event had mainly to do with the religious controversies that influenced the church at the time. According to Pontoppidan, Christian III, the monarch who had implemented the Reformation in 1536, only had to deal with the disgruntled Catholics. His successor, Christian VI, on the other hand, faced several discontented parties. There were the Catholics in Copenhagen, among them the Austrian ambassador and his wife, who were appalled by the jubilee. More problematic, however, were the factions among the Lutherans themselves, who uttered complaints instead of joy:

namely, on the one hand the multitude of clerical and lay superstition, who felt that the old was good enough and that all new measures for the improvement of the church was superfluous; on the other hand the separatistically minded, who thought that the king did not go far enough in removing the remnants of the old faith.<sup>711</sup>

It is telling that Pontoppidan's memory of the jubilee revolves around the conflicts in the church at the time. The 1730s were, in fact, a period marked by bitter religious quarrels in Denmark-Norway. Temperatures were particularly high in the first half of the decade, when radical Pietists attracted a substantial following in Copenhagen. In these same years, the so-called *Herrnhutere* also influenced religious life in the capital after the movement's leader, Count Zinzendorff, developed a friendly relationship with Christian VI himself. The orthodox clergy, however, reacted with dismay and denounced what they perceived as heresy, heterodoxy and separatism from their pulpits. The conflict escalated in 1733, when several clergymen arranged conventicles and refused administering sacraments that they were obliged to do by law. The orthodox faction urged the king to take action against these so-called «separatists». Christian VI himself was torn between several considerations in the matter. His personal religiosity was influenced by Pietism, and he was critical of the orthodox clergy. The king was, however, also very protective of the dignity of his royal office. As the supreme

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<sup>711</sup> «nemlig paa den ene Side Mængden af Geistlige og Verdslige Superstitiosis, som meente, det Gamle var godt nok og alle nye Anstalter til Kirkens Forbedring overflødige; paa den anden Side de Separatistisksindede, som syntes Kongen gik ikke vidt nok i at udrense den gamle Suurdeigs overblevne Levninger.» Pontoppidan 1874: 96.

head of the Lutheran state church, he was not prepared to tolerate any direct insubordination in religious matters. His reaction to the controversies between the separatists and the orthodox was therefore to try as far as possible to accommodate those clergymen who for reasons of conscience could not accept certain parts of the officially sanctioned rituals and tenets of faith. Those who went too far with their protests, however, were liable for punishment.<sup>712</sup>

1735, the year before the bicentenary, marks the start of a new epoch in Danish-Norwegian church history. That year the inflamed conflict between the separatists and the orthodox calmed down, partly as a result of a royal commission that had been set down to investigate the controversies. In addition, the king chose to distance himself from Count Zinzendorff, thus ending the rising influence of his followers in Copenhagen. Furthermore, the king made substantial changes in his government, replacing many of his old advisors that had now fallen out of favour. Most of the new men in the administration shared the king's religious views and promoted a conservative Halle-influenced variant of Pietism within the bounds of the state church. The king and his advisors believed that the church was in need of reform, and wanted to raise the quality of the clergy and the knowledge of the faith in their congregations. In the following years, the administration embarked on a church reform programme that set out to achieve these goals, a programme which has been given the label *state Pietism* by Norwegian and Danish historians.<sup>713</sup> Among the most important reforms were a new «Sabbath decree» in 1735 that was intended to regulate and improve the behaviour of the subjects on Sundays and holidays, the introduction of the confirmation in January 1736, and the establishment in 1737 of the so-called *General Church Inspection College*, an administrative body led by the head secretary of the Danish Chancery, Johan Ludvig von Holstein, which was given authority to supervise the clergy and to censor texts intended for publication, as well as the task to ensure the spread of acceptable religious literature among the subjects. The latter was ensured by the mass production and widespread distribution of Erik Pontoppidan's new catechism, *From Truth to the Fear of God* (1737), which was intended to replace the great variety of catechisms that were used in the parishes of Denmark-Norway.<sup>714</sup> Early attempts at creating a national system of rural schools were part of the same reform drive, although the plans were not actually put into action before 1739.<sup>715</sup> A final important reform in this period was the so-called *Conventicle Poster* from 1741, a law that regulated religious gatherings outside of the Church and prohibited prayer meetings that were not

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<sup>712</sup> Pedersen 1951: 112-150.

<sup>713</sup> Krogh 1997: 65.

<sup>714</sup> Horstbøll 1999: 436-441.

<sup>715</sup> Pedersen 1951: 156 ff.

sanctioned or supervised by a minister. The Conventicle poster was intended to strike a balance between allowing private prayer meetings, which were considered beneficial and were encouraged, and avoiding uncontrolled and heretical preaching by unauthorised lay folk.<sup>716</sup>

This string of church legislation was directly inspired by Pietism, specifically modelled after the variant developed in Halle by August Hermann Francke.<sup>717</sup> Pietism was a Lutheran reform movement that originated in Germany in the latter half of the seventeenth century, although it was inspired by older Lutheran authors such as Johann Arndt.<sup>718</sup> It has been described as a reaction to a perceived moral disintegration of society, state and church in the German territories in the wake of the Thirty Years War and the inadequacies of the confessional Lutheran churches to face these challenges.<sup>719</sup> The genesis of Pietism as a coherent reform programme is found in the writings of the German clergyman Phillip Jacob Spener (1635-1705), particularly his work *Pia Desideria* (1675). Spener's main argument was that the Lutheran church was in need of improvement and that reform was both desirable and possible. He did not question Lutheran doctrine, but was rather concerned with improving the Lutheran church from within. Spener argued, among other things, that the Bible had to be made more available and be read more actively by the members of the congregation. He wanted to revive Luther's idea of the priesthood of all believers and argued that laymen should have a more prominent place and active role in the congregation, alongside the minister. He emphasized, furthermore, the practical and active dimension of Christianity, and wanted Christ's message of brotherly love both to manifest itself in the way people lived their lives and to change them inside. Spener called for a reform of the theological university education with a more marked emphasis on personal piety rather than doctrine and, finally, he wanted sermons to be geared towards building the piety and faith of the congregation, rather than teaching correct doctrine.<sup>720</sup> Spener's reform program was developed further by the younger minister August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), who founded schools, poor houses and hospitals in the university town of Halle from the early 1690s. Halle became a model town and a European centre of Pietism, and inspired similar social activities elsewhere in Lutheran Europe. Francke also strongly influenced the development of Pietism with his view of the importance of conversion in the individual Christian. He developed a concept of the conversion experience as a pivotal moment in which the individual believer goes through a deep

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<sup>716</sup> For the history of the Conventicle poster, see Supphellen 2012.

<sup>717</sup> Montgomery 1995a: 63; Rasmussen 2005: 149-150.

<sup>718</sup> Gilje & Rasmussen 2002: 308.

<sup>719</sup> Fulbrook 1983: 23-24; Schneider 2010: 23.

<sup>720</sup> Gilje & Rasmussen 2002: 302-307; Rasmussen 2005: 146-147.



personal crisis, experiences conversion and emerges as a new and regenerated individual. Francke's concept of conversion, which became widely influential among Pietists, differed from a traditional Lutheran conception in which conversion is a daily occurrence that must be constantly repeated by sinful man. For Francke, conversion was a fundamental and definitive break that fundamentally changed the life of the believer. It also introduced a notion of a spiritual hierarchy among Lutherans, with its differentiation between those who had and those who had not experienced conversion.<sup>721</sup>

Pietism was never one unified and coherent movement, but should rather be seen as the Lutheran version of a general tendency to emphasize personal piety and moral reformation that found similar expressions in the Reformed churches of Europe around the same time.<sup>722</sup> Pietism, with its critique of the established church, its calls for reform, its loosening of the relationship between individual religiosity and institutional religion and its revival of Luther's idea of the priesthood of all believers, carried within itself a radical potential that could be seen as a threat to the confessional state churches. There soon developed different strains of Pietism in the Lutheran territories that differed in their views on the established church. In the tradition of Phillip Jacob Spener, so-called «churchly Pietists» or «conservative Pietists» aimed at reforming the established church from within by improving the congregations' knowledge of the Gospels and by developing a spiritual elite within the congregation—an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*—that could motivate others to become true Christians. In the view of Spener and his followers, however, these groups should only operate within the bounds of the established church and be led by a minister. Others came to an alternative conclusion and saw the existing church as beyond repair. For these so-called «Radical Pietists» or «separatists» the only viable solution was to break out of the church and found their own communities of true believers.<sup>723</sup> The radical potential of Pietism was never allowed to develop freely in Denmark-Norway. As we have seen, there was a brief period of conflict and polarization in the 1730s, but the reforming energies of Pietism were ultimately channelled into the state church after 1735, and conventicles were closely regulated and controlled closely after 1741.

The Reformation bicentenary in 1736 occurred in the midst of these changes and must be viewed in light of the substantial religious reforms that were taking place in this period. The Danish historian Henrik Horstbøll has indeed argued that the Reformation jubilee in 1736 was as an integral part of the king's programme of church reform: «The Reformation was not only historical tradition, and the jubilee not only the celebration of an old victory, but also part of and a practical opportunity

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<sup>721</sup> Gilje & Rasmussen 2002: 311.

<sup>722</sup> Montgomery 1995a: 53; Nordbäck 2004: 18.

<sup>723</sup> Schneider 2010.

to do Church politics in the present.»<sup>724</sup> The reforms that followed each other in quick succession in the period 1736-39 were intended to induce what Horstbøll calls «the second Reformation», in which the primary focus was to reform the individual citizen's knowledge of Christianity and to create «the uniform, Christian citizen through uniform, properly controlled preaching and intensified teaching as well as the learning of a mandatory curriculum».<sup>725</sup> Norwegian historian Øystein Idsø Viken also points out the relationship between the jubilee and the contemporary reforms. He writes that the 1736 jubilee was meant to launch state Pietism, much in the same way as the Reformation jubilee in 1617 was followed by a series of laws intended to intensify the piety of the people.<sup>726</sup>

Church historian J. Oskar Andersen has proved a direct connection between the Reformation jubilee and the government's church reform programme. The first time the jubilee year is mentioned in the sources is in connection with a government discussion in 1735 about a proposal to make confirmation obligatory for all youths in Denmark-Norway. According to Andersen, the king wished to hasten the process in order that the decree could launch the jubilee year.<sup>727</sup> This is an indication of the king's intention to emphasize a connection between his own efforts at reforming the church and his royal ancestor's reforms two hundred years previous. A similar sentiment is reflected in the foreword to a short work that Erik Pontoppidan published in Latin in connection with the jubilee year, *Everriculum fermenti veteris*. In this text, Pontoppidan showed how remnants of old heathendom and Catholicism were carried on in popular culture and religious practices. The purpose was to remind his fellow clergymen, the primary audience of the book, of the blessings of the Reformation as well as to show that there was still much to be done before the faith was completely purified.<sup>728</sup>

An impulse to renew, continue and complete the Danish Reformation was thus a contemporary concern that seems to have been an important driving force behind the celebration of a bicentenary. Or rather, the jubilee was intended to symbolically mark the start of a new period of royal religious reforms. If this is indeed the case, the bicentenary can be interpreted as oriented towards the present and the future, as a stimulus to continued religious reform and renewal, rather than as a mere celebration of the past triumphs of Lutheranism. The jubilee, however, also had strong elements of a manifestation of dynastic glory: the commemoration of the achievements of a

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<sup>724</sup> «Reformationen var ikke alene historisk tradition, og Jubelfesten ikke blot markeringen af en gammel sejr, men også led i og en praktisk anledning til at drive aktuel kirkepolitik.» Horstbøll 1999: 436.

<sup>725</sup> «[...] intentionen om at skabe den uniforme, kristne medborger gennem ensartet, velkontrolleret forkyndelse og skærpet undervisning samt indlæring af obligatorisk pensum.» Horstbøll 1999: 441.

<sup>726</sup> Viken 2014: 67.

<sup>727</sup> Andersen 1935: 26.

<sup>728</sup> Pontoppidan 1923: 3, 7-8.

royal ancestor was clearly designed to remind the subjects of the achievements of dynastic forebears and thus, by association, enhance the prestige of the present king. None of these dimensions excludes the other, although they might potentially have pulled in opposite directions when it came to how the past was actually interpreted during the jubilee. If one wished to stress the glorious achievements of the Oldenburg dynasty in promoting the Evangelical religion, it would be prudent to praise the Reformation as a great act of divine Providence that had forever changed the kingdoms for the good. If one stressed the need for renewed Reformation, on the other hand, it would necessarily follow that one considered the actual, historical Reformation as somehow insufficient or incomplete. As we shall see, however, various actors emphasized these dimensions differently during the celebrations. Different priorities in the present, with consequences for the interpretation of the remote past, were evident already during the initial preparations for the jubilee, to which we shall now turn.

### **Defining the framework: 1736 or 1737?**

In contrast to the previous jubilees in Denmark-Norway, the Reformation bicentenary in 1736 was celebrated only in the realms of the Danish king, and did not celebrate events connected to the life and work of Martin Luther that had relevance for all Protestant countries. In effect, the jubilee therefore marks the first completely local adaption in Denmark-Norway of an international form of celebration, the Protestant centenary that had originated in the German cultural sphere in the seventeenth century. As was the case with most of the jubilees in early modern Denmark-Norway, however, this innovation was not completely unprecedented. The most relevant comparison in this case is the neighbouring kingdom of Sweden.

Like Denmark-Norway, Sweden had celebrated centenaries since the early seventeenth century. The Swedish realm had never, however, participated in the celebrations that had taken place all over Protestant Europe in remembrance of the hundredth anniversaries of Luther's 95 theses. Instead, Swedish monarch chose to commemorate two events from Swedish history: the beginning of Gustav Vasa's rebellion against Denmark (1521) and the acceptance of the Augsburg Confession at the National Synod in Uppsala (1593). The centenary of the former event was celebrated as early as 1621, in the reign of Gustav II Adolf. According to church historian Harry Lenhammar, this centenary had three main messages. First, God was thanked for having rescued Sweden from the papal darkness and let the kingdom live in the light of the Gospels for one hundred years. Second,

Gustav Vasa was portrayed as an instrument of God that had freed Sweden from Danish tyranny. Finally, God was thanked for having protected king Gustav's heirs on the Swedish throne, and expanded the borders of the kingdom. The confessional change, writes Lenhammar, was not in the centre of the jubilee, which was rather a celebration of the fatherland («fosterländsk fest») that stressed the unity of state and church, king and people that the Reformation had introduced.<sup>729</sup> Carl Axel Aurelius describes the centenary in 1621 as consciously parochial and self-centred. In his jubilee oration, professor Olof Laurelius used the heading «Sweden know thyself» («Suecia gnothi seauten») and explicitly expressed the desirability for Sweden to concern itself with its own matters rather than copying the German jubilees. In order to know themselves, the Swedes needed to consider the events of their own history for the past hundred years.<sup>730</sup> In 1693, the absolute monarch Charles XI ordered the celebration of a centenary of the National Synod in Uppsala in 1593, which was portrayed as the reintroduction of the pure faith and national unity in Sweden after a troubled period.<sup>731</sup> Nils Ekedahl describes this jubilee «as one the greatest propaganda manifestations of the Caroline absolute monarchy», and claims that the Uppsala Synod was widely presented as a pact («förbundsakt») between God and the Swedish nation.<sup>732</sup> Sweden did not participate in the celebration of the bicentenary in 1717, but rather chose to once more commemorate Gustav Vasa's rebellion in 1721.<sup>733</sup> Although there is no mention of the Swedish example in the extant sources from the Danish government's preparations of the bicentenary in 1736, it is nonetheless certain that it was aware of the diverging centennial traditions in the neighbouring kingdom.<sup>734</sup>

Planning documents written by members of the royal government give a fairly detailed impression of how the jubilee was conceived. J. Oskar Andersen describes some of the key steps of

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<sup>729</sup> Lenhammar 1993: 21.

<sup>730</sup> Aurelius 1994: 20.

<sup>731</sup> Lenhammar 1993: 21-23.

<sup>732</sup> Ekedahl 2002: 50.

<sup>733</sup> Aurelius 1994: 80-82.

<sup>734</sup> I have found only one contemporary discussion of the innovation, in an unpublished manuscript about the bicentenary written by the student Jacob Langebek, who later became royal archivist and a renowned historian. Langebek and his friend Ludvig Harboe later published a German account of the jubilee in the first issue of their journal *Dänische Bibliothec*. The published account bears some resemblance to the Danish manuscript, which might therefore be a first draft. It could also be that Langebek originally intended to publish a Danish account, but decided to do it in his new journal instead. In 1736, Langebek was not involved in the planning of the centenary, so his observations does not tell us anything about how the government perceived the matter. Previous jubilees, wrote Langebek, had been «general» («almindelige»), had not concerned the Reformation of the Danish Church in particular, and had been celebrated in most of the Lutheran-Evangelical congregations. The Danish church had joined in the celebrations, although the Reformation had not really had free and public progress in Denmark until 19 years after it had happened in Germany. Therefore, he claimed, it was only appropriate («tilbørlig») that the Danish Church marked the bicentenary of the Reformation with its own particular celebration («en særdeles Høytid»), just like the Swedish Church had celebrated its own particular jubilee in 1721 to mark the bicentenary of the Reformation there. Jakob Langebek, *Den Nordiske Zions Evangeliske Jubel Fryd over sin Frelse af Babylon* (Additamenta 165 kvart).

this process in his article about the jubilee. His account seems to be primarily based on commented collections of sources edited by church historian Holger Rørdam.<sup>735</sup> As already mentioned, Andersen pinpoints the first sign of the awareness of a forthcoming jubilee year to September 1735, when the awareness of a *jubilee year* arose during discussions concerning the introduction of the confirmation. He furthermore claims that the idea of a special *celebration* might have been conceived as early as the end of 1735 by the law professor Andreas Hojer, but he does not present any conclusive evidence in support of this.<sup>736</sup> The first concrete evidence of preparations for the jubilee is, according to Andersen, two orders from the king to the rector and professors of the university, dated 9 July 1736, in which the basic plan for the jubilee was set out. The following step in the process was allegedly the production of a short historical account of the Danish Reformation, written by Hojer, to be read aloud in the schools as well as in those churches where there were no noon services. Andersen takes this as an indication of Hojer's strong involvement in the planning of the jubilee:

The king's approbation of the multifaceted Hojer's text, which is naturally connected with a strong wish on his part as well as his interest in the schools, thus underlines his influence on the plans for the celebration, but can maybe also support the conjecture that he had plans already in November 1735 for a great celebration of the Reformation in the churches.<sup>737</sup>

Hojer had made a career as a royal historiographer during the reign of Frederick IV, but had fallen out of favour, like many others, when his son acceded to the throne.<sup>738</sup> During the 1730s he had again risen to prominence as a Professor of Law, and was given many important tasks by the king as member of various boards and commissions. Hojer was one of the advisors that shared the king's Pietist views, and he clearly had some influence on the church policies in his reign. Andersen's hypothesis that Hojer was the mastermind behind the jubilee is therefore reasonable, but the sources do, however, not support it.

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<sup>735</sup> Rørdam 1896: 385 ff., Rørdam 1902: 133. See also Lindhardt 1939: 298.

<sup>736</sup> The royal ordinance of 10 February 1736 that introduced the law degree at the university stipulated rules for doctoral promotions in law. According to Andersen, Hojer wished to mark this landmark ordinance with a doctoral promotion on the annual commemoration of the Reformation at the university. In order to do this, however, the king had to promote the two law professors to the doctoral degree, since only a doctor could perform the promotion. This happened on 20 January 1736. Andersen argues that, since the doctoral promotions were part of the jubilee celebrations, the idea of a special commemorative celebration at the university must have been conceived before this, i.e. in the latter half of 1735. Andersen 1735: 27

<sup>737</sup> «Kongens Godkendelse af den mangesidige Hoiers Skrift, der naturligvis hænger sammen med et stærkt Ønske fra dennes Side og atter med hans udprægede Skoleinteresser, understreger saaledes hans Indflydelse paa hele Festplanen, men kan maaske ogsaa støtte Formodningen om, at han allerede i November 1735 har omgaaedes med Planer ogsaa om en stor *kirkelig* Reformationsfest.» Andersen 1935: 29. See also Pedersen 1951: 164.

<sup>738</sup> Jørgensen 1964: 177.

Two documents preserved in the Royal Library in Copenhagen show that important decisions concerning the jubilee were made in early June 1736, without any involvement by Hojer.<sup>739</sup> They stem from the personal archive of Count Johan Ludwig von Holstein, the powerful head secretary of the Danish Chancery.<sup>740</sup> The first document was written on 29 May by the bishop of Zealand, Christen Worm.<sup>741</sup> Worm had previously been contacted by von Holstein, who had presented to him the idea of commemorating the Reformation on 30 October 1736. Believing that the king had already decided on this date, the bishop did not wish to second-guess the king's will. A letter from von Holstein on 27 May, however, gave him the impression that the date was not yet decided. This led him to write a text where he explained why he did not find the suggested date appropriate, and suggested another date.<sup>742</sup>

Worm's text shows that the king had at some point considered two possible alternatives, 12 August and 30 October 1736, as the date for the bicentenary. According to Worm, 12 August 1536 was the date king Christian III had arrested the Danish bishops and the Council of the Realm had asked the king to abolish their power. On 30 October 1536, the king had made a speech to the estates on the Old Market (Gammeltorv) in Copenhagen, and the estates had sworn to follow the Holy Gospel and reject the rule of the bishops. In Worm's opinion, none of the dates were appropriate, and he gave two reasons why they should be rejected. First of all, they did not mark the moment when the Evangelical faith was first introduced in Denmark. This had happened first during the reign of Christian II (r. 1513-1523) when the New Testament was printed in Danish, and had continued in the reign of Frederik I (r. 1523-1533) when the king allowed Lutherans to preach in public. Neither did the dates mark the actual completion of the Reformation: Monks were allowed to stay in their convents for another year, papist practices continued for some time, many rural churches were not supplied with clergymen, and most of the bishops were released from imprisonment in the latter part of 1536. Worm also pointed out that what happened on 30 October had only to do with worldly matters. Worm therefore suggested an alternative date, September 2 1737. On this day, two hundred years before, the Lutheran superintendents were initiated and the

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<sup>739</sup> *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>740</sup> The documents are part of a larger case-file that resembles a typical case-file from the Danish Chancery (in the series *Sjællandske Tegnelser*). This suggests that the documents have been removed from the Chancery's archive.

<sup>741</sup> Christen Worm, «Jubel Fest pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio). This document is undated, but according to the bishop's out-letter book, it was written on 29 May 1736. LAS. Sjællands Stifts Bispeembede. B.1-9.

<sup>742</sup> LAS. Sjællands Stifts Bispeembede. B.1-9: p. 258

Lutheran Church Ordinance was published. Only after this date and not before, wrote Worm, were the religious affairs in Denmark truly and finally settled.<sup>743</sup>

Count von Holstein wrote a reply to Worm's text on 2 June, in a document addressed to the king.<sup>744</sup> It consists of 21 short points, of which the first half is a refutation of Worm's argument, while the rest are arguments in favour of celebrating the jubilee on 30 October 1736. It is clear from the document that by the time Worm gave his counter-proposal, the king had already settled for 30 October.<sup>745</sup> Consequently, count von Holstein focused on providing arguments in favour of this date and arguing against bishop Worm's objections against it. Since the explicit purpose of the document was to clarify which date was the most appropriate to celebrate, it provides an insight into how the king and his advisor perceived the history of the Reformation, as well as what they saw as the purpose of the jubilee itself.

Worm had claimed in his text that what had happened on 30 October 1536 had solely to do with worldly matters. This was true, wrote von Holstein, but it was not a relevant point. To carry out a Reformation, it was necessary to execute many worldly matters and make decrees. In addition, clerical and worldly matters could not in any case be completely separated: «Yes, in our Protestant church it cannot happen, since both matters has to be so closely connected both in principle and in practice, that there is no difference between them.»<sup>746</sup> The bishop had argued that the Reformation was not finalized on 30 October 1536 so that, consequently, a jubilee should mark a later date when it had proceeded further. This was also a moot point, wrote von Holstein, since there had been many papists in the country after 1537 as well. The lingering existence of Catholicism was a consequence of the nature of the Danish Reformation, which had prevented a total, abrupt and violent break with the past: «since the Reformation happened without force or severity it was impossible that the whole kingdom could be reformed at the same time.»<sup>747</sup>

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<sup>743</sup> Christen Worm, «Jubel Fest pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>744</sup> Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm*, (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>745</sup> «Jeg finder intet at revidere, angaaende d. 12 Aug: desuden har H.K.M. ogsaa ei samme Dag, men d. 30 Oct: allernaadigst determineret.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>746</sup> «Ja i voris Protestantiske Kirke maa det ei skee, thi begge Sager maa være qvad Principia et effectus saa nøye continuerit, at der findes ingen Forskiel iblandt dem.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>747</sup> «(...) som Reformatorium skeede foruden Tvang eller Haardhed, saa var det ogsaa umueligt, at heele Riget kunde reformeris paa een Tiid.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

Count von Holstein went on to list the positive reasons why October 30 was the most appropriate date. On that day in 1536, the king and the estates decided to introduce the Evangelical faith. Before this, individual Protestants were allowed to practice their faith, but now it became «*Autoritas Publica*». The day was, moreover, important in both Denmark and Norway, since at the same Estates General the Norwegian council of the realm was abolished and replaced by the Danish council, which meant that the decisions made at the meeting was valid in both kingdoms.<sup>748</sup> Von Holstein also associated the events at the meeting in Copenhagen in October 1536 with the introduction of absolutism in 1660. On 30 October 1536 the king had been given complete power and authority over church affairs. On the same day, the «foundation» was laid for hereditary succession, which had secured the well being of the kingdoms and the safety of religion.<sup>749</sup> This remark referred to a provision in the Copenhagen Recess of 30 October 1536, which stated that the king's eldest son would automatically follow his father on the throne when he died, and bear the title of prince. The formal election of a successor while the king was still alive represented a weakening of the power of the Council of the Realm, which had previously used its right of election to force the king's son to make political concessions after his father's death, in order to get elected.<sup>750</sup> Von Holstein also claimed that the hereditary succession and the Royal Law of 1665 was a safeguard for the Protestant faith in Denmark-Norway.<sup>751</sup> Finally, there was even a correspondence between the events themselves, as they had played out in Copenhagen in 1536 and 1660:

Finally, there is a speech on 30 October by king Christian the Third to the lesser nobility, burghers and peasants with an *actus solennis*, which has no parallel except for the day when the sovereign power was introduced, which two days closely correspond to each other.<sup>752</sup>

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<sup>748</sup> «Denne Dag er ogsaa almindelig for begge Riiger, thi paa samme Riigs Dag blev der besluttet, at Norge og Danmark skulde have samme Raad, og hvad nu derudi blev besluttet, angikk dem begge toe; tilforn havde Norge et aparte Nordske Raads Collegium.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>749</sup> «Ja Grundvolden til Arv succesionen selv lagt, som er den beste Nytt til Riigernes Beste og Religionens Sikkerhed.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>750</sup> See Rian 1997: 50.

<sup>751</sup> «Thi in Lege Regia tales der først om den Augsburgiske Confession, og var Arve Successionen ei bleven fastsat i den Kongel. Familie, stoede heele Religionen og den Evangeliske Lære i begge Riger ikkun paa svage Fødder.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>752</sup> «Endeligen er der en paa d. 30 Oct: 1536 holdne Buersproek af Kong Christian den Tredie til meenige Adel, Borgere og Bønder med en Actus Solennis, som ei har sin mage, foruden den Dag, der den Souveraine Magt var indført, hvilke toe Dage harmonerer best med hinanden.» Johan Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio); Von Holstein's use of the Middle Low German word «Buersproek» (meaning a public meeting or an act published at such a meeting) suggests that he based his proposal on a reading of the sixteenth-century historian Arild Huitfeldt's history of the reign of Christian III



Von Holstein had identified an event in the history of the Reformation that mirrored another transformative event in Danish history, the introduction of absolutism. In both cases, the monarch pacified a powerful group (in 1536 the bishops, in 1660 the nobility) and received the public acclamation and assent of representatives of the estates in a public ceremony in Copenhagen. Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen effectively summarizes the parallels between the two events: «In parallell with the homage of 1660, the act of 30 October 1536 represented a consensus-creating and pacifying rite, transforming the virtual *coup d'état* accomplished by the king and a circle of fellow conspirators into law.»<sup>753</sup> Von Holstein pointed out to the king that Andreas Hojer also stressed the close connection between the monarchs' absolute power, hereditary succession, the royal house and the security of the religion, in the text he had written for the jubilee.

The disagreement between the bishop and the politician about when to celebrate the jubilee was a consequence of disparate views on what constituted the most important single event of the Danish Reformation. Von Holstein did not dispute any individual fact in Worm's text, only his interpretation of the relative importance of the events themselves. The bicentenary in 1736 was the first public celebration of the Danish Reformation and, consequently, there existed no precedence for the government to follow. Before they could initiate the commemoration, the king and his advisors therefore had to sort through the elements that could potentially constitute a narrative of the Danish Reformation that best suited their needs. The discussion about the date allows us to get an understanding of the agenda that lay behind the jubilee. Worm's alternative throws the actual date that was selected, and the rationale for it, into sharper relief. The question is how to interpret the two suggestions. Do they somehow reflect distinct and consistent interpretations of Danish history, or are there more prosaic or incidental reasons behind them? Which ideological viewpoints, if any, do the two alternatives support?

On the one hand, there was a purely practical dimension to the discussion. One factor was the ongoing renovation of Vor Frue church in Copenhagen, which had still not been rebuilt after the great city fire in 1728. The bishop mentioned this to support his argument for a later date: Vor Frue church, «the most distinguished main church in both kingdoms», was under renovation and would

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(1595). Huitfeldt uses the word «Bursprock» and describes the meeting in terms that are strongly reminiscent of von Holstein's: «Paa samme Herredag/[...] holt hans Naade Bursprock met menige Adel/Borgere oc Bønder/paa gamle Torff [...]». Huitfeldt 1976 [1595]: d1v.

<sup>753</sup> Johannsen 2013: 210.

not be ready by October 1736.<sup>754</sup> Von Holstein, however, pointed out that the bishop had previously promised the king that the church would be ready for his birthday on 30 November, so he could not see why it could not be finished four weeks earlier. In any case, the main sermon could be held in the Nicolay church if renovations were not completed in time.<sup>755</sup> He therefore recommended that the king ignore this argument. Von Holstein also pointed out in favour of October 30 that the following two days were important in the Protestant calendar: 31 October could be used to commemorate the start of the Reformation and Martin Luther, while 1 November, All Saints Day, was the annual commemoration day of the Reformation in Denmark and Norway. One could therefore, without any difficulties, use all three days to celebrate the jubilee.

Apart from these practical issues, the discussion about the chronology of the Reformation reveal that political considerations did play an important part in the planning process. This dimension is quite explicit in von Holstein's text. As previously shown, he wished to emphasize the historical connections between the years 1536 and 1660, between the monarchs Christian III and Frederik III, between Protestantism and absolutism. Not only did the Protestant faith and the absolute monarchy mutually guarantee each other's existence, but their historical geneses bore a remarkable resemblance to each other as well. In the same vein, von Holstein stressed that 30 October 1536 marked the transfer of authority over the church to the monarch, as well as an important step towards hereditary succession. The main point should, in other words, be to celebrate the Reformation as a political event and focus on the establishment of a state church under the monarch's authority.

Von Holstein's remark about Norway also had political implications. The intention was clearly to celebrate the jubilee in Denmark *and* Norway. It was therefore important to select a date that was valid for both kingdoms. From a Danish perspective, von Holstein was right in asserting that the recess of 30 October 1536 represented the formal introduction of the Lutheran faith in Norway. Christian III's charter, which was ratified on the same day, contained a paragraph that abolished the Norwegian Council of the Realm because of its resistance against the king. The paragraph also stated that, if God granted him success, Christian would conquer Norway and make it a province of Denmark. However, part of the Norwegian Council, led by the Norwegian archbishop Olav Engelbrektsson, continued its resistance against the Danish king until May 1537. The Catholic

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<sup>754</sup> Worm, «Jubelfester pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>755</sup> Von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfæsten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

Church was not actually abolished in Norway before this resistance was put down. Von Holstein was definitely aware of this, but his comment on the matter reflects the official stance of the Danish government, which did not acknowledge the Norwegian resistance at all. Norwegian historian Øystein Rian points out that the official historical narrative concealed that the Reformation took place at the same time as Norway lost its self-government.<sup>756</sup> As we shall see, this fact was hardly mentioned at all in sermons and other texts written for the jubilee. Von Holstein's comment reveals, however, that the government took Norway's loss of independence in 1536 into consideration in the planning process.

Worm's arguments are more difficult to categorize and his motivations for making them less obvious than von Holstein's. The bishop argued that since 30 October 1536 was neither the starting nor the finishing point of the Reformation, it would be more appropriate to celebrate the date when the formal organization of the Lutheran church was put into place with the consecration of the Lutheran superintendents and the issuing of the Church Ordinance. An important detail in Worm's text is the justification he gave for his proposal: «[...] what I write is mostly for the sake of strangers, who just as much as ourselves know what happened here in such an important matter.»<sup>757</sup> In Danish, the word *fremmede* («strangers») refers to, among other things, foreigners or people who do not belong in the community.<sup>758</sup> According to Erik Pontoppidan, the ambassador for the Holy Roman Emperor, Count Josef Fürst von Khevenhüller-Metsch, considered the jubilee to be «completely despicable.»<sup>759</sup> It could be that Worm anticipated such reactions from foreigners, both within and without the kingdoms, and wanted to ensure that the government was spared the embarrassment of also being accused of historical inaccuracy. We also remember, moreover, that after the bicentenary for the Augsburg Confession in 1730, a German periodical had written that the Danes intended to celebrate a jubilee in 1737, which was allegedly the year when the most remarkable changes in religion in Denmark had taken place.<sup>760</sup> Most likely, the editor of the journal, Johann Cristoph Colerus, had received this information directly from a Danish theologian. It is possible that Worm was aware of this, and that he therefore wanted to maintain this date. Another possible interpretation

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<sup>756</sup> Rian 2013; Rian 2014a: 445

<sup>757</sup> «Skee Guds og Kongens Villie, angaaende denne Jubel-Fests Dag: hvad jeg skrifver meest for Fremmedis Skyld, der lige saa vel, som Vi self ved hvad saadan vigtig Sag angaaende, hos os, er forefaldet.» Worm, «Jubelfester pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilæet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>758</sup> Query «Fremmed» in *Ordbog over det danske sprog*. <http://ordnet.dk/ods/ordbog?query=fremmed>. Retrieved 08.10.2013.

<sup>759</sup> «Imidlertid var bemeldte Jubelfest heel foragtelig i de kjøbenhavnske Papisters Øine, særdeles den Keiserlige Minister, Grev Kerenhüllers [sic!] eller rettere hans Gemahls [...]» Pontoppidan 1874: 96.

<sup>760</sup> *Nöthiges Supplement zu der Auserlesener Theologischen Bibliothec. Viertes Stück* 1731: 377.

is that Worm wanted to steer the jubilee more in the direction of celebrating the creation of the Lutheran Church, rather than being exclusively a celebration of the monarch's role in arresting the bishops and dissolving the power of the Catholic Church. The king naturally played an important part in both events, but a jubilee in 1737 would still have ended up looking quite different than in 1736. It could, for instance, have led to a historical narrative less centred on the king himself. A crucial actor in 1537 was Johannes Bugenhagen, a German clergyman and associate of Martin Luther who was invited by the king to assist in creating a Lutheran church organization in Denmark. Among other things, he consecrated the first Lutheran superintendents and participated in writing the Church Ordinance. Worm himself mentioned in his text that Christian had postponed his coronation till Bugenhagen arrived in Copenhagen, because he did not want to entrust such a holy and solemn affair to a papist.<sup>761</sup>

Worm's proposal, in other words, suggests a narrative in which the king depended on Bugenhagen and the Lutheran clergy to implement the Reformation. He did not take sufficiently into account, however, that the jubilee was intended to canonize the Reformation as a *royal* act. The fact, noted by Worm, that the meeting on 30 October 1536 was primarily a political event dominated by «worldly matters» did nothing to reduce its significance. On the contrary, it was precisely the political nature of the event that made it important. Von Holstein's reading of the past favoured a view of the Reformation as a dramatic rupture rather than a gradual process: he described a history of royal revolutions, in 1536 and 1660, that closely resembled each other and contributed to the cumulative strengthening of monarchical power. Worm's objections against 30 October diminished the importance of the date by portraying it as one among a series of relevant events.

Three years before the bicentenary in 1736, Ludvig Holberg had published the second volume of his *Danmarks Riges Historie*, where we find his account of the reign of king Christian III. Holberg's narrative represents an illuminating contrast to von Holstein's arguments for the importance of 30 October 1536: Holberg's text does not convey the impression that Von Holstein's preferred date represents the exact moment when the Reformation had been introduced in Denmark-Norway. Holberg's account is much closer to Worm's portrayal of the Reformation as a more drawn-out process that lasted well into 1537. When he reached the year 1536 in his history,

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<sup>761</sup> «Merkelig er det og, at den Høysalige Konge saa vel som Dronningen, ei blefve cronet før Aar 1537 d 12 Augusti, som, atter, var hans Majestets Fødselsdag; thi hans Majst vilde ei at nogen af den Papistiske Overtroe skulde betrees slig hellig og høytidelig Forretning, men af de Evangeliske forefandt han ingen, dertil, beqvem for Johannes Bugenhagen hidkom». Worm, «Jubelfester pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

Holberg did introduce it by describing it as «the happy and, for the king, glorious year [...]».<sup>762</sup> He was referring, however, to the peace with Lübeck and the pacification of Malmø and Copenhagen, not the Reformation of the Danish church. He called Christian's arrest of the bishops «the most remarkable thing that has happened in Christian III's reign», and he gave a fairly detailed description of the act on 30 October 1536 (although without mentioning the actual date or dwelling on its significance), but these events were portrayed more as necessary preliminary steps than the actual Reformation of the Danish church. In Holberg's account, the king invited Bugenhagen to Copenhagen to help him with the «great Reformation, that he had in mind.»<sup>763</sup> After having described Bugenhagen's Church Ordinance, the ordination of Lutheran superintendents and other measures, all of which happened in 1537 and later, Holberg wrote: «In this way the entire Lutheran faith was confirmed with laws by Christian III [...]».<sup>764</sup> He then described the Norwegian archbishop's uprising and the resistance to the Reformation in Norway, which lasted well into 1537.<sup>765</sup> He concluded his account of the year 1537 with the following paragraph:

Thus ended the year 1537, which together with the previous deserves to be written with golden numbers in the Danish chronicles, since they were no less happy for the kingdoms than glorious for king Christian, by whose victorious weapons the kingdom was freed from the foreign yoke, and returned to its previous honour and prosperity. The power of the bishops, who weakened the country and constantly fanned the flames of disorder, was dampened. The Evangelical faith was established by laws, and the decrepit University of Copenhagen was so renewed, that this king can rightly be called its true founder.<sup>766</sup>

Holberg clearly considered both of the years 1536 and 1537 as momentous in the political and religious history of the kingdoms. We must of course not forget that Holberg wrote a work of history and not, like Von Holstein, a recommendation for when to celebrate a centenary: the historian could write a complex and extended narrative where the politician had to be concise and selective. My point here is to emphasize that there was nothing obvious or self-explanatory about

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<sup>762</sup> Holberg 1733: 329-330.

<sup>763</sup> «[...] lod Kong Christian [Bugenhagen] forskrive til Dannemark for der at gaae sig til haande udi det store Reformations Verk, som han havde fore.» Holberg 1733: 348.

<sup>764</sup> «Saaledes blev den Evangeliske Troe ved Love stadfæstet af Christiano 3. [...]» Holberg 1733: 349.

<sup>765</sup> In the process, he made the rather spurious statement that the Reformation in Norway caused so little unrest that «it is probable that the Roman religion was already weak in Norway.» Holberg 1733: 350.

<sup>766</sup> «Dermed endtes dette Aar 1537, hvilket tillige med det foregaaende fortæner at staae med gyldene Tall udi de Danske Krøniker, saasom de vare ikke mindre lykkelige for Riget end glorieuse for Kong Christian, ved hvis sejerrige Vaaben Riget blev befriet fra fremmed Aag, og kom til sin forrige Ære og Velstand igien. Bispens Myndighed, som svækkede Landet, og var en stedsvarende Tønder til Uroeligheds Ild, blev dæmpet. Den Evangeliske Lærdom blev ved Love etableret, og det forfaldne Kiøbenhavns Universitet blev saaledes igien fornyet, at denne Konge ikke med Urett holdes for dets rette Stifter.» Holberg 1733: 353-354.

celebrating a bicentenary for the Reformation in Denmark and Norway in 1736 rather than 1737. This is important to underline, precisely because the centenary contributed to the canonization of 30 October 1536 as the most important date in the history of the Reformation: As we shall see, the instructional material the government distributed to the clergy and schoolteachers in the kingdoms reinforced the tendency towards highlighting 30 October 1536 and placing other dates and events in the shadow. We now know that this canonization was the product of a very conscious and deliberate choice made by the regime.

## Preparations

The king eventually decided that 30 October 1736 would be the first day of the jubilee. The final decision was made after Von Holstein's proposal of 2 June, at the latest, but as previously mentioned, it was probably decided even earlier. In the last point of his text, von Holstein had promised that he would come back later with his thoughts on how the jubilee could be arranged. He submitted a proposal consisting of no less than 82 points on 29 June 1736.<sup>767</sup>

The document provides crucial information about how von Holstein developed his ideas about the jubilee. It shows that the Reformation jubilee in 1717 was used as a template for how things could be done in 1736. In several points, von Holstein refers to details from the proceedings in 1717. He suggested, for instance that heralds could announce the jubilee in Copenhagen (point 3), that cannons could fire after the morning service in those towns where there were fortresses (12), that the royal family could attend the sermon on 30 October, and that medals could be thrown to the attending public (15), all of this «as it happened in 1717».<sup>768</sup> Von Holstein wrote that «the Marshal of the Court should make the necessary arrangements, which can all be found in the relations from the year 1717» (point 31). This remark suggests that he based his own plan on one or several of the descriptions that had been printed after the jubilee in 1717.<sup>769</sup>

Some of the points in the proposal show, furthermore, that von Holstein himself was already reflecting on how the forthcoming jubilee could be documented and publicized, both abroad and for

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<sup>767</sup> Von Holstein, «Hvorledes Jubelfesten d: 30. Oct. A. 1736 kunde celebreres», *Reformationsjubilæet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>768</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>769</sup> I have discovered two such descriptions. One is trilingual (*Beskrivning over de Solenniteter [...] Det Andet Jubilæum [...] er bleve celebreret*) and printed by the university bookdealer Hieronymus Christian Pauli, while the other is in Danish (*Udfærlig Beretning hvorledes er tilgaaet på den [...] saa Christeligt anordnede Otte Dages Jubel-Fest [...] and printed by the Royal printing house. Both of these are possible inspirations for von Holstein's proposal.*

posterity. He planned for the collection and printing of sermons and orations held by the bishops on 30 October (point 25) and the collection of orations by rectors and lectors in the Latin schools held on the same day (38). In the latter case, he explicitly stated the reason for collecting these materials. Orators should send copies of their speeches to the Chancery «not only in perpetuam rei memoriam, but especially since such specimens allows one to learn more about schoolmen and see what there is to be done about them.»<sup>770</sup> The collection of these texts thus had two functions: one was a memorial function, to ensure that the event was not forgotten by posterity; the other was a control function, to gather information about the competence of the teachers in the kingdoms. In the same vein, Von Holstein proposed that all diocesan governors and bishops should send a report about «how the jubilee had been celebrated in their diocese according to the royal order and instruction.» (81).<sup>771</sup> The reason for this was that, «when everything had passed and intelligence from all places had arrived to the Chancery, a *Historia Jubilæi* should be written, and it should be done somewhat better than in the year 1717» (82).<sup>772</sup> Von Holstein, then, had an ambition of producing an official account of the jubilee, based on collected texts and reports from the provinces. For some reason, however, it seems that an official history of the jubilee never materialized. The only account that was made was published in German, in the first edition of the recently established journal *Dänische Bibliothec*.<sup>773</sup> The journal was edited by two young men: the 28-year old student Jacob Langebek, who later became a historian and royal archivist, and the 29-year old clergyman Ludvig Harboe, later bishop of Zealand.<sup>774</sup> Their account was fairly comprehensive, at least compared with those written in 1717, but it did not include any reports from the provinces. The authors mentioned that the account was almost exclusively about celebrations in Copenhagen, since they had received very little information about what had taken place in other towns.<sup>775</sup> The text was in any case produced as a private initiative, which means that von Holstein's plan for an official history based on reports from crown officials was never realized.

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<sup>770</sup> «Hvoraaf, saavel som af deres Orationer, de og alle Oratores burde indsende Gienparter til Cancelliet ei alleene in perpetuam rei memoriam, men fornemmelig: at man af slige Speciminibus best kand lære Skolemænd at kiende, og see hvad der er ved dem at gjøre.» Von Holstein, «Hvorledes Jubelfesten d: 30. Oct. A. 1736 kunde celebreres», *Reformationsjubilæet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>771</sup> «Tilligemed af hver Stiftamtmand og Biskop, hvorledis [Jubilæum] i deris Stift efter den Kongl. Ordre og Forskrift er bleven celebreret.» *ibid.*

<sup>772</sup> «Thi naar alt var forbi, og Efterretningerne fra alle Stæder til Cancelliet indkommen, burde billigen *Historia Jubilæi* beskrivis og det noget bedre end det [for] A. 1717.» *ibid.*

<sup>773</sup> [Langebek] 1738: 256 ff.

<sup>774</sup> Jørgensen 1964: 204.

<sup>775</sup> [Langebek] 1738: 282, 307.

Von Holstein was also preoccupied with how the jubilee would be perceived by a foreign public. In his proposal (17, 18), he mentioned that when the king and the royal family went to the church on 30 October, the Marshal of the Court would regulate the order of the procession. The reason for this was that

even though no worldly splendour is necessary on such solemn occasions, good order is needed, both with regards to the crowd, as well as to the strangers present and the many reports that are sent to foreign countries.<sup>776</sup>

A concern for the international reputation of Denmark-Norway is also present in the provisions made for the doctoral promotions at the university that were going to take place on the fifth and seventh day of the jubilee, in the faculties of theology and law. Von Holstein wrote a provisional draft of the royal order to the two faculties, which stated the king's intentions in allowing candidates to be promoted. One of the purposes of the doctoral promotion was to «show other nations, that in our Northern realm, just as much as in theirs, learned and competent men are holding office (...)».<sup>777</sup> This suggests that one of the purposes of the jubilee was to enhance the international prestige of Christian VI and the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway. This aspect is not otherwise made explicit in the sources, but the quoted remarks indicate that it has been an underlying motive or, at least, that the government was aware that the jubilee might receive international attention and wanted to make sure that it would be favourable.

Most of von Holstein's suggestions were included in the instructions that were eventually sent out to the bishops in July. The basic framework of the bicentenary was therefore in place at this point. The jubilee was going last for eight days, from 30 October to 6 November 1736. The first day would be celebrated with a programme of four church services in every church in Denmark-Norway. This was the main day of the jubilee, on which every subject in the kingdoms would attend church and participate in the celebrations. The second day was not designated as a holiday, so for the majority of the population this was an ordinary working day. At the university and in all Latin schools in the kingdoms, however, there would be a programme of orations in Latin and Danish. These would be advertised in Danish beforehand, and all inhabitants in the towns were welcome to

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<sup>776</sup> «Thi omendskiönt ingen verdslig Pragt til deslige Höytider udkrevis, saa behöves dog en god Orden, baade i Henseende til Mengden af Folk, som for de tilstedeværende Fremmede, og de mangfoldige udenlands gaaende Relationer.» Von Holstein, «Hvorledes Jubelfesten d: 30. Oct. A. 1736 kunde celebreres», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio)

<sup>777</sup> «[...] samt for at viise andre Nationer, at der ligesaavel i voris Norden som hos dem var lærde og habile Folk i Embeder [...]» *ibid.*



attend. The third day, 1 November, was All Saints' Day, the annual commemoration of the Reformation. This day would proceed as usual, with sermons in every church. The remaining four days were reserved for the doctoral promotions at the university.<sup>778</sup> The only day for which nothing concrete was planned was Friday, 2 November. Von Holstein had suggested that this day could be a «prayer and thanksgiving day», also an inspiration from the bicentenary in 1717, but for some reason his idea was not carried any further. In the course of the year, however, the king and his advisors had been working on a new decree that was intended to reform the church by improving the quality of the clergy. The decree introduced the requirement that those who had finished their theological studies had to be questioned by a bishop or a professor of theology and receive an attestation before they could apply for a clerical office. Its stated purpose was to «provide the congregations with teachers that are neither errant in their learning nor scandalous in their conduct of life.»<sup>779</sup> It was eventually publicized on 2 November 1736, during the jubilee. According to J. Oskar Andersen, this was no coincidence: the king saw the jubilee as an appropriate opportunity to make an effort to raise the quality of the church by reforming the clergy.<sup>780</sup> Contemporaries also perceived the decree in this way. In the account of the jubilee in the journal *Dänische Bibliothec*, Jacob Langebek wrote the following about the decree:

Am Tage, nach dem Jubiläo den 2. Nov. liessen J.K.M. eine ausnehmende Probe von Dero allerchristlichen Eifer und geheiligten Absicht, daß die Kirche Gottes hier in Norden blühen, und die Gemeinen in diesen Landen hinführo mit tuchtigen und frommen Lehrern versehen werden möchten.<sup>781</sup>

In a pastoral letter to the clergy in Akershus diocese, bishop Peder Hersleb introduced the decree by describing it as one of many recent testaments to the king's untiring concern for the improvement of his church. According to Hersleb the king wished, «like a blessed Josiah» to begin «the new *Reformation seculum*» with this decree.<sup>782</sup> These contemporary observations supports the hypothesis that the king saw the jubilee not merely as a commemoration of the Reformation as an historical event that took place 200 years before, but also as an opportunity to launch a series of reforms in the Danish-Norwegian Church. Both the introduction of obligatory confirmation that launched the

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<sup>778</sup> This took place on 3 November at the Faculty of Theology, and 5 November at the Faculty of Law.

<sup>779</sup> «[...] paa det Menighederne kan forsynes med Lærere, der verken ere vildfarende i Lærdommen eller forargelige i Liv og Levnet.» Schou 1795: 273.

<sup>780</sup> Andersen 1935: 33.

<sup>781</sup> [Langebek] 1738: 291.

<sup>782</sup> Faye 1865: 112.

jubilee year, as well as the new requirements of attestation for all theological alumni seeking a parish, were aimed at ensuring that the clergy and their congregations had a sufficient knowledge of the Gospels and awareness of their duties as Christians. Both initiatives were part of the same programme of reform that sought to improve the church within the boundaries of the existing state church organization.

After Von Holstein submitted his proposal to the king, the preparations proceeded on several fronts. All congregations in Denmark-Norway were to be informed about the bicentenary on the preceding Sunday, when their minister read a short text prepared by the Danish Chancery. During the church services, the clergy were going to deliver sermons based on specially selected Bible verses, and the congregations would sing selected psalms. The clergy would also read a special prayer written for the occasion. In rural churches, as well as those churches in towns where there were no sermons at midday, the clergyman, dean, sexton or schoolteacher was to read a brief history written for the occasion. All of these plans required texts that would have to be written and printed for distribution to all parishes in the kingdoms in time for the jubilee. On 26 May, the king wrote to von Holstein informing him of which bible verses he wished to be used for the jubilee sermons.<sup>783</sup> The king had personally selected four out of ten verses suggested by bishop Worm, one for each of the services that were planned for 30 October.<sup>784</sup> The bishop was also given the responsibility of writing an appropriate prayer and choosing the psalms for the services.<sup>785</sup> The king approved Worm's suggestions on 28 July, and ordered the bishop to arrange the printing of the verses, psalms and prayers in enough copies for all the dioceses in Denmark and Norway.<sup>786</sup> Andreas Hojer had at this point already written a draft of the short history of the Reformation that was intended to be read in public in schools and churches during the jubilee.<sup>787</sup> The text was revised and finally approved by the king himself on 18 July, after which it was sent to the royal printer.<sup>788</sup>

The products of these preparations were three documents that were later distributed to the bishops in Denmark and Norway. One document was a printed 17-page pamphlet containing the bible verses, psalms and a prayer to be read after the sermon.<sup>789</sup> The second was a printed 19-page

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<sup>783</sup> Rørdam 1896: 233

<sup>784</sup> Both the initial list and the selected verses can be found in *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio), marked as Lit. C.

<sup>785</sup> DRA. DK. D20-18: no 267.

<sup>786</sup> DRA. DK. D20-18: no 290; See also Rørdam 1896: 234.

<sup>787</sup> Point 19 in von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubelfesten», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>788</sup> DRA. DK. D99-4: no. 433, 434.

<sup>789</sup> *Texter og Bønnen som skal forklares og bruges [...] 1736.*

booklet with the short history of the Reformation, written by Andreas Hojer.<sup>790</sup> Finally, all bishops received a brief text that informed the king's subjects about the bicentenary, and explained the reasons for celebrating it.<sup>791</sup> The three texts provided the clergy with a template for their own expositions of the events in 1536. The essential purpose of the jubilee was explained by the brief notification that was handed out to all ministers to be read out on the Sunday before the jubilee. When a clergyman sat down to write his sermons for 30 October, he was expected to base it on the guidelines set out in the pamphlet. It is also reasonable to assume that the short history may have assisted many clergymen and schoolmasters in need of relevant material to use in their sermons and orations.<sup>792</sup> Both texts were, in other words, bound to influence how the history of the Danish Reformation was presented in churches and schools in the kingdoms. It is therefore necessary to analyse in some detail how the Reformation is described in the texts.

### The history of the Danish Reformation according to the absolute monarchy

The brief history of the Reformation was written by the historian and jurist Andreas Hojer. In the existing literature about the jubilee, it has been remarked upon with some wonder why the task of writing a piece on church history was not delegated to a theological professor or clergyman, instead of a Professor of Law.<sup>793</sup> J. Oskar Andersen mentions the court preacher Erik Pontoppidan as a more likely candidate, since he had already written and published a short history of the Danish Reformation two years previous.<sup>794</sup> Andersen sees this as yet another indication of Hojer's major interest in and influence on the jubilee.<sup>795</sup> Since it has been established that Hojer's influence on the jubilee was less considerable than Andersen suggests, the answer must lie elsewhere. One explanation, which both Andersen and Hojer's biographer Troels G. Jørgensen mention, is the fact that Hojer had held the Latin oration for the annual commemoration of the Reformation at Copenhagen University in 1735. It is possible that the king gave Hojer the task of writing the short

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<sup>790</sup> [Hojer] 1736.

<sup>791</sup> DRA. DK. D21-72: no.327-328 («Tillysning»).

<sup>792</sup> In a letter to the bishop of Akershus, a schoolmaster from Kongsberg complained that he did not have a library, and that he therefore hoped that he would receive the history in good time before the jubilee so that he had material for his oration.: SAO/A-10378/D/Db/L0002. Letter from Frederik Breum to biskop Hersleb, 24 august 1736

<sup>793</sup> Rordam 1902: 164; Andersen 1935: 29; Jørgensen 1961: 157.

<sup>794</sup> Erik Pontoppidan's *Kurzgefaste Reformations-Historie* was written in German and published in Lübeck in 1734.

<sup>795</sup> Andersen 1935: 29.

history because he was satisfied with this speech.<sup>796</sup> Another, more obvious, reason is Hojer's previous career as royal historiographer (1722-30) and author of two books and several smaller works on Danish history.<sup>797</sup> His professional background thus made Hojer well qualified for the job.

The brief history can be divided into three parts. In the first part (pages 2-7), Hojer described the *spiritual* conditions in the kingdoms before the Reformation. In the second part (pages 7-9), he described the *temporal* conditions, that is, the power of the Catholic Church in relation to the Crown. Finally, he described the Reformation and its consequences for Denmark-Norway (pages 9-19). The first part presented an extremely critical picture of the Catholic church in Denmark before the Reformation. Christianity did exist in the kingdoms, Hojer claimed, but it had become mixed with the «most disgraceful fables and coarse inventions by the blind papacy.»<sup>798</sup> He enumerated the wrong teachings and practices of the medieval church: veneration of saints, trade in indulgences, masses for the repose of the soul, and so on. According to Hojer, the clergy had no concern for the spiritual and worldly well being of the common people, and kept the Word of God for themselves. Sermons were held in Latin, a language the laity did not understand, and the priests did not try to improve the education of the common man. The Catholic clergy were more concerned about their own «dignity, esteem, sensual pleasures and comfort» and how they could increase their wealth, than the salvation of their congregations.<sup>799</sup>

The second part of the text was concerned with the political situation before the Reformation. According to Hojer, the prelates of the church behaved as «worldly princes» that did not respect their lawful king. They oppressed the subjects physically, economically and spiritually, and since they were exempt from paying taxes, the tax burden became even greater for the common folk. The bishops travelled with armed retinues and held fortified castles for themselves, instead of for the king. The kings were bound by an oath in their charters, forced on them by the bishops, which pledged them to protect the Church and the privileges of the clergy. Hojer concluded his account on the «temporal conditions» of pre-Reformation Denmark-Norway with blaming the bishops for the terrible civil war of 1533-36:

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<sup>796</sup> Andersen 1735: 29; Jørgensen 1961: 157.

<sup>797</sup> Hojer's main works as historian are his *Kurtzgefasste Dännemärkische Geschichte* (1717) and *König Friedrich des Vierten glorwürdigstes Leben* (1732/34). The former is a pedagogical work, structured as a series of questions and answers, written when he was teacher for Johan Ludwig von Holstein's two younger brothers. The latter is a history of the reign of Frederick IV.

<sup>798</sup> [Hojer] 1736: a2r.

<sup>799</sup> [Hojer] 1736: a4v.

It was solely their vengefulness and evil that wasted the union of the Nordic kingdoms, that would have torn Norway from the kingdom of Denmark, and that drove our dear fatherland into the unfortunate and bloody three year long war, which ended by God's mercy exactly 200 years ago.<sup>800</sup>

Hojer's condemnation of the excessive power of the bishops and their responsibility for the war echoed the words of Christian III himself in the Copenhagen Recess of 30 October 1536. In that document, the king had claimed that the bishop's obstinate refusal to elect a rightful king had led the kingdoms into the destructive civil war. This was the official reason the bishops would be deposed and their properties confiscated.<sup>801</sup> Although there is a certain element of truth in the king's assertions, it is undeniably a case of history written by the victor. Øystein Rian has pointed out that the bishops were convenient scapegoats that were sacrificed to secure the fragile post-war consensus, restore harmony in the kingdoms, and justify the Reformation.<sup>802</sup> The Recess focused exclusively on the bishops' refusal to elect the Lutheran duke Christian as king of Denmark and Norway as *the cause* of the war, but it did not mention that the war *itself* was waged between two parties that supported their respective candidates, who were both Lutherans. Although many noblemen, as well as the important towns of Malmø and Copenhagen, had fought against Christian (Copenhagen had in fact been conquered by the king just three months before), they were neither punished by Christian nor given the blame for the war. The Recess was a cleverly crafted piece of political propaganda, and its version of recent events had served a concrete political purpose in 1536. The previously hostile participants at the Estates General would have had the events of the Count's war fresh in their minds and known what was deliberately left out of the Recess. In Hojer's text, however, we can observe how, two hundred years later, the king's narrative about the bishops' guilt had metamorphosed into official mythology. In this new context, the civil war served as an illustration of the Catholic bishops' arrogance and lust for power, a logical outcome of their evil ambition. Even though Hojer later in his text touched upon the active role of Copenhagen and Malmø during the war, the burghers in these towns were not actually blamed for anything. In fact, their actions were motivated by a desire to defend their «freedom of religion». Since the prelates refused to elect duke Christian as king because he was a Protestant,

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<sup>800</sup> «Det var deres Hevngierighed og Ondskab alleene, der spildte de Nordiske Rigers Samfund, der gierne havde revet Norge fra Danmarks Rige, og der styrtede Vores kiære Fæderneland i den ulyksalige og blodige 3 Aars Krig, som just for 200 Aar siden ved Guds Naade endtes.» [Hojer] 1736: b1v.

<sup>801</sup> See Rørdam 1873.

<sup>802</sup> Rian 1997: 47, 49, 144; See also Imsen 1982: 5-9.

the great market towns, in order to defend their freedom of religion, allied themselves with Lübeck and the supporters of the captured king Christian, as a result of which the bloody three year-war started, which nearly destroyed the kingdom and its best towns with predation, fire, violence and murder.<sup>803</sup>

Hojer exonerated all belligerent parties, except for the bishops. His text thus reproduced and reinforced the myth of the evil bishops that was first created in the Copenhagen Recess.

In the third and final part of Hojer's history, he described the Reformation itself. The spirit of God had awoken the monk Martin Luther to attack the «kingdom of darkness» and «ignite the light of the word of God anew». Due to the power of the «ungodly Roman bishops and clergy», the light of the Gospel reached the Nordic kingdoms only slowly and with difficulty. It was also prevented by linguistic problems, since Danes did not understand German Protestant preachers and German books. God had found a way, however: the Gospel reached Denmark through the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. God's providence had also ensured that the Protestant duke Frederik became king after Christian II was deposed. Hojer claimed that the reign of Frederick I, during which Lutheranism received equal legal status as Catholicism, constituted a foundation for the Danish Reformation. Because of strong resistance from the clergy, however, it was not until Christian III won the Civil War and deposed the bishops that the Reformation could be fully introduced in Denmark. Hojer gave a relatively detailed account of the events in Copenhagen from the king's triumphal entry in August to the Estates General in October, as well as the contents of the Copenhagen recess pertaining to both clerical and worldly matters. Among the latter, he particularly emphasized the importance of the provision that secured hereditary succession.<sup>804</sup>

For Hojer, there was no doubt that the events of October 1536 were God's work. In just three months, Denmark had almost been created anew, the powerful bishops lost their power and privileges, and the people could now hear the previously forbidden pure word of God. It was particularly praiseworthy that this happened without any bloodshed, even though the kingdom was still full of papists, and even though it happened in a time when just small changes in government or religion elsewhere resulted in «streams of blood». As we have seen, the idea of a particularly peaceful Danish Reformation had already been expressed by bishop Worm in his thanksgiving prayer written for the bicentenary in 1717. Hojer next emphasized the importance of 30 October 1536, which he

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<sup>803</sup>«Hvorover de store Kiøbstæder i Danmark, for at forsvare deres Religions Frihed, forbandt sig med de Lybske og den fangne Kong Christian den Andens Tilhængere, hvorudover den blodige 3 Aars Krig fra 1534 til 1536 blev yppet, som med Rov, Brand, Vold og Mord nesten ødelage Riget og dets beste Stæder.» [Hojer] 1736: b2v.

<sup>804</sup> [Hojer] 1736: c1v.

described as the day «when all of the previously mentioned great things were agreed upon and decided by the whole kingdom [...]». <sup>805</sup> This remark is interesting in light of the previously mentioned discussion between von Holstein and Worm about which date to commemorate. According to Hojer, «everything that has since happened in our Danish church to its construction and to the honour of God, is the fruit of this blessed Estates General.» <sup>806</sup> He described both the Church Ordinance of 1537 and the reestablishment of the university as «fruits of this great change». Hojer's text thus reasserted von Holstein's opinions about the importance of this date.

Before Hojer's text was sent to the printer, it was read, corrected and approved by Christian VI himself. The draft manuscript, including the king's corrections, is preserved in the Danish Chancery's archive. <sup>807</sup> This allows us to study the amendments the king made to the original manuscript. Since he has not explained or given any reasons for the changes, however, it is difficult to explain what motivated them. There are only few changes made, one of which recurs throughout the text: the king added the adjective «Roman», «papal» or «papist» as a prefix to the word «bishops» or «clergy». There are four such amendments. A probable explanation is that the king wanted to make it clear, beyond any doubt, that the text was referring to the Catholic clergy and, possibly, also to stress their connections with and loyalty to an external power, the papacy in Rome. Another amendment the king made to the text was to cross out the adjective «simple» from the phrase «our simple forefathers», making it «our forefathers» instead. The original word in Danish was «eenfoldige», a word with many connotations. On the one hand it had positive connotations, referring to honesty, confidence in others and simple piety. On the other hand, it could also be used pejoratively, as a synonym for stupid, unenlightened, naïve or gullible. <sup>808</sup> One of the sentences the king corrected in this manner went like this: «This was the miserable and wretched condition our simple forefathers were led or rather, seduced, into during the last and densest darkness of the papacy.» <sup>809</sup> It is impossible to say with any certainty why the king chose to erase this word twice, but he must either have perceived it as unnecessary, or as problematic for some reason. The last amendment is easier to explain. When writing about the worldly powers of the bishops, Hojer had

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<sup>805</sup> [Hojer] 1736: c2r.

<sup>806</sup> «Alt hvad siden i vores Danske Kirke til dens Opbyggelse og GUDs Ære er skeet, er Frugten af denne af GUD velsignede Rigs-Dag.» [Hojer] 1736: c2r.

<sup>807</sup> The manuscript is marked «Lit. D». In the collection of documents concerning the jubilee from the Royal library in Copenhagen (*Reformationsjubilæet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 Folio)), the appendix «Lit. D» is missing. The draft manuscript has therefore originally been part of this case file. The draft is located in DRA. DK. D21-72: no. 313.

<sup>808</sup> Query «Enfoldig» in *Ordbog over det danske sprog*. <http://ordnet.dk/ods/ordbog?query=enfoldig> Retrieved 03.12.2013.

<sup>809</sup> «Saa ynkelig og elendig bleve vore eenfoldige Forfædre under Pavedømmets sidste og tykkeste Mørke forte, eller rettere, forførte.» DRA. DK. D21-72. no 313.

used the following words: «It was not enough for them that they had changed from teachers in the church to worldly regents, and that they had acquired a seat and a vote in the Council of the Realm [...]».<sup>810</sup> The king crossed out the dependent clause, thus leaving out reference to the fact that the Catholic bishops all had seats in the Council of the Realm. One possible explanation for the omission is that it was motivated by political concerns. The Council of the Realm, which had the right to elect the monarch and to participate in the governance of the kingdom, was the foremost institutional expression of the duality of power between king and nobility before absolutism was introduced in 1660. It is likely that the king considered that mentioning the bishops' seat in this political organ would be tantamount to admitting that they had a formal right to oppose the king and that, by crossing it out, the bishops' political power would appear more illegitimate.

The second document distributed to the clergy was the pamphlet written by bishop Worm, containing psalms, collects, prayers and Bible verses to be used in the church services.<sup>811</sup> Its longest text, a prayer to be read after the sermon, was cast as a humble thanksgiving to God for his countless blessings towards his sinful and inadequate subjects. The prayer thanked God for the heavenly kindness he had shown two hundred years before, «when the foster father of your Church here in the North publicly spoke to all of our people, who saw their previous errors and decided to wander on your path.»<sup>812</sup> It condemned the errors of Catholicism, describing the Catholic faith as «human inventions», its church services as «external, useless and [...] invented» and dismissing the doctrine of good works and the veneration of saints. Then it went on to describe the Pope as «the man of sin and the child of depravation» and claiming that he had raised himself above God and his representatives on earth, the monarchs.<sup>813</sup> These short paragraphs were the only historical references in the prayer. Its account of the Reformation was more or less similar to Hojer's account, although it was much shorter and less specific.

Even more significant in determining how the clergy discussed the Reformation were the Bible verses the king selected for the jubilee. Every minister had to base his sermons on these verses, which consequently determined the topic and structure of the entire sermon. The Bible verse selected for the morning service was 2 Chron. 34 v. 33-34, which describes how king Josiah removed

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<sup>810</sup> «Det var dem ikke nok at de af Lærere i Kirken var bleven til verdslige Regentere, og at de havde forhvervet sig Sæde og Stemme i Rigets Raad (...)».*DRA. DK. D21-72: no 313.*

<sup>811</sup> *Texter og Bønner som skal forklares og bruges til den Taksigelses og Jubel-Fest 1736.*

<sup>812</sup> «Vi indfinde os denne Dag i Dit Huus og Din Helligdom, at erkiende saadan himliske Godhed, beviist os, for to hundrede Aar siden, da Din Kirkes Foster Fader her i Norden offentlig taledede til alt Dit Folk, som fandt deres forrige Vildfarelser, og besluttede at vandre paa Dine Veje.» *Texter og Bønner 1736: [6].*

<sup>813</sup> *Texter og Bønner 1736: [7].*



all abominations from Israel and made all the people serve God as long as he lived. Identifications between Protestant kings and the biblical rulers were common in propaganda and political iconography throughout the early modern period. In Protestant kingdoms such as Denmark, Sweden and England, Old Testament kingship was perceived as a universally valid ideal, the form of government that was in closest accord with God's will. The historical books of the Old Testament therefore provided a widely familiar sourcebook of examples that could be compared to and thus lend legitimacy to the policies of contemporary monarchs. King Josiah was frequently used as an exemplar in a Protestant context, in which he figured as the prototypical reformer-king and iconoclast.<sup>814</sup> In this context, it is relevant to ask how the comparison with Josiah shaped interpretations of Christian III and the Danish Reformation. Josiah's grandfather Manasseh and his father Amon had done «that which was evil in the sight of the lord» and reintroduced idolatrous heathen practices to the kingdom of Judah. When Josiah acceded to the throne at a young age, he started to destroy the idols and sacrificial altars, and murder the sacrilegious priests. In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, Hilkiah the priest rediscovered the Law of Moses in the temple and gave it to the king. This led Josiah to read the word of God to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and made all that were present serve God. The most obvious parallels one could draw between Josiah and Christian III were their role as uncompromising destroyers of idolatry and protectors of pure forms of worship. As Tony Claydon points out in his study of Williamite propaganda in England after the Glorious revolution, Josiah could also represent moral reform and the eradication of vice.<sup>815</sup> The ministers could of course choose themselves how to apply the analogy, and modify it so it fit the historical situation in sixteenth-century Denmark. I shall return to how this was done in practice later on.

The final document distributed to the ministers of Denmark-Norway was a brief notification that explained to the subjects the reasons for celebrating a bicentenary. The document was to be read to all congregations on the Sunday preceding the jubilee. It stated that on the approaching Tuesday, two hundred years had passed since «the wisdom, omnipotence and benevolence of God» had saved the kingdoms from the «papist darkness and the intolerable slavery of the pope and the clergy» and given his «holy and pure Gospel free passage and complete access here in these kingdoms.» God, the text explained, had moved Christian III's heart to summon the estates to a general assembly, which had abolished the power of the Catholic clergy and decided to introduce the pure light of the Gospel

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<sup>814</sup> See Bradshaw 1996: 81; Sharpe 2009: 240; Claydon 1996: 38.

<sup>815</sup> Claydon 1996: 39.

to the kingdoms. Since God had not only shown this great mercy, but had also ensured that the Gospel had remained accessible for everyone in the kingdoms for 200 years, it was the duty of all subjects to appreciate this divine benevolence and the priceless wealth of the pure Gospel in such a way that they learned to «wander worthily in its light and to apply it in such a way that God shall not be driven by our evil and ignorance to remove the candelabrum he has so far placed among us.» Furthermore, the subjects should consider it a further sign of God's benevolence that he had let his anointed, «our merciful father of the kingdom», receive the idea to commemorate this important and blessed change with a day of jubilee and thanksgiving to mark the bicentenary of the official introduction of the Evangelical faith to these Nordic kingdoms. The text went on to explain what was going to take place on the three days of the jubilee. Finally, it exhorted the subjects to prepare for the jubilee with penitent hearts and true devotion in order to praise God in the right manner.<sup>816</sup>

These three texts, then, constituted the official framework of the commemoration. The documents give an impression of how the king and his advisors wanted to portray the Danish Reformation, its causes, consequences and historical and religious significance, to the subjects. Although the texts differ in many ways, they nonetheless share some essential components. First, they all sharply dichotomise Danish history before and after the Reformation. The attack on Catholicism and the secular power of pope and bishops had been a fundamental part of Lutheran polemics ever since Luther's break with Rome, and had only intensified in the confessional struggles of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. As we saw in chapter 2, the Lutheran liberation from «the Egyptian darkness and spiritual Babylon» had been celebrated as a major historical triumph in Denmark and the rest of Protestant Europe in the first Reformation centenary in 1617. The three texts followed this tradition closely: the Catholic Middle Ages was described as a period of total darkness and depravity, when the Word of God was kept from the people and the Catholic clergy interfered in the national affairs of Denmark-Norway. The bishops' abuse of power had led to a bloody civil war. As the rescue out of this dark and dreary state of affairs, the Reformation truly appeared to be a gift from God.

The role of divine Providence in bringing about the Reformation was the second important component in the official narrative. God had chosen to save the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway from this spiritual slavery, and he had continued to facilitate and protect the true faith in the following two hundred years. The providentialist idea that God had intervened in human affairs to save the kingdoms implied, although it was not stated explicitly in this case, that Denmark shared the

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<sup>816</sup> DRA. DK. D21-72: no.327-328 («Tillysning»).

special status of Israel in the Old Testament of being God's chosen people. This exceptionalism is expressed in the very first line of Hojer's text: «Never has the good God shown any kingdom or people larger favours at one and the same time, than he showed our ancestors and our dear fatherland for exactly two hundred years ago».<sup>817</sup>

The third component in the texts was the centrality of the king as the main protagonist, and the special relationship between the monarch and the Lord. Christian III, together with Martin Luther, was described as an instrument awakened by God to execute his divine plan. The king's selection of a bible verse that described Josiah's destruction of idolatry in Israel, a biblical example of a king doing the work of the Lord, was an open invitation to ministers to expound on this point. The theocratic conception of the king's special role as God's anointed and vicar on earth was an important tenet in Danish Lutheran political thought, repeatedly expressed in state rituals, sermons and works of political theory, and had only been strengthened with the introduction of absolutism.<sup>818</sup> The historical narrative embodied in the three texts was, in other words, based on a set of interlinking ideas that were highly familiar to all subjects of the Oldenburg monarchy.

A noteworthy characteristic of the texts is the absence of a language of reform oriented towards the future. Hojer's text focuses solely on the past, and its only purpose seems to be to inform the readers and listeners of the great gifts God has shown the kingdoms, in order to make people aware of why they should be thankful for. The same can be said of the two other texts, written by Worm. They express a traditional Lutheran interpretation of the causes and consequences of the Danish Reformation, and equally traditional critiques of the papacy. They do not, however, express any notions of an «unfinished» Reformation or suggest that the events of 1536 should inspire to further religious renewal, a second Reformation, either on a personal or collective level. In short: even though the king himself and many of the political advisors and clergy he surrounded himself with, such as Hojer, von Holstein and the court preachers von Blühme and Pontoppidan, were personally influenced by Pietism, and even though the jubilee took place in a period of intense church reform activity, the writings that constituted the official interpretation of the Reformation and justification of the jubilee did not explicitly present the jubilee as an opportunity to revitalize or renew the Danish church. The jubilee was cast as a collective thanksgiving to God for his protection, and the underlying intention seems, on the surface at least, to have been to instil gratitude among the

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<sup>817</sup> «Aldrig har den gode GUD beviist noget Rige eller Folk større Velgierninger paa een Gang, end vore Forfædre og dette vort kiere Fæderneland, just for to hundrede Aar, efter den himmelske Faders urandsagelige Raad og Barmhertighed er vederfaret» [Hojer] 1736: a2r.

<sup>818</sup> Hermansen 2005: 188 ff.; Bregnsbo 1997a: 204-216; Rian 2014a.

subjects for God's great mercy. As we shall see further on, the idea of further reform was indeed introduced on the local level as a significant component in many jubilee sermons, but nothing in the official texts, or the planning process that preceded their creation, implies that this was the stated intention of the government.

### Commemorative medals

Around the same time the king and his advisors had prepared the programme of church services on the main day of the jubilee, they also started making arrangements for the striking of jubilee medals. Count von Holstein had suggested in his proposal on 29 June 1736 that «some medals» could be «thrown out among the public, as it was done in the year 1717».<sup>819</sup> At some point it was decided that three medals would be struck.<sup>820</sup> During the jubilee, two large medals in silver and gold were given to court officials and other dignitaries, while a smaller medal in silver was thrown out to a large crowd of commoners in Copenhagen.<sup>821</sup> The task of striking the medals was given to the German engraver Georg Wilhelm Wahl, who engraved a total of five stamps for the three medals.<sup>822</sup> The two larger medals shared the same depiction of Christian VI on their obverse. On the reverse of one medal was a representation of the Danish-Norwegian church freed from the slavery of Catholicism, bearing the inscription «DE DOMO SERVIENTIVM LIBERAVI TE–ECCLES. DAN. ET. NOR. IVBILAVM-MDCCXXXVI».<sup>823</sup> The church was depicted as a woman standing in a mist or a cloud of smoke, with her gaze directed towards a beam of light coming down from heaven. In the background the Roman church was represented by the St. Peter's basilica, while in the foreground a pile of objects symbolizing the Roman church, a papal mitre and staff, a letter of indulgence and so on, lay discarded on the ground. The reverse of the other large medal bore the Latin inscription «MEMORIAE SACROR EMENDATOR PER PISSIM REGEM CHRISTIANVM III AN MDXXXVI IVBIL INDICT A CHRISTIANO VI AN MDCCXXXVI A.D. XXX OCTOB».<sup>824</sup> The smaller medal bore a Danish inscription in verse that expressed thanks to the heavens for two

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<sup>819</sup> «Skulde deris K.M. allernaadigst behage, at lade udkaste iblant Folket nogle Medailler, ligesom det skeede A. 1717 saa kunde det best lade sig gjøre, naar K.Mayt. fra Universitetet var kommen Hiem igien.» Point 29 in von Holstein, «Hvorledis Jubel Festen d. 30 Oct: A. 1736 kunde celebreris», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>820</sup> I have not succeeded in finding the actual orders for this in the archives.

<sup>821</sup> *Extraordinaire Relationer for October Maaned 1736*: 80; *Dänische Bibliothec 1738*: 286, Galster 1931: 13, Galster 1936: 228.

<sup>822</sup> Galster 1936: 228.

<sup>823</sup> «I have freed you from the house of servitude. The jubilee of the Danish and Norwegian Church 1736».

<sup>824</sup> «In memory of the improvement of worship by the pious king Christian 3. in the year 1536. Jubilee declared by Christian 6. 1736 AD 30 October». Galster 1936: 447.

hundred years of light, prosperity and peace in Denmark «For Livs og Flor og Fred i tuende hundred Aar vor Sions Tak og Fryd til høyen Himmel gaar Anno MDCCXXXVI d XXX Octobr.»<sup>825</sup> The imagery and inscriptions on three medals conveyed the message that Christian VI wanted to thank God and to commemorate his royal ancestor Christian III and the liberation of the Danish Church from Catholicism. The jubilee medals thus carried a dual message: they commemorated Christian III and explained the origins of the current, glorious state of the Danish-Norwegian church, and they contributed to the future immortalization of Christian VI. The message was directed not only to the present, but also to posterity.

A domestic audience could read a description of these medals, albeit without images, in the account of the jubilee in the October edition of the Copenhagen newspaper *Extraordinaire Relationer*.<sup>826</sup> A few years later they were described and their images reproduced in the German-language periodical *Dänische Bibliothec*, edited by Jacob Langebek and Ludvig Harboe.<sup>827</sup> And, finally, in 1744 they were reproduced in the German periodical *Samlung merkwürdiger Medaillen*, edited by Johann Hieronymus Lochner, where they reached an even larger European audience of numismatics, collectors and connoisseurs.<sup>828</sup> Although the sources do not reveal international publicity and attention to be a stated objective on the part of the Danish government, Lochner's article on the «vortrefflicher Medaillon» and its background shows that the commemorative medals were of interest to a larger European audience, and that they did in fact garner some attention abroad.

### Quiet devotion or worldly ceremony? The celebration of the bicentenary in 1736

Attention has so far been directed primarily towards those sources that tell us something about how the jubilee was planned, as well as what the king and his government wanted to communicate to a domestic audience. The next aspect of the jubilee to consider are the parts of the event that took place outside of the churches. As we saw in the previous chapter, elaborate ceremonies and splendour was an important part of the jubilee in 1717. An interesting characteristic of the jubilee in 1736 is, in fact, the almost complete absence of such features. None of the reports from the event tell us anything of processions, music, illuminations, and so on. And, in contrast to later jubilees,

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<sup>825</sup> «FOR LIVS OG FLOR OG FRED I TVENDE HVNDRED AAR VOR SIONS TAK OG FRYD TIL HÖIEN HIMMEL GAAR. AN. MDCCXXXVI. D. XXX. OCT.» Galster 1936: 229.

<sup>826</sup> *Extraordinaire Relationer for October Maaned* 1736: 80.

<sup>827</sup> *Dänische Bibliothec* 1738: 286.

<sup>828</sup> Lochner 1744: 121-128.

there are no reports of festivities in the provincial towns. The first question to address is whether this is due to lack of sources or whether, in fact, the Reformation bicentenary was intended to be only a church event. If the latter is the case, the second question is to address is what the lack of splendour and spectacle signifies.

Documentary evidence suggests that the general absence of references to spectacle and splendour in the jubilee is not due to a lack of sources but that it was, in fact, a deliberate choice on the part of the government. An early indication is found in the list of suggestions written by von Holstein during the planning phase. In point 18, von Holstein discussed the role of worldly splendour in such events: «Even though no worldly splendour is necessary on such solemn occasions, good order is needed, both with regards to the crowd, as well as to the strangers present and the many reports that are sent to foreign countries.<sup>829</sup> I have previously quoted this passage to point out von Holstein's concern with how the jubilee would be perceived by a foreign public. Here, we shall rather focus on the first part of the sentence. Von Holstein's opinion that worldly splendour was not necessary seems to be his own opinion on the proper way to celebrate a jubilee. The written reports from the jubilee in 1717 were full of references to splendour: the splendidly adorned clothes worn by nobles and other high-ranking participants, the costly draperies on the façade of the church, the gilded wagons, the servants in new and expensive livery and the king's balcony decorated with red velvet and golden fringes. The trilingual description from 1717 claimed that the king, in order to demonstrate his «burning zealousness for the true religion» «had spared nothing, neither his own person nor any work or cost».<sup>830</sup> The few private eyewitness reports we have from this occasion refer to its great splendour and magnificence.<sup>831</sup> For some reason, the king's chief minister did not find it necessary to repeat these elements in 1736. Although there was a procession to the church in this jubilee as well, it seems that considerably less expense and effort was invested in making it an ostentatious display of magnificence. The ceremonial also involved much less planning and coordination. In 1717, the Master of Ceremonies Vincents Lerche had been involved in planning the formal aspects of the celebrations in Copenhagen. In 1736, however, he was kept completely out of the preparations. As late as 13 August, long after most of the plans had been made, Count von

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<sup>829</sup> «Thi omendskiönt ingen verdslig Pragt til deslige Höytider udkrevis, saa behöves dog en god Orden, baade i Henseende til Mengden af Folk, som for de tilstedeværende Fremmede, og de mangfoldige udenlands gaende Relationer.» Von Holstein, «Hvorledes Jubelfesten d: 30. Oct. A. 1736 kunde celebreres», *Reformationsjubilæet 1736. Udkaast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>830</sup> [...]Vores Allernaadigste Konge/fremb for alle de Fyrster/der holde Sig til den Augsburgiske Confession, ved denne Leilighed haver viist ald Verden sin for den sande Religion havende brendende Niedkierhed og til den Ende icke har sparet/hvercken sin egen Høye Person/eller nogen Moye og Bekostning». *Beskrivning over de SOLENNITETER 1717*: 52.

<sup>831</sup> Pontoppidan 1874: 20, Clausen & Rist 1915: 20.

Holstein sent Lerche a copy of the king's instructions to the rector and professors at the university, and to bishop Worm. Here, the king stated explicitly that «we [...] do not want this jubilee to be celebrated with any splendour or worldly ceremonies, but only with sermons and orations that pertain to church services.»<sup>832</sup>

Reports on the jubilee in domestic and foreign periodicals specifically mention the lack of worldly ceremony as a noteworthy characteristic of the bicentenary. The Leipzig journal *Die Neue Europäische Fama* wrote of the jubilee that «alles nur hauptsächlich auf die Andacht und Erbauung eingerichtet worden, ohne weiter einige Solennitäten und Ceremonien vorzunehmen, als sonst an hohen Fest-Tagen gebräuchlich sind.»<sup>833</sup> The Regensburg journal *Kurz-gefaßter Historischer Nachrichten zum Behuf der Neuern Europäischen Begebenheiten* noted that the jubilee, «auf das feyerlichste, jedoch nur mit Andachten, gefeyert worden.»<sup>834</sup> *Acta Historico-Ecclesiastica*, a journal dedicated to European church affairs, noted that the jubilee was celebrated with «Gottesdienst, Andacht, Lob, Dank und Gebeth», and claimed that «[a]ller Pracht und Eitelkeit wurden sorgfältig vermieden.»<sup>835</sup> In 1744, the journal *Samlung Merkwürdiger Medaillens* described the jubilee medals and gave a six-page long description of the Danish Reformation in 1536, but it had little to say about the jubilee itself: «Die deßwegen in gegenwärtigen Seculo angestellte Jubelfeyer erfordert um so viel weniger Platz, weil sie zwar mit großer Andacht, doch keinen sonderlichen äuserlichen Solennitäten, begannen worden.»<sup>836</sup> In the Danish journal *Dänische Bibliothec*, the historian Jakob Langebek wrote that the jubilee «in allen Stücken wie einer von denen 3. jährlichen Fest-Tagen ohne vielen ausserordentlichen weltlichen Ceremonien in Andacht und in der Stille gefeyret ward.»<sup>837</sup> The wording in these accounts imply that the absence of worldly and «outer» («äuserlichen») splendour was considered to be something worthy of note, a characteristic that distinguished it from comparable events («als sonst an hohen Fest-Tagen gebräuchlich sind»). The jubilee was perceived as a solemn and quiet occasion marked by devotion («Andacht») and religious edification («Erbauung»).

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<sup>832</sup> «[...] men vi derhos ikke ville, at denne Jubel Fest skal celebreres med nogen Pragt eller Verdslige Ceremonier, men alleene, med Prædikener og Orationer, som høre til Guds Tienister;» *Collectaena om Jubelfæsterne 1717 og 1736* (Thott 813 folio).

<sup>833</sup> *Die Neue Europäische Fama welche den gegenwärtigen Zustand der vornehmsten Höfe entdeckt. Der 13- Theil* 1736: 749.

<sup>834</sup> *Kurz-gefaßter Historischer Nachrichten* 1736: 929.

<sup>835</sup> *Acta Historico-Ecclesiastica* 1737: 386-387

<sup>836</sup> The account of the jubilee in this journal was based on the report in *Die Neue Europäische Fama*. See Lochner 1744: 128.

<sup>837</sup> [Langebek] 1738: 281; In a handwritten manuscript in Danish that has been attributed to Langebek, the bicentenary is described in similar words: [Jubelfesten] blev med Guds Tieniste i alle Maader som een af de 3 aarlige store Høytider, uden nogen usædvanlig Pomp og Ceremonier, i Guds Frygt og Stilhed helligholden.» *Den nordiske Zions evangeliske Jubel-Fryd over sin Frelse af Babylon* (Additamenta 165 kvart).

An explanation for the general absence of worldly splendour and festivity and the emphasis on solemn devotion, should be sought on several levels. One factor is be the style of Christian's court and the personality of the king himself. There is an established tradition in Danish historiography of describing the reign of Christian VI as the nadir of court festivity and Christian himself as the king with the least popular appeal among the Danish absolute monarchs. Historians have often summarized his style of government by referring to the chain that encircled Christiansborg castle and kept the populace at a physical and symbolical distance.<sup>838</sup> Christian's reign was generally characterized by a relative shortage of festivities and public events in which the king could present himself to his subjects, compared with both his predecessors and successors.<sup>839</sup> Life at court was so quiet and isolated that contemporary observers compared it with a monastery, and the king and the queen apparently spent much of their time in private prayer and attending sermons.<sup>840</sup> The general lack of festivity in the reign seems partly to have a religious explanation. The king did not approve of entertainments such as dancing and card-playing on moral grounds, and for the same reason the theatres in Copenhagen were closed during Christian's reign. In light of the peculiarities of court life in this period, it could therefore be that the solemn character of the 1736 jubilee was a reflection of Christian's personality and lack of interest in, or even capacity for, festivity and spectacle.

The devotional and relatively subdued character of the Danish jubilee in 1736 may also be discussed in the wider context of the historical development of the Protestant jubilee tradition, and particularly the influence of Pietism. As we have seen, the Reformation jubilee in 1717 was the first major jubilee in Protestant Europe for a hundred years. It had not yet become established as a tradition in the Protestant churches, and was consequently subject to debate and criticism. Already when the Protestants celebrated their first Reformation jubilee in 1617, they had encountered harsh accusations from Catholic polemicists who claimed that the jubilees were novel human inventions, and that the Protestants had merely aped the Catholic jubilee year.<sup>841</sup> More or less the same accusations were repeated a hundred years later, when the Lutherans celebrated the bicentenary of the Reformation.<sup>842</sup>

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<sup>838</sup> The earliest reference I have found to these chains is Suhm 1794: 17; See also Holm 1894: 743; Bruun 1901: 26; Bech 1965: 177; Lyngby 2010: 136.

<sup>839</sup> Holm 1894: 747; Krogh 1997: 65.

<sup>840</sup> Pedersen 1951: 171; Holm 1894: 747-748.

<sup>841</sup> Zika 2003: 206; Brendecke 2005: 78.

<sup>842</sup> Schönstadt 1982: 65-68; Cordes 2006: 39.



In 1717, however, criticism also came from within the Protestant camp. Harm Cordes mentions examples of prominent Protestant academics and clergymen in 1717 that sounded a note of caution against making the jubilee a worldly spectacle. One notable critic was Johann Peter Ludewig, Professor of Law and incumbent prorector at the Friedrichs-Universität in Halle. Shortly before the in 1717, Ludewig published a text (*Dica Iubileorum*) in which he systematically attacked the jubilee year as it was practiced in the Roman Catholic Church, claiming that Pope Bonifacius VIII had invented them as a way to fill the papal coffers. The church had existed for 1300 years without any jubilee years, he argued, and they could neither be justified with reference to the Jewish jubilees in the Old Testament nor the heathen *Ludi Seculares* of ancient Rome. Ludewig then went on to discuss the Protestant jubilees, claiming that the current situation in the Protestant world did not actually allow any celebration. He did not claim that Protestants should not celebrate jubilees, but rather argued that they should be celebrated in a dignified and theologically acceptable manner. He stressed, among other things, that the jubilees should only honour God, not Luther, and that they should be celebrated «nicht mit äußeren Zeichen, sondern in der inneren Bereitschaft für den Empfang des Reichs Gottes.»<sup>843</sup>

Ludewig's call for a reduction of outer pomp and splendour and his emphasis on the spiritual, inner dimension of the jubilee was echoed by some of his contemporaries, notably the leading Halle theologians August Hermann Francke and Joachim Lange. In the preface to a jubilee text aimed at students, Lange expressed a wish that the approaching jubilee would be celebrated in a dignified manner, that is, «mehr mit innerlicher und realer Danckbarkeit/so sich in einem dem Evangelio gemässen Leben erweist/als mit äusserlichen Solennität. Denn auf diese kömmt es eigentlich nicht an.»<sup>844</sup> Francke argued in one of his jubilee sermons that the «äusserlichen Feyer» of the jubilee had little purpose, «wenn wir nicht zu ihm selbst kommen, und von ihm Segen, Leben, Licht und Kraft erbitten.»<sup>845</sup> Ludewig's view was mostly met with opposition, however, particularly by Wittenberg theologians such as Martin Chladenius and Joachim Coler.<sup>846</sup> Coler claimed that Ludewig had done more harm to the Protestant cause with his text than many Catholics, and went so far as to ask whether deserved to be considered a member of the Lutheran church.<sup>847</sup> Although all

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<sup>843</sup> Cordes 2006: 42, 125. See also Loofs 1917: 45-48; Schönstadt 1982: 69.

<sup>844</sup> Lange 1717. See also Cordes 2006: 43.

<sup>845</sup> Francke 1724: 26. See also Cordes 2006: 42.

<sup>846</sup> For responses to Ludewig's argument, see Cordes 2006: 44-47; The Danish minister Gerhard Treschow later criticised Ludewig's text in the preface to his *Danske Jubel-Lærvæ* (1753), and also referred to Chladenius' and Coler's defense of the Lutheran jubilee tradition. Treschow 1753: [xiv].

<sup>847</sup> Cordes 2006: 45.

Lutheran territories did agree that a jubilee should take place in 1717, writes Harm Cordes, the celebrations ended up taking quite different forms: «An manchen Orten eher mit großem Pomp und aufwendigen Feiern, an anderen Orten auf eher stille und beschaulige Weise [...]».<sup>848</sup> Cordes' study shows that the resistance to outer splendour and the emphasis on the inner dimension of the celebration was particularly prominent among academics and clergy from Halle, the only German university in the early eighteenth century in which Pietism had a dominant position in the theological faculty. It seems that the jubilee was indeed rather sparsely celebrated in Halle, a fact that has been attributed to the publication of Ludewig's text.<sup>849</sup>

There is therefore a case to be made, based on Cordes' findings, that German Pietists' view of jubilees was marked by a critical attitude towards worldly celebration. This might also explain why such elements were conspicuously absent from the bicentenary in Denmark-Norway in 1736, where the personal religiosity of the king and most of his advisors was strongly influenced by Pietism.<sup>850</sup> Since the sources that tell us something of the planning process are mostly silent on these matters, apart from von Holstein's brief remarks, it is impossible to say for certain what motivated the relatively subdued celebration in Denmark-Norway in 1736. A qualified guess would be that it was a result both of the solemn topic that was being commemorated, of Christian's general style of rule, and of his own and his advisors' personal religious attitudes. In any case, it seems that the jubilee received a positive reception in printed media in the Holy Roman Empire. Nowhere is the lack of worldly splendour criticised as a deficiency, although all commentators specifically mention it in their reports. On the contrary, the simple and austere style of the jubilee was portrayed as a sign of genuine devotion.

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<sup>848</sup> Cordes 2006: 47.

<sup>849</sup> Cordes 2006: 125, 127.

<sup>850</sup> The main arguments in the debate that was sparked by Ludewig's text was also discussed in the German periodical *Die Europäische Fama* (1718), right after its description of the bicentennial celebrations in Copenhagen. On the one hand, the text stated, critics saw the jubilee as a unnecessary papal invention. One should not remember the purification of the religion every hundred years, but rather every year, and there was in any case more to bewail than to rejoice for in this regard. The supporters of the jubilee, on the other hand, argued that inner devotion was closely connected to external worship and that the latter was pleasing to the Lord if it had the right purpose. Most people, the text stated, were cold in their worship and needed encouragement from «äuserliche Anstalten». *Die Europäische FAMA, Welche den gegenwärtigen Zustand der vornehmsten Höfe entdeckt. Der 207 Theil.* 1718: 208-210.

## The history of the Danish Reformation in jubilee sermons

We have seen how the Danish Reformation was presented in the printed materials produced by members of the central government some months before the jubilee. As has been pointed out, these texts were important guidelines for how the clergymen of Denmark-Norway should frame the Reformation as an historical event in their sermons. This does not mean, however, that all the sermons simply reproduced the officially sanctioned version authored by Hojer and bishop Worm. In this section, I shall argue that the main emphasis in some of the sermons actually lies elsewhere than in the official version. The most significant difference is a much stronger focus on the need for further reformation, within the individual Christian and within the church as a whole. Preachers who followed this line of argument, which was influenced by Pietism, used the jubilee as an opportunity to exhort their congregation to true penitence and inner conversion. In a few sermons, moreover, this impulse was even more pronounced. In these cases, I shall argue, the Reformation as an historical event and the purpose of the commemoration itself are reinterpreted from what was originally intended by the government, and the message of thanksgiving and jubilation for the historical Reformation is replaced by an urgent call for personal reformation in the present.

Before moving on to the analysis some words must be said about the sources. Compared to the later jubilees in 1749 and 1760, far fewer sermons were printed and published in 1736. In fact, I have discovered only one printed sermon, written by the bishop in Trondheim, Eiler Hagerup. However, a collection of forty-two handwritten sermons has survived in the Oslo Regional State Archive.<sup>851</sup> Scholars have long been aware of the collection, but the sermons had not been subject to a thorough analysis before Øystein Idsø Viken used many of the sermons in his analysis of the political functions of preaching in Norway in the eighteenth century.<sup>852</sup>

As previously mentioned, the sermons were all written by clergymen in the Norwegian diocese of Akershus, and were collected and bound together by the Akershus bishop Peder Hersleb. In his history of Norwegian preaching, Olav Hagesæther points out that Hersleb's collection is particularly valuable and interesting because it offers «a cross section of the preaching in these years,

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<sup>851</sup> SAO/A-10378/F/Fa/L0004.

<sup>852</sup> The collection is briefly mentioned in Lindhardt 1939: 298; Rasmussen 2005: 166; Rian 2013: 71. In his book on the history of the sermon in Norway, Olav Hagesæther provides a description of the collection, as well as an analysis of a few of the sermons. Hagesæther 1973: 196. See Viken 2014.

at least in these parts of the country.»<sup>853</sup> The size of the collection, as well as the fact that it has apparently not been compiled according to any criteria of selection, does indeed seem to make it a fairly representative sample of sermons, from which one could draw inferences about how clergymen in other parts of the kingdom might have presented the Reformation in their sermons. On the other hand, the influence of Pietism seems to have been particularly strong in Hersleb's diocese in these years.<sup>854</sup> The bishop himself was what may be characterized as a moderate Pietist and introduced many reforms in his diocese that aimed at religious reform.<sup>855</sup> Consequently, it is possible that Pietist sentiments are more pronounced in this collection of sermons than what may have been the case in many other dioceses.

### The Danish Josiah

How did Hersleb's subordinates present the Danish Reformation to their congregations?<sup>856</sup> Not surprisingly, analogies between the biblical king Josiah and the Danish monarch Christian III is an omnipresent motive in the sermons. This was, as previously pointed out, a direct consequence of the Bible verse the king had selected for the morning service, 2 Chron. 34, 33-34. The ministers expounded the story of Josiah and applied it to the history of the Danish Reformation. Cort Ramshart, minister of Bragernes and Strømsø parishes in Drammen, explained this exegetical method to his parish. In order to show, wrote Ramshart,

what connection and similarity there is between [the Danish Reformation] and the Church in the Old Testament and in the latest times of the New Testament, it has pleased His Royal Majesty to choose our text, taken from 2 Chron. 34 v.33-34 (...). We shall proceed in the following manner, we shall A go through the words as they were written in those times, and B apply them to our and our forefathers' times; in both places there is a Reformation; in the text for the Jewish Church in those times, in the application for the Christian Church remembered in our times.<sup>857</sup>

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<sup>853</sup> Hagesæther 1973: 196.

<sup>854</sup> Supphellen 2012: 34-36.

<sup>855</sup> Ingun Montgomery describes Hersleb as «[d]er bedeutendste Vertreter des kirchlichen Pietismus[...]» Montgomery 1995b: 481.

<sup>856</sup> None of the sermons are originally paginated, so the page numbers given in the references are my own. I have counted the first page of every sermon as page one, whether or not it has a front page, table of contents etc.

<sup>857</sup> «Og for at vise, hvad Sammenhæng og Lighed det har havt med Kirken i det Gamle Testamentes og i det nye Testamentes sidste Tider, saa har det behaget Hans Kongelige Majestæt dertil at udvælge vor oplæste Text, taget af 2 Cronik: 34 v.33.34. saaledes lydende [...] Textens Ord vi saaledes vil forhandle, at vi A vil giennemgaa Ordene, som de paa de Tider ere skrevne, og B applicere dem paa vores og vores Forfædres Tider; Paa begge Steder er her en Reformation; i Texten for den Jødiske Kirke paa de Tiider, i Applicationen for den Christne Kirke Ihukommet i vore Tider.» Cort Ramshart, *Prædiken paa Jubel=Fasten den 30<sup>de</sup> Octobr: 1736 holden af C. Ramshart, uværdige Sogne=Præst for Bragernaes og Strømsøe Meenigheder*, SAO/A-10378/F/Fa/L0004: [8].

Few ministers explained their method as explicitly as Ramshart, but most of them proceeded in essentially the same way. The story of king Josiah contained at least three elements that could be applied to its Danish counterpart. It spoke of a people that had once known the true God and the correct ways of worshipping him, but who had fallen from him and started worshipping false idols. It spoke of a king who had been angered by the heresies of the people and purified his entire kingdom by tearing down idols and burning false priests. Finally, it spoke of the rediscovery of God's Word and the reintroduction of correct worship.

Knud Ramshartz's sermon, held for the parishes of Askim and Hærland, is a typical example of how the comparison could be done in practice. In the beginning of his exegesis, Ramshartz explained what was meant by the word «abominations» in the appointed verse. It referred to the worship of idols, which was widespread in Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah. The Lord's temple was full of idols, and every man had his own idol in his home. When Josiah acceded to the throne, he wished to do what was right in the sight of the Lord and destroyed all the false idols in his kingdom. The same thing had happened in Denmark-Norway with Christian III: «hardly had he acceded to the throne before he, like Josiah, found, to his great consternation, the multiple abominations that existed here in the kingdoms that can easily be compared with those Josiah found in his time.»<sup>858</sup> Ramshartz then compared the respective abominations of Judah and Denmark-Norway. He likened the idol altars in the Lord's temple to the altars to the saints in Catholic churches; he claimed that the worship of graven images in Judah was identical to the worship of images in Catholic churches, and he compared the idolatrous priests of Judah with the Catholic clergy. Soon after his accession to the throne, «our Josiah, the god-fearing king Christian III» decided to exterminate all abominations from his kingdoms. All on the same day, according to Ramshartz, the king had therefore arrested all the bishops, deposed all papist priests, forbidden papist teaching and decreed that only God's pure Word could be taught in the churches.<sup>859</sup> Christian III had not only removed all abominations, however. Like Josiah, he had also introduced «that which is pleasant unto the Lord.» Ramshartz explained how

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<sup>858</sup> «Neppe har hand opstigen paa Dannemarckes og Norges Throne, förend hand, som Josias, jo forefandt, til sin store Gremmelse, de mangfoldige Væderstyggeligheder, her fandtes i Landene, hvilke billigen regnes liige ved de Josias i sin Tid forefandt.» Knud Ramshartz, *In Nomine Jesu! Textus 2 Paral: 34. v. 33,34.* [28]; See also Peder Humble, *Denne Prædiken er blefven holdt udi Brunlang-Næss Præstegjæld paa den Anno 1736 anordnede og indfaldne Jubel og Taksigelses Fæst, nemlig udi Tanum og Berrigs Kirker dend 30de og udi Langestrands Kirke dend 31 October*, [11]; Otho Holmboe, *Den Evangeliske Dags Opgang i dette vores kiære Fædermeland paa d: 30 Octobr Ao 1536*, [31].

<sup>859</sup> This assertion is incorrect. The bishops were arrested in August, well before the meeting of the estates in October, and the priests were allowed to keep their positions after this, as long as they did not. Knud Ramshartz, *In Nomine Jesu! Textus 2 Paral: 34. v. 33,34.*, [30].

Josiah had made the children of Israel serve the Lord by making them swear to perform the correct form of worship that was described in the book of the law that Hilkiah the priest had found in the temple. In the same way, Christian III had introduced the correct form of worship in the form of «the pure Evangelical faith that had been revealed through Luther to be preached in God's churches.» The king had invited German preachers to teach what they had learnt from Martin Luther himself, he had built schools and academies and he had ordained Lutheran bishops and ministers.<sup>860</sup>

Most sermons were similar to Ramshartz' in their scant attention to historical detail in their descriptions of the Reformation. Their accounts of Danish history usually started with a generic description of the Catholic Middle Ages, before describing what took place in Copenhagen in 1536, often via a brief excursion to Luther's posting of the Ninety Five Theses in 1517. Furthermore, the sermon's dramatis personae were generally quite small. In the same way as king Josiah is the unquestionable protagonist of the appointed Bible verse, Christian III appeared in most sermons to have been the solitary instigator of the Reformation. Like the idolatrous priests of Judah, the Catholic clergy were portrayed generically evil, without any extenuating characteristics. The Danish estates were, like the people of Judah in 2 Chronicles, only reacting to the king's initiative by acclaiming and supporting his decision to reform his kingdom. One particularly notable simplification of Danish-Norwegian history in the sermons is the almost universal absence of references to the differences in how the Reformation was introduced in the two kingdoms. Almost no preachers mentioned the fact that it took many months before the Reformation was formally introduced in Norway, after the resistance led by the Catholic archbishop of Nidaros had been put down. Just like in Andreas Hojer's brief history, most sermons made it appear as the Reformation had been effectively introduced in a single stroke in both kingdoms on 30 October 1536.<sup>861</sup>

Like Hojer, too, some preachers also emphasized the exceptionality of the Danish-Norwegian Reformation, which first and foremost was manifest in the peaceful and harmonious manner in which had taken place. Niels Møllerup of Hvaler parish, for example, claimed that the Reformation had taken place «in such a Christian and peaceful way that it hardly has its equal in any other country, since it happened without notable trouble, without bloodshed, without civil war and

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<sup>860</sup> Knud Ramshartz, *In Nomine Jesu! Textus 2 Paral: 34. v. 33,34.*, [34-35]. See also Peder Humble, *Denne Prædiken er blefven holdt udi Brunlaug-Næss Præstegjeld paa den Anno 1736 anordnede og indfaldne Jubel og Taksigelses Fæst, nemlig udi Tanum og Berrigs Kirker dend 30de og udi Langestrands Kirke dend 31 October*, [17].

<sup>861</sup> One of the very few exceptions was Jens Krog, minister of Rollag parish in Buskerud, who wrote that Norway received the pure Gospels and that the papist abominations were exterminated there after «bishop Oluf of Throndeim had escaped to Holland». Jens Krog, *Dend anordnee Jubel-Festis Prædiken 1736 d: 30 Octobr: holden for Rollaugs Meenighed i Ofre Numedal*, [9].

rebellion».<sup>862</sup> These formulations indicate that preachers used Hojer's text as a template and source of information when they prepared their own sermons.<sup>863</sup>

It was not uncommon to claim that Denmark-Norway was actually more blessed than the kingdom of Judah under Josiah. Whereas the Jews had only followed the Lord faithfully for as long as Josiah lived, so this argument went, Denmark-Norway had stayed faithful from the Reformation until the present day. According to Andreas Wejdemann, minister of Skjeberg parish, all kings of Israel except David, Josiah and Ezechiel had sinned since they had abandoned God's Law, and the kingdom of Israel had only been happy when it had been subject to God-fearing kings. Denmark-Norway, on the other hand, had been far happier, since «not one, but 8 kings of the Oldenburg dynasty has enforced the true worship of God and abolished all abominations and false teachings».<sup>864</sup> After comparing the deeds of Josiah and Christian III, Knud Ramshartz made a similar point, when he claimed that God had shown «the Danish Josiah greater mercy than the Jewish Josiah in the past». Josiah had started a Reformation in the Jewish Church, but it had unfortunately ended after his death. Therefore, «the true religion had only lasted in thirty-something years, while the Evangelical Reformation that king Christian started in these Nordic kingdoms continued unchanged not only in his reign, but also in the reign of his successors, so that it has now persevered here in God's Church in 200 years.»<sup>865</sup>

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<sup>862</sup> «[Reformationen] skeede uden syndelig Tumult og Allarm, uden Blods Udgydelse, uden indvortes Krig og Oprør.» Niels Møllerup, *In Fest: Jubil: Die 30 Octobr: 1736*, [18]. See also Lars Pharo, *Enfoldig Forklaring over Jubel Fæstes Texten av 2 Chron: 34. v: 33, 34 holden i Höelands Præstegjelds Kirker den 30 Octobr: 1736*, [23]; Peder Kinck, *Jubel-Festen 1736 d: 30 Octob, [9]*; Cort Ramshart, *Prædiken paa Jubel=Fæsten den 30te Octobr: 1736 holden af C: Ramshart, værdige Sogne=Præst for Bragernas og Strømsøe Meenigheder*, [20]; Henric Wilhelm Riis, *Kong Josiæ Berømmelige Ombue for Guds Kirke i Juda, lignet med Den uforglemmelige Konges Christian den Tredies Høj=priselige Ombue for Guds Kirke i Norden*, [24]; Øystein Idsøe Viken has made the same observation in Viken 2014: 235.

<sup>863</sup> A few preachers mentioned Hojer's text explicitly in their sermons. Jonas Wessel, minister in Vestby parish, wrote that he would not give an elaborate description of the Reformation and only mention a few things, since «the history of these things that shall be read shows comprehensively the evil from which we were saved at that time, and the good that happened to us.» Jonas Wessel, *Prædiken over 2 Chron. XXXIV. 33.34. holden for Westbye Mænigheder paa den Allernaadigst anbefalede Jubelfæst den 30 Octobris 1736 til Erindring om Velgierningerne som GUD for 200 Aar siden beviste disse Riger i det han udfriede deris Indbyggere af det Papistiske Mørke*, [7]; See also Lars Pharo, *Enfoldig Forklaring over Jubel Fæstes Texten av 2 Chron: 34. v: 33, 34 holden i Höelands Præstegjelds Kirker den 30 Octobr: 1736*, [19]; Peder Humble, *Denne Prædiken er bleiven holdt udi Brunlaug-Næss Præstegjeld paa den Anno 1736 anordnede og indfaldne Jubel og Taksigelses Fæst, nemlig udi Tanum og Berrigs Kirker dend 30de og udi Langestrands Kirke dend 31 October*, [10]; Otho Holmboe, *Den Evangeliske Dags Opgang i dette vores kiære Fæderneland paa d: 30 Octobr Ao 1536*, [32].

<sup>864</sup> Andreas Wejdemann, *Jubel Prædiken, som paa den av Hans Konlige Majestæt Kongen Christian den Siette Christeligen anordnede Taksigelses=Jubel=Fest den 30 Oct: 1736 Schjeberg Præstegjelds Menigheder blev forestilled*, [37].

<sup>865</sup> «Saa at den sande Religion varede ikkun i nogle og 30 Aar, men den Evangeliske Reformation, som Kong Christian begyndte paa i disse Nordiske Lande, den varede ved uforandret, ikke alleene i hans Regierings Tiid, men endog i hans Efterkommeres, saa den nu har staaet ved Magt her i Guds Kirke i fulde 200 Aar.» Knud Ramshartz, *In Nomine Jesu! Textus 2 Paral: 34. v. 33,34*, [38]; See also Niels Møllerup, *In Fest: Jubil: Die 30 Octobr: 1736*, [12]; Otho Holmboe, *Den Evangeliske Dags Opgang i dette vores kiære Fæderneland paa d: 30 Octobr Ao 1536*, [39-43].

The clergy's combination of biblical exegesis and historical interpretation was highly selective. For instance, one potential comparison it could have produced, but which it did not, was between Christian's royal ancestors and Josiah's immediate forebears. Josiah's father and grandfather, Amon and Manasseh, were described in the Bible as idolaters who had done «that which was evil in the sight of the Lord» (2 Chron. 33:22). The kings preceding Christian III were never described in such negative terms, although they had lived and reigned before the Reformation. In fact, another biblical analogy was used to defend these kings, at least those who had ruled the kingdoms after Luther's Reformation, and to explain why the Reformation had not occurred during their reigns. Hans Christensen Schmidt, minister of Eidsberg parish, claimed that the subjects of the Danish kings should praise themselves lucky for having kings who shied no burden in promoting peace and true religion in their kingdoms. An example of this, wrote Schmidt, was Frederik I who had not achieved his holy goal, but had had to leave this to his son Christian III. According to Schmidt, Frederik I could be likened to king David, «who could not build the Lord a house as he had planned, although he had made great preparations for this, but had to leave it according to God's will, revealed through Nathan, and rest until his son came to the throne.»<sup>866</sup> This was a reference to 2 Samuel 7, in which king David wishes to build the Lord a temple, whereupon God commands Nathan the prophet to instruct David that he shall leave the building of the temple to his successor.<sup>867</sup> Frantz Vogelius, chaplain in Emmanuel church in Frederikshald, drew the same analogy as Schmidt. According to Vogelius, the first king who had given his subjects «a taste of the core and power in Luther's teachings» was Christian II. Because of the unfortunate fate of this king and the troubles the kingdoms were in at the time, however, the Reformation had not gone further in his reign. God had then awoken two other Christian kings, Frederik I and Christian III, under which the Reformation had been more successful, although more under the latter than the former. These two kings reminded Vogelius of David and Solomon:

The first made preparations for the building of the temple, the other completed it: David did not neglect making good measures to prepare for this deed in his time, found the people willing to make

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<sup>866</sup> «hvorudi den 1ste Frideric kan ansees som Kong David, der ikke efter sit Forsætt maatte bygge Gud et Huus, skjønt hans havde giort store Anstalter dertil, men maatte lade den Gierning efter Guds Ville, som hand gaf tilkiende ved Nathan, og hvile til hans Søn kom til Regjæringen.» Hans Christensen Schmidt, *Bøn For Prædickken paa den Store Jubel=Fæsten holden 1736*, [34].

<sup>867</sup> The same story is told in 1 Chronicles 28-29. Solomon fulfills the task in 1 Kings 5-6 and 2 Chronicles 2-4.



contributions to it, but the troubles and the wars David was involved in did not allow him to reach his goal, the building was only completed in his son Solomon's time.<sup>868</sup>

In the same way as David, Frederik I had not been able to achieve his goal because of «some difficulties» that had stood in the way. It was therefore left to his son to complete the Danish Reformation in October 1536. Schmidt's and Vogelius' analogies neatly illustrate the preachers' skill in finding relevant and convenient biblical examples to apply to Danish history. The historical figure of Christian III could accommodate several biblical parallels at the same time, which emphasized different aspects of his historical significance. He was *both* the earnest and stern reformer who had destroyed all forms of idolatry in his kingdoms, like Josiah, *and* the son who completed the work that his father had begun, like Solomon. The Bible seems here to have fulfilled two important functions in the preachers' work of historical interpretation. On the one hand, it was a key that allowed them to understand God's work in human history and to explain events that otherwise would have seemed contingent and unexplainable. The problem in this particular case was to explain why God, who directed all human affairs, had not allowed the Reformation to occur earlier, even though Frederik I was a Lutheran and had wanted to reform his kingdoms. The example of David and Solomon was an important precedent that seemed to confirm that the postponement of the Reformation was not a failure on Frederik's part, but willed by God. It is, on the other hand, difficult to avoid seeing the political convenience of this analogy. The chronology of the Reformation was not a purely historical question of intellectual interest; it also concerned dynastic honour and was, hence, a political matter. The pre-Reformation kings of the Oldenburg dynasty were the forefathers of the current king in a direct line, so it was therefore not indifferent how these were discussed in public. In no sermon were the Oldenburg kings before Christian III criticized for allegiance to the Catholic Church or a lack of antipathy towards the papacy. Andreas Wejdemann only included the last eight Oldenburg monarchs when he praised the kings for upholding the true form of worship, but still he did not explicitly criticize the three Oldenburg kings whom were not included in this company.<sup>869</sup> Nor did any other

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<sup>868</sup> «[...]dend förste gjorde Beredelse til Templens Bygning, dend anden fuldförde Bygningen: David forsömte icke gode Anstalter til denne Gierning udi sin Tid, fant Folkets Frivillighed til et Sammenskud, hvoraf Tempelen kunde bygges, men dend Uroelighed, de Kriger, David var indviklet Udi, tillod ham ei at komme vidt med sit Forsætt, Bygningen lyckedes först, udi hans Söns Salomons Tiid.» Frantz Vogelius, *Jubel=Prediken holdt til Aftensang udi Emanuels Kirke paa Friderichshald paa Dend anordnede Jubel og Taksigelse=Fæst d:30te Octobr 1736*, [16].

<sup>869</sup> Andreas Wejdemann, *Jubel-Prædiken, som paa den av Hans Konlige Majestet Kongen Christian den Siette Christeligen anordnede Taksigelses=Jubel=Fest den 30 Oct: 1736 Schjeberg Præstegjelds Menigheder blev forestilled.*, [35].

minister.<sup>870</sup> What the David/Solomon-analogy allowed the preachers to do was to extend the myth of the special relationship between God and the Danish monarchs further back in history. Frederik I was not a failed reformer-king, but a Danish David.

Analogies were not only drawn between the biblical kings of Israel and the historical kings of Denmark-Norway, but also between Josiah and the current monarch, Christian VI. Many vicars interpreted the king's recent policies as modern equivalents of Josiah's reforms. The analogy is exemplified by a poem written by Hans Buch, parish minister of the Cathedral church in Roskilde in Denmark. The main title of his poem was «Josiah in Denmark», and in the extended title Buch described Christian III as the «founder of the Reformation in 1536» and Christian VI as «the protector of the Reformation».<sup>871</sup> In the poem itself, Buch described how Christian VI wanted to imitate the example of his forefather Christian III and Josiah. He particularly emphasised the king's attempt to improve the schools in the kingdoms, and the mission in Greenland, Finnmark and in the colonies: Christian VI was like «a Josiah among the Finns, Greelanders and the Indians».<sup>872</sup>

According to the minister Cort Ramshart, God's own church and the true way of worshipping him had spread and increased for the last two hundred years, until it had reached an apex under the current king. The many godly decrees that had been made in his short reign were proof of the monarch's holy eagerness to exterminate all abominations from his kingdoms. Ramshart mentioned the decree that had made confirmation compulsory as a particularly noteworthy example of this. Even though this decree had, claimed Ramshart, seemed strange to most people at first and even «tasted of Anabaptism to many», all God-fearing people now found the confirmation ceremony to be a joyous and comforting sight to behold.<sup>873</sup> After claiming that there was no biblical king before or after Josiah that had been so concerned with doing the Lord's work, the chaplain Ole Mandal turned to Christian VI, «the God-fearing Josiah of our times.» As proof of the king's fear of God and concern for the church, Mandal mentioned, among other things, the Sabbath decree of 1735, the

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<sup>870</sup> Cort Ramshart, for instance, dates the beginning of the Reformation to the reign of Frederick I, but without explicitly criticizing his predecessors. See Cort Ramshart, *Prædiken paa Jubel=Fæsten den 30<sup>te</sup> Octobr: 1736 holden af C. Ramshart, værdige Sogne=Præst for Bragerne og Strømsøe Meenigheder*, [20].

<sup>871</sup> Buch 1736.

<sup>872</sup> «Saa skal da Skolerne i Riget ikke mindre/ Vor KONNINGS Nidkierhed for Ungdommen erindre;/ Som en Josias er endog blant Ffinderne,/ Iblandt Grönlederne, samt Indianerne». Buch 1736: d2r.

<sup>873</sup> Cort Ramshart, *Prædiken paa Jubel=Fæsten den 30<sup>te</sup> Octobr: 1736 holden af C. Ramshart, værdige Sogne=Præst for Bragerne og Strømsøe Meenigheder*, [24].

confirmation decree of 1736, a decree securing a proper livelihood for widows of clergymen, and the propagation of «many godly books.»<sup>874</sup>

As Ramshart's comment about the initial reactions to the confirmation suggests, it had in fact been a contested practice when it was first introduced. Bishop Hersleb had introduced the confirmation locally in his diocese four years previous, and he therefore received the royal initiative with acclaim and gratitude. When the royal decree came in January 1736, bishop Hersleb wrote a pastoral letter in which he urged the ministers to take the task placed upon them by the king seriously, and criticized those who had treated his own initiative with scepticism or laziness. When the bishop was later ordered to write a pastoral letter in defence of confirmation, he referred to a claim put forth by many of his subordinates that common folk thought that a new faith was being introduced.<sup>875</sup> The instances cited above shows that the introduction of mandatory confirmation, and the comprehensive Church reform project of which it was an important part, could be connected rhetorically with both the Danish Reformation in 1536 and king Josiah's Reformation in the Bible. The authority of the past and the authority of Scripture legitimated Christian VI's contemporary attempts at renewal of the church.

### The Reformation of the heart

An element that was prominent in many sermons, but which did not figure strongly in the official documents from the Danish Chancery, was passionate calls for a reform of the sinful individual. Several preachers combined their praises of the glory of the Danish Reformation of 1536 with stern exhortations to their congregations to turn inwards and consider if they had indeed reformed their own hearts and purified them of all abominations. In most of these sermons, Catholicism was portrayed as a closed chapter in the history of the kingdoms, and the problem to address was instead the individual believer's failure to reform his own soul and change the way he led his life accordingly. The preachers' criticised Lutherans who thought that they would be saved if they merely attended church and went through the motions, without «heart, devotion, faith, love and a righteous

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<sup>874</sup> Olao Mandalino, *Explicatio Textus Verborum 2: Paralip: Cap: 34. Vers: 33: et: 34: Solenniter habita justa Serenissimi nostri Regis Christiani 6ti mandatum die 30 Octobris Anno 1736 in Templo Ramnæssensi in Comitatu= Jarelsbergensi*, [12]; See also Niels Møllerup, *In Fest: Jubil: Die 30 Octobr: 1736*, [12]; Otho Holmboe, *Den Evangeliske Dags Opgang i dette vores kiære Faderneland paa d: 30 Octobr Ao 1536*, [20]; Jesper Achton, *Texten Paa Jubelfesten d: 30 Octobr: 1736. 2 Chron: 34. V. 33.34*, [13].

<sup>875</sup> Hersleb 1737; Erik Pontoppidan claims in his memoirs that his congregation asked whether the rumours were true that a new faith was going to be introduced. Pontoppidan 1874: 83.

intention» as one minister put it.<sup>876</sup> Too many people worshipped like Christians and called themselves Lutherans, but lacked true faith and lived a life in sin. The ministers perceived, in other words, a discrepancy between allegiance to the external rituals of Lutheranism and the internal beliefs of the individual member of the congregation. It seems that an essential goal for many vicars was to remove a sense of false comfort from their parishioners by showing them that one could not do as one liked simply because one believed that Christ had died for ones sins. Christianity had to lead to a real change in the way people lived their lives.

Many of the sentiments expressed in these exhortations correspond to central elements in Pietist rhetoric.<sup>877</sup> As previously mentioned, Pietism had, from its genesis in the latter half of the seventeenth century, been formulated as an antidote to perceived inadequacies in the established Lutheran confessional churches. Pietists defined traditional Lutheran orthodoxy as deficient, and legitimated their own views by constructing a dichotomy between a living and active Christianity, on the one hand, and a habitual, external and «empty» Christianity, on the other. A central aspect of Pietism, as it defined itself in opposition to traditional Lutheran orthodoxy, was a criticism of mere external worship combined with a stronger emphasis on the *subjective* religious experience and piety of the *individual*. For Pietists, it was not enough to avoid sin, to follow laws and prescriptions and to participate in the rituals of the Lutheran church, one had to internalize Christianity and let it fundamentally affect and change ones entire outlook and way of life.<sup>878</sup> Pietists conceptualized this change as a conversion and rebirth («Bekehrung und Wiedergeburt»). According to Markus Matthias, the central Pietist thinker Phillip Jakob Spener opposed the traditional Lutheran doctrine of forensic justification, according to which humanity had been justified once and for all in Christ, which he saw as the cause of the delusional belief («Wahnglauben») that sins were forgiven solely through justification by faith.<sup>879</sup> Nor was it enough to simply live a moral and honourable life; true Christianity demanded that a specifically Christian ethic changed the entire life of the believer, creating a deep and heartfelt faith that manifested itself in the practice of piety as the fruits of faith. This change was conceptualized as a rebirth, a spiritual event that qualitatively altered the believer. For Spener, baptism was an important and necessary sacrament that did regenerate the individual,

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<sup>876</sup> Jonas Wessel, *Prædiken over 2 Chron. XXXIV. 33.34. holden for Westbye Mængheder paa den Allernaadigst anbefalede Jubelfæst den 30 Octobris 1736 til Erindring om Velgierningerne som GUD for 200 Aar siden beviste disse Riger i det han udfriede deris Indbyggere af det Papistiske Mørke*, [11].

<sup>877</sup> Øystein Viken has previously pointed out a Pietist influence in many of the sermons in Hersleb's collection. See Viken 2014: 67.

<sup>878</sup> Amundsen 2005b: 246; Lausten 2002: 161.

<sup>879</sup> Matthias 2004: 53.

but it had also to be accompanied by a second rebirth through the Word.<sup>880</sup> He saw this rebirth as the start of «einer neuen, spezifisch christlichen Existenz, konstitutiver Teil des wahren, lebendigen, nämlich tätigen Glaubens.»<sup>881</sup> With August Hermann Francke, the conversion experience became the central element of Pietist religiosity. According to Matthias, Francke differed from Spener in emphasizing that the new Christian existence was inaugurated by a particular conversion or second rebirth. The conversion was a total transformation from a state of sin to a state of mercy, and the only the depth of the conversion experience itself guaranteed its authenticity and divine nature.<sup>882</sup>

The Pietist message of personal conversion and rebirth was particularly prominent in the sermon delivered by Iver Brink, minister at the hospital church in Christiania. In his exordium, Brink expounded a verse from Paul's epistle to the Romans: «The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of the light» (Romans 16:11). According to Brink, an external religious change had to be accompanied by an internal change in the individual believer. It was of no use that the «sourdough» of the old faith had been purged from the churches of the kingdom, if the «sourdough of evil» was still in people's hearts and expressed itself in their lives. This was what the verse from Paul's epistle expressed so clearly. Here, Paul reminded the converted Romans of their previous state of spiritual darkness and of the great mercy God had shown them when he freed them with his spiritual light. He also, however, exhorted the Romans to let the light of the Gospels awake them from sin and create a «holy change in them». With the phrase «works of darkness», Paul referred to all that which is produced from «the darkness of corrupt nature», such as gluttony, drunkenness, fornication, hate and envy. «The armour of the light», on the other hand, were all those things that the «power and mercy of the Holy Spirit produces and prepares in a penitent and believing soul». The point of Paul's exhortation was, according to Brink, to remind the Romans that the «casting off» of darkness and «putting on» of light was a continuous and daily process.<sup>883</sup> In the main part of the sermon, Brink explained the prescribed verse of the day, on Josiah's removal of abominations from Israel. Contrary to most preachers, however, Brink did not draw a parallel between these abominations and the abominations of the medieval papacy. Instead, he urged his congregation, «as spiritual kings that are anointed with the Holy Spirit in baptism», to «reform and change our hearts and thereby purge and exterminate all

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<sup>880</sup> Matthias 2004: 51-52.

<sup>881</sup> Matthias 2004: 52.

<sup>882</sup> Matthias 2004: 59; O. C. Edwards points out that Spener never stressed the conversion experience in his preaching, since he had never experienced it himself. Edwards 2009: 18.

<sup>883</sup> Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [5-10].

abominations, all those idols that we there fall down and worship.»<sup>884</sup> He compared, in other words, the abominations and idol-worship of the Israelites with the sins that were committed every day by ordinary people. Every sinful lust that the congregation might experience in their hearts was a deviation from the Lord and therefore an idolatrous abomination.<sup>885</sup> As an extension of this line of thought, Brink did not only compare Josiah with Christian III like most of the other preachers, but rather put the biblical king forth as an example for all Christians to follow. Just like Josiah had removed all abominations from Israel, all believers should do their utmost to exterminate every single sin from their hearts.<sup>886</sup>

Near the end of his sermon, after praising the present king for his efforts to enlighten and improve the hearts and minds of his subjects, Brink lambasted his congregation for failing to truly appreciate the gifts that God had given the Evangelical Zion. In Denmark-Norway, God's Word was indeed taught purely and the sacraments were officiated according to God's command. But, wrote Brink, «if we look upon the people in this church, on Lutherans and their conduct, and consider them with spiritually enlightened eyes, we discover such a miserable and wretched condition, that one cannot bewail it enough [...]».<sup>887</sup> Brink had many complaints: Parents allowed their children to grow up «like cattle», without caring for their Christian education. Many households did not own a Bible or even a New Testament, even though the price was quite bearable. People spoke like Lutherans, but were papist and Roman-Catholic in their hearts. The Catholics worshipped their saints, but these so-called Lutherans were no better since they had their own idols, such as greed and pride. The Catholics were only concerned with external worship, but this fault was prevalent also among many Lutherans, who thought they were saved just because they prayed, sang and went to Church to take communion. The Catholics believed in justification by good works, but many Lutherans hoped vainly for salvation just because they had done some good deeds. After thus hammering in the similarities between the Catholics and the so-called Lutherans, he addressed the congregation: «From this you can see discern and understand that you in your Lutheranism are not a hair's breadth better than a Catholic in his Catholicism.»<sup>888</sup> Brink warned his listeners that God might remove the light of his Word unless they repented. The exhortation to repent and convert was the primary purpose of his sermon: «See, I can preach nothing else to you, you unchanged and

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<sup>884</sup> Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [15].

<sup>885</sup> Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [16].

<sup>886</sup> Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [17, 25].

<sup>887</sup> Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [28].

<sup>888</sup> «Hvorav du nu kand skjelne og skjønne, at du i din Lutherdom er ikke et Haar bedre end en Catholsk i sin Pavedom.» Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [31].

unconverted sinner, in this solemn jubilee, than conversion, that you should give the converting mercy of God room in your soul and no longer resist the spirit of God.»<sup>889</sup> He continued, in a highly affective language, to urge his listeners to convert. However, there were clearly some members of the congregation who had already been reborn. Brink encouraged these to thank God, both in words and deeds, and to strive to grow and develop continuously as Christians.<sup>890</sup>

This dual address in Brink's sermon, his sharp differentiation between the converted and unconverted in the congregation, is a reflection of the Pietist distinction between true and false Christians, between the visible and invisible church, between the converted and unconverted.<sup>891</sup> Lutheran Orthodoxy defined the true church as a community of believers in which the pure Word of God was taught and the sacraments were properly administered. In this sense, the entire Lutheran church constituted the true church, in contrast to the false churches of confessional enemies. Although sinners and hypocrites were undeniably part of this community, Lutheran Orthodoxy did not try to distinguish between true and false believers. Pietists, on the other hand, introduced a sharper differentiation between the visible and invisible churches. According to Hans Schneider, Phillip Jacob Spener defined the Lutheran church as the only true church, in contrast to other confessions, but he introduced an additional qualification that marked a difference between the members within the visible church. The true, invisible, church was marked by «the practice of piety in a godly lifestyle that shows visible fruits of faith.» Although he saw this invisible church as the actual true church, his reform suggestions were aimed at reforming the visible church, to «diminish the gap between expectation and reality, between believed and experienced church.»<sup>892</sup> August Hermann Francke's strong emphasis on the conversion experience as the inauguration into a state of mercy and as a prerequisite for rebirth made conversion a real mark of distinction that separated those who had experienced it from those who had not. According to O.C. Edwards, Francke's own preaching method «involved informing his congregation of the difference between the saved and unsaved and of the criteria by which they could tell the state that they were in.»<sup>893</sup> Alexander Bitzel points out, moreover, that Pietist preaching was based on the «fundamental theological assumption» that faith was not something one had to continually acquire anew, but rather something that was in

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<sup>889</sup> »See, intet andet kand jeg prædike for dig uforandrede og uomvendte Synder paa denne høytidelige Jubel-Fæst end Omvendelse, at du dog vilde give Guds omvendede Naade Rom udi din Siæl og ikke længere staa Guds Aand imod.» Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [32].

<sup>890</sup> Iver Brink, *Bönnen For Prædiken Paa den første Jubel-Festens Dag d: 30 Octobris*, [33].

<sup>891</sup> For a discussion of this motive in Brink's sermon, see Viken 2014: 69.

<sup>892</sup> Schneider 2010: 24.

<sup>893</sup> Edwards 2009: 19.

the possession of someone who had had a conversion experience. It follows from this that the Pietist preacher addressed two audiences at the same time: the unconverted, who he must try to convert, and the already converted, who he must keep «on the way of sanctification.»<sup>894</sup> Brink's differentiated message is a manifestation of this line of thought. Celebrating a jubilee in memory of the Lutheran Reformation only made sense for those who had reason to celebrate: the converted. The others still had work to do.<sup>895</sup>

Although exhortations to repent and improve manners and lifestyle were a central element in in sermons by Pietist ministers, it was not exclusive to them: calls for moral improvement were not necessarily expressed in the characteristically Pietist terminology of conversion and rebirth. An important element of Lutheran Orthodoxy was the concept of penance («Bot», «Poenitentse»), and the practice of penitential piety («Botsfromhet», «Bußfrömmigkeit»). It had been a dilemma for Lutheran authorities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to explain how it could be that they, although having restored the true church in their territory, were still being plagued by war, disease and catastrophe. In Denmark-Norway, this question became particularly pressing when the kingdoms were racked by disastrous military defeat and the plagues of war during Christian IV's involvement in the Thirty Years War. The answer to this pressing question was to interpret all catastrophes as manifestations of God's punishment against the sins of the people. Even though the church had been purified and God's word was freely available, so this argument went, the people continued to anger God with their sins. The only way to please God and avert his wrath was to do collective penance. The close but fluctuating relationship between the kingdom of Israel and the Lord in the Old Testament provided the biblical template for this interpretation. The need to do penance to avert God's wrath was the rationale behind the recurring so-called prayer days that were held in Denmark-Norway throughout the early modern period.<sup>896</sup>

The same interpretative scheme surfaced in jubilee sermons in 1736: the Reformation had been a great gift from God and had rescued the people from darkness and spiritual slavery. If the people continued to sin, however, God would become angry and remove the light of the Gospels. Niels Dorph, minister of Nicolay church in Copenhagen and staunch defender of Lutheran

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<sup>894</sup> Bitzel 2009: 66.

<sup>895</sup> Ole Tidemand, minister of Larvik and Hedrum parishes used a similar language of conversion and rebirth as Brink, and differentiated the message of his sermon in the same way manner. See Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høje Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Proedicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fasten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestat Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at belligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [84-92].

<sup>896</sup> Lausten 2002: 151-153; Amundsen 2005a: 221-223; Olden-Jørgensen 2006: 95-102; Viken 2014: 57-62.



Orthodoxy, threatened his congregation that such a scenario was likely if they did not do penance.<sup>897</sup> Near the end of his sermon, after describing how the Reformation had improved doctrine («Troens Lærdom») and worship («Guds Dørchelse»), Dorph turned to the topic of morals and manners («Levemaade»). The example of Judah before Josiah's Reformation, he claimed, showed that corrupt religion leads to corrupted morals. Judah and Jerusalem had been full of vice and evil until Josiah and the prophet Jeremiah had reformed them. After Josiah had died, however, the people had returned to their old sins «so that God's wrath had to haunt them and take revenge on such an evil people».<sup>898</sup> The same was true of Denmark-Norway. The religion of the papacy had been an evil religion that could only lead to abominations and sin. The Reformation, however, had removed this and awakened the people to true penitence. Luther had taught that a Christian's entire life had to be penitence, a fight against the desires of the flesh and spiritual evil.<sup>899</sup> Dorph went on to draw a highly idealised picture of the first period after the Reformation, when the lives of Protestants had consisted of unceasing worship, continual study of the Bible, daily prayer and brotherly love. He contrasted this state of bliss in the past with the conditions in the present, when «we» lived in sin, did not read the Bible and were indifferent to the Evangelical religion. He concluded this discussion with a humble prayer to God that he would awaken «us» and make «us» true Evangelical Christians: «Woe to us! Your words threaten us! Your wrath burns over us! Your bow is drawn against us! And we must expect that your foot will soon shake us— Ah please be merciful! and do not punish us in your wrath!».<sup>900</sup>

It has been pointed out that Pietism involved a movement away from the Lutheran Orthodox idea of penitence as a collective phenomenon, which stressed the individual's responsibility towards the religious collective, to a focus on the individual's personal conscience and

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<sup>897</sup> Niels Dorph had been minister in Hedmark in Akershus when he held a sermon for Christian VI on his journey to Norway in 1733. The king evidently liked what he heard and shortly after promoted Dorph to a post as minister in Nicolay Church in Copenhagen, where he was worked at the time of the Reformation jubilee in 1736. We know that Dorph was perceived by his contemporaries as a champion of orthodox Lutheranism, and during his time in Copenhagen he apparently attacked various «new sects» from the pulpit. Olav Hagesæther claims that Dorph was an opponent of «every form of Pietism» and describes him as «a reactionary orthodox of pronounced nature.» When he later replaced Peder Hersleb as bishop of Akershus he repeatedly came into conflict with Pietist subordinates, among them the minister Ole Tidemand. See Gram 1907: 43; Giessing 1779: 506; Hagesæther 1973: 204; Supphellen 2012: 38-45.

<sup>898</sup> «Men siden Josiæ Død, toge de samme Laster Overhaand, saa at Guds Vrede motte hemsøge dem, og hevne sig paa saa ont Folch. Jer.5.24.» Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærværelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736* (GKS 1512 kvart): [28].

<sup>899</sup> Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærværelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736* (GKS 1512 kvart): [29].

<sup>900</sup> «Væ Os! Dine Ord truer os! Din Vrede brænder over os! Din Bue er spendt imod os! Og vi maa vente at Støven af din Fod skal snart rystis over os.— Ah vær os naadig! og straffe os ikke i Din Vrædel!» Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærværelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736*, [34].

responsibility towards God.<sup>901</sup> According to Markus Matthias, the Pietist redefinition of the Christian message, with its stronger emphasis on Christian ethics and the rebirth of the individual, led to a corresponding reorientation in Pietist preaching. First, instead of addressing a religious collective (the parish, village, city or nation), the Pietist message of Christian morality was directed towards the individual believer, who was held responsible as an individual. Secondly, traditional elements of Lutheran preaching, namely cosmic or large-scale events such as comets, storms or wars, lost their meaning as signs of God's wrath. Instead, the experience of God's wrath and mercy was perceived as a moral and emotional experience.<sup>902</sup> Whereas Brink's exhortations were directed towards those individual members of the congregation who were unconverted, Dorph cast his exhortations as a humble prayer to God on behalf of the entire congregation, to avert his wrath from the religious community.

The difference between the two modes of address should not be exaggerated, however. If one wanted to improve the community to please God one had, after all, to start with the individual sinner. There are instances in the jubilee sermons where a strong focus on individual improvement is discursively connected to the threat of God's wrath. Hans Christensen Schmidt, for instance, emphasized the unworthiness of the people in the prayer that preceded his sermon. Even though the light of God's Word was now accessible to everyone, many had still neglected to follow it. It would therefore be completely understandable if God chose to remove his «candlestick» and «let us walk in darkness in the middle of the day». The only thing Schmidt could do was to humbly pray to God that he would continue to show mercy and let the light of his Word keep shining in the kingdoms.<sup>903</sup> In the introduction to his sermon Schmidt went on to claim that a Reformation of every man's life was as necessary as the Reformation in the Jewish Church and in the Danish Church of old.<sup>904</sup> He returned to this motive several times in the course of the sermon, for instance when he spoke of the complete nature of Josiah's Reformation, the fact that the Jewish king had purified his entire kingdom of idolatry. If only one single idol had been left it would have contaminated the land. This, claimed Schmidt, gave cause to reflect on how «our own Reformation should be, which we should make within ourselves, it should be so general that we in our conversion should not allow one single

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<sup>901</sup> Viken 2014: 68-69.

<sup>902</sup> Matthias 2004: 51.

<sup>903</sup> Hans Christensen Schmidt, *Bön For Prædicken paa den Store Jubel=Fasten holden 1736*, [3-5].

<sup>904</sup> Hans Christensen Schmidt, *Bön For Prædicken paa den Store Jubel=Fasten holden 1736*, [26].

sin to stay within us [...]».<sup>905</sup> Near the end of his sermon, he compared the current king with his illustrious forefather Christian III and claimed that the former had made as great an effort as the latter to spread God's Word. There was a need for his care for the Church. The «great Reformation» had indeed already occurred, but «what is the use of this, if there is not a continued Reformation among us.»<sup>906</sup> Schmidt had several complaints: in church, many among the congregation sat and gossiped and talked during baptism and communion and completely forgot to direct their thoughts to their own salvation. Outside the Church, too many drank too much and forgot the Word of God, instead giving Satan the opportunity to «tear the Word from their hearts.» Too few masters and mistresses of the household made a proper effort to remove all «abominations» from their children and servants. Schmidt asked a rhetorical question: «will it save us that we have [the light], but do not follow it?» The answer was clear: «No, it will damn us even more [...]» He concluded with the following exclamation: «O! Let it be your intention to make a serious and sincere Reformation in your heart, to exterminate and remove from yourselves the evil that is in you, so that God shall not remove you from his countenance and take his Word [...] from us».

The calls for personal reform of the individual believer in the sermons quoted here, whether or not they were cast in the Pietist terminology of conversion and rebirth, differed in emphasis and tone from the celebratory and triumphant rhetoric of the official instructions distributed from the Danish Chancery. This does not mean, however, that the two modes of discourse were necessarily irreconcilable. As we have seen from the instructions and Hojer's history, the primary aim of the jubilee was ostensibly to precipitate humble thanksgiving among the listeners by instilling in them a sense of gratitude to God for the blessings he had shown the kingdoms, and gratitude to the Oldenburg kings for their role in the Reformation. The ministers could, however, develop this point into a moralizing rebuke directed to the individual member of the congregation without degrading God's great gifts and the achievements of the monarchs.

The minister of Aker parish Otho Holmboe, for instance, pointed out in his exordium that there was good reason to celebrate the bicentenary of the first day the light of the Gospels started to

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<sup>905</sup> «det kand give os denne Eftertanke, at saadan bør vor Reformation være, som vi bør holde i Os selv, den bør være saa almindelig, at vi i vor Omvendelse ike tilstæde een eneste Synd at blive tilbage hos os (...)» Hans Christensen Schmidt, *Bøn For Prædicken paa den Store Jubel=Fæsten holden 1736*, [53].

<sup>906</sup> «Nu, den store Reformation er da skeed; men hvad vil det nytte, uden der skeer idelig Reformation iblant os.» Hans Christensen Schmidt, *Bøn For Prædicken paa den Store Jubel=Fæsten holden 1736*, [77]; Knud Ramshartz used a similar expression when he spoke of the need to do a Reformation in the «particular Church» («den særdeles Kirke»), meaning the hearts and souls of every member of the congregation, like the kings had done a Reformation in the «general Church» («den almindelige Kirke»). Ramshartz, too, connected the need to improve the individual with a threat that God might remove his mercy from the kingdoms if the subjects did not improve. Knud Ramshartz, *In Nomine Jesu! Textus 2 Paral: 34. v. 33,34.*, [41-43].

spread in the kingdoms, and that this was why the king had followed the example of David and ordered a day of jubilee and thanksgiving in honour of God. The subjects should therefore follow the king's order and celebrate. However, there was no point in celebrating if they did not also exert themselves to live like «true Evangelical Christians». He wanted them to consider that it would not give them any advantage over «heathens, Jews, papists or other delusional sects» on the Day of Judgment that they had had the clear light of the Gospel but had still stayed in the darkness of ignorance. On the contrary, it would only condemn them more. Jubilee-joy («Jubel-glæde») would only be an insult to God if, after the jubilee, the parishioners did not become «such people that most of those among us has not been until this day, and if we do not understand our Christianity differently and better than before [...]».<sup>907</sup>

Yet another minister who interpreted the jubilee as an occasion for the congregation to repent their sins and improve their lives was Andreas Wejdemann. After describing the glories of the Danish Reformation, he asked the rhetorical question of whether there were still any abominations among the people. The answer was yes, although only in life and sociability («Levned og Omgængelse»), not in doctrine or worship («Lærdom og Guds Dørkelse»). Fortunately, the kingdoms had a righteous and earnest Josiah, Christian VI, who sought «with all his power and wealth» to avert all heresy and delusions, propagate the true Evangelical faith and «abolish all evil sin and abominable vices that might exist among us.» According to Wejdemann, the point of the jubilee should be that the people, after being shown God's great mercy towards them, should «not only weep over our great sins and ingratitude towards God, but also show hereafter a true improvement in our entire life.»<sup>908</sup>

These examples show that many ministers interpreted the jubilee, which was originally designed by the government to be a day of jubilation and thanksgiving, as a personal day of reckoning for the individual member of the congregation. Instead of merely encouraging their congregations to give thanks, they pointed out the failure of their listeners to live up to the ideals of the Evangelical faith that had been introduced with the Reformation. It should be mentioned that

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<sup>907</sup> Otho Holmboe, *Den Evangeliske Dags Opgang i dette vores kiære Fæderneland paa d: 30 Octobr Ao 1536*, [2]; The idea that heathens would condemn the Lutherans on Judgment Day was also expressed by Oluf Christian Borch, minister at Akershus castle church. See Oluf Christian Borch, *Prædiket paa den stoere Jubel-Fest d: 30 October 1736 udi Aggershuus Slotskircke*, [9]; Henrik Gerner made the same point, only substituting the heathens with the Catholics. Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fasten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [90-91].

<sup>908</sup> Andreas Wejdemann, *Jubel-Prædiken, som paa den av Hans Konlige Majestet Kongen Christian den Siette Christeligen anordnede Taksigelses=Jubel=Fest den 30 Oct: 1736 Schjeberg Præstegjelds Menigheder blev forestilled.*, [18].

not all ministers chose this perspective. Some jubilee sermons are pure tributes to Christian III and the Danish Reformation.<sup>909</sup>

### The unfinished Reformation and the papacy within: Pietist perceptions of past and present

In many of the sermons quoted so far, the Reformation jubilee was interpreted as an opportunity for the individual listener to scrutinize his own soul, repent his sinfulness and convert. These exhortations were for the most part, however, combined with unconditional praise of the Reformation as an historical event: medieval Catholicism had been an evil perversion of Christianity, the Reformation had been complete, the Danish-Norwegian church had been purified of abominations and the pure Gospels were now freely available to everyone. The Reformation of the church had now only to be accompanied by a Reformation of the heart of the individual believer. In a few of the jubilee sermons from Akershus diocese, however, the critique of contemporary Lutheran religious practice involved a more fundamental questioning of the impact of the Reformation in Denmark-Norway. These sermons tended to blur the very sharp distinction between before and after the Reformation, between darkness and light, between imprisonment and freedom, and thus relativized the triumphant message that was the stated rationale of celebrating the jubilee in the first place. They suggested that the Reformation had not actually been completed in 1536, and that there was still a need to continue and finalize the Reformation of the church that had been started by Martin Luther and Christian III.

Such reformist sentiments were a central component of the Pietist world-view. Inherent in the Pietist conception of faith was the idea that Christianity should lead to a change in both individual and society. We have already seen how some Pietist preachers exhorted their audience to embark on conversion and rebirth, a process that could be conceptualized as an internal or individual «Reformation». The call for reform could also extend, however, to the entire Lutheran church and society at large. According to Carola Nordbäck, the main object of Pietism was to carry out a religious and moral reform of the entire society, and this will to change was often combined with a

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<sup>909</sup> For examples of this approach, see Peder Debes, *Sermo Eucharistico Jubilæus*; Frantz Bache, *I Jesu Navn, Jubel-Prædikken Prædikket i Huurums Kirke d 30te Octobr I Annex-Kirken ved Strømmen d 31 Octobr*; Jacobo Stubæo, *Det Onde udryddet og udsletted og et Gode paabuddet og opretted ved Josiam er [antegnet] i 2 Chron. Cap. 34. vers 33, 34. Og efter Kongelig Allernaadigst Befalning forestillet Krogstad og Schie Meenigheder Anno 1736 Den 30 Octobr. Festo Jubillæo A Jacobo Stubæo*; Jesper Achtton, *Texten Paa Jubelfesten d: 30 Octobr: 1736. 2 Chron: 34. V. 33.34*; Olao Mandalino, *Explicatio Textus Verborum 2: Paralip: Cap: 34. Vers: 33: et: 34: Solenniter habita justa Serenissimi nostri Regis Christiani 6ti mandatum die 30 Octobris Anno 1736 in Templo Ramnassensi in Comitatu= Jarelsbergensi*, [12]; See also Niels Møllerup, *In Fest: Jubil: Die 30 Octobr: 1736*.

«comprehensive and devastating critique of the status quo».<sup>910</sup> In her study of encounters between Lutheran orthodoxy and conservative Pietism in Sweden in the 1720s, Nordbäck claims that the Swedish Pietists' critique of society and church was based on a shared view of history. According to this view, the church had been in a continual state of decay for 1500 years, a state of affairs for which they blamed the clergy who had not practiced what they preached. The earliest period of church history had been a golden age, but after this decay had set in. The Reformation had led to some improvement, but then the negative trend had started again. The time had therefore come for a new Reformation: «It was time to carry out a new Reformation, to finalize Luther's work, and to do it with the organization and social forms of the early Christian church as model.»<sup>911</sup>

The conception of church history as a continual decay after the golden age of the early church was not unique to the Swedish Pietists.<sup>912</sup> It is similar to the historical interpretation in the German radical Pietist Gottfried Arnold's historical work *Unparteiische Kirchen-und Ketzerhistorie* (1699-1700). According to Ulrich Gäbler, Arnold idealised the time of the Apostles, which he saw as a time when Christians lived together in love, peace and humility without any institutions or rigid structures. This golden age was broken when bishops started to assume leadership in the church, Christianity entered into an alliance with the state and dogmas were settled. From this point on, the church was plagued with strife, hatred, rigidity of faith and a preoccupation with external rather than spiritual matters.<sup>913</sup> As Gäbler points out, both medieval church critics and the early reformers shared these elements of Arnold's interpretation of church history. The original aspect of Arnold's history was his conviction that this negative development had continued unabated even after the Reformation. He sympathised with Luther's early work, but after a promising start everything followed its old course: «Auch in Protestantismus herrschte–und herrsche–Theologengezänk, Glaubenszwang, Staatsverherrlichung, Äußerlichkeit. Ebenso wie das Pabsttum sei das Luthertum seinen Anfängen untreu geworden.»<sup>914</sup> Arnold's criticism of contemporary Lutheranism was radical and amounted to a total condemnation– he considered the Lutheran church to be beyond repair and

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<sup>910</sup> «Denne vilja att förändra kombinerades ofta med en omfattande och förödande kritik av det rådande läget.» Nordbäck 2004: 197.

<sup>911</sup> «Det var dags att åter genomföra en reformation, att slutföra Luthers arbete, och att göra det med den tidiga kristna kyrkans organisation som förebild.» Nordbäck 2004: 274.

<sup>912</sup> Nordbäck herself points out that the view of the history of the church as a continual decay after the earliest Christian period was not unique to the Swedish Pietists, and mentions that it bears a strong resemblance to Phillip Jacob Spener's interpretation of history and even echoes Martin Luther's own view of the development of the church before the Reformation. Nordbäck 2004: 274.

<sup>913</sup> Gäbler 2004: 31.

<sup>914</sup> Gäbler 2004: 31; See also Wallmann 1990: 94.

incompatible with his own ideal of what constituted true Christianity: a spiritual and invisible community of reborn believers that were not bound by confessional dogma.<sup>915</sup>

The influential Pietist Phillip Jacob Spener had expressed a more conciliatory criticism of contemporary Lutheranism in his *Pia Desideria* (1675). Although this text was primarily oriented towards a future reform of the church, Spener's reform suggestions were based on and legitimized by an implicit interpretation of the past. Spener, like Arnold, considered the first Christian church to be a relevant model and ideal for contemporary Christianity.<sup>916</sup> In contrast to Arnold, however, he subscribed to the traditional Lutheran perception of the break with Rome as an «Auszug aus Babel», and claimed that the Lutheran church was the true church due to its purity of doctrine.<sup>917</sup> Unlike Arnold, therefore, his criticism was not aimed at a separation from, but rather an improvement of the existing Lutheran church. The problem with the church was a discrepancy between doctrine (Lehre) and practice (Leben).<sup>918</sup>

Spener's criticism of Lutheran practice was based on the traditional Lutheran understanding of society as consisting of three estates. According to Spener, the worldly estate («des weltlichen Standes»), which had been given its authority by God to promote his kingdom, had not properly performed its duties. Instead of protecting and nursing the church, rulers lived sinful lives and used their zealotry for the church as pretence for protecting their own political interests.<sup>919</sup> The clergy («des geistlichen Standes») he accused of not properly understanding and practicing true Christianity. They had forgotten the primary requirement («Grundforderung») of Christians, namely to deny the self. Instead they sought promotion and worldly things. The faith they taught to their congregations was just human conceit, not the true Word of God. They read the letters in the Bible but were not enlightened by the Holy Spirit themselves. Although the Word of God could work even through an unregenerate preacher, the church would be much better off if all ministers were touched by a living faith. Many did not even see the problems in the Lutheran church, but were satisfied as long as it was not threatened by the false religions of its adversaries. Instead of teaching theological candidates to practice their faith («Uebung der Gottseligkeit»), theological university education practiced them in quarrelsome disputations («zanksüchtigen Disputationen»).<sup>920</sup> Finally, Spener criticised the household estate («des Hausstandes»). Most «so called Lutherans» sinned daily without even realizing that they

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<sup>915</sup> Gäbler 2004: 32.

<sup>916</sup> Spener 1841: 54ff.

<sup>917</sup> Gäbler 2004: 31.

<sup>918</sup> Wallmann 1990: 45.

<sup>919</sup> Spener 1841: 11-13.

<sup>920</sup> Spener 1841: 13-30.

were sinners: the sins of drunkenness, litigiousness and egotism were widespread. People had completely forgotten the Christian message of brotherly love, and cared only about themselves. Lutherans had, moreover, the correct knowledge about the doctrine of justification by faith, about the power of preaching God's word, and about the sacraments. However, the community of Lutherans («der grosse Hause, der doch auch evangelisch heißt») had opinions about these things that were contrary to the Lutheran doctrine and confession. They thought, erroneously and contrary to Luther's teachings, that they could live however they wanted and still be saved just because they believed in Christ. They thought that true Christianity consisted in being baptised, hearing God's Word in sermons, receiving absolution and taking communion. They forgot that the baptismal pact required a life-long renewal by faith, that the Word of God had to be taken to heart and change the listener, that prayer, absolution and communion only worked for true believers. As a consequence, the dangerous Catholic doctrinal error of justification by works was allowed to live on in the midst of the Lutheran Church.<sup>921</sup> According to Spener, the Lutheran faith itself had no fault in these errors. It was the forces of evil that had corrupted the Church: «Hieran ist die Lehre unsrer Kirche, welche solchen Einbildungen eifrig widerspricht, nicht Schuld, sondern das ist der Menschen Bosheit under des Teufels List, welcher bei jenen die göttlichen Mittel der Seligkeit; zu Gelegenheit mehrerer Sicherheit und schwererer Verdammniß zu machen suchet.»<sup>922</sup>

Gottfried Arnold's church history and Phillip Jacob Spener's *Pia Desideria* thus represent two distinct Pietist interpretations of church history. They share the same starting point, namely that the Reformation had not led to perfect conditions in the church, but they differed in their conclusions. For Spener, the Lutheran church could be improved, while for Arnold, it was beyond repair.

The idea that the Reformation of 1536 was somehow unfinished or incomplete was a recurring topic in the influential Danish court preacher Erik Pontoppidan's literary production, and constituted an important historical legitimation for his reforming activities. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Pontoppidan published a short text in the jubilee year in which he showed how remnants of Catholicism and heathendom had been allowed to survive in the midst of the Danish church. In this preface to this work, Pontoppidan argued that the Reformation in 1536 had not led to a complete eradication of popular superstitions because of three factors: the reformers had been too preoccupied with teaching the main tenets of the faith, «theological prudence» had

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<sup>921</sup> Spener 1841: 30-44.

<sup>922</sup> Spener 1841: 44.



made them only focus on defeating the worst abuses and left the rest to «be devoured by time» and, finally, there had been a great lack of leaders and teachers in «the start of the Lutheran epoch» and many of the ministers had only recently been papists.<sup>923</sup> In the second volume of his main work of church history, *Annales Ecclesiae Danicae Diplomatici* (1744), Pontoppidan introduced his account of the year 1536 with describing it as marking the end of the papacy in Denmark and the foundation of the external organization of the Lutheran church, but at the same time he claimed that the «old sourdough» had lived on in the hearts and minds of many people. It had only been, in other words, a partial Reformation.<sup>924</sup> Many years later, Pontoppidan introduced his work of pastoral theology, *Collegium Pastorale Practicum* (1757) with a chapter on «[t]he corruption of Christianity and the lamentable condition of the Church, both before and after the Reformation, here as well as elsewhere.»<sup>925</sup> Here he attempted to explain to the theological students who were the primary audience of his book how it could be that the Gospels, although they remained completely unchanged in themselves, no longer achieved what they had done in the earliest Christian period, namely to «bend the proudest and move the hardest hearts in an instant.»<sup>926</sup> According to Pontoppidan, the time of Christ and the Apostles had been the golden age of Christianity, when the Christians had truly practiced what they preached. Corruption had first set in when Christianity became an official state religion, a change that had led to a false security, laziness and a preoccupation with worldly matters among the prelates of the church. Some believers, the «first Protestants» as Pontoppidan called them, protested against this but were condemned as heretics. The Middle Ages, when the papacy «put out the light in the Lord's house», marked the very height of the corruption in the church. The Lutheran Reformation, which purified both the faith and the worship, had been a «holy change», but for various reasons the early reformers had not paid sufficient attention to church discipline. As a result it had been «only a half Reformation, namely in doctrine alone, not in how people led their lives.»<sup>927</sup> Although the Gospels were now taught freely, the lack of effective church discipline allowed people to «wander as children of darkness» while giving themselves the false comfort of being Protestants and Evangelical Christians. They knew the pure

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<sup>923</sup> Pontoppidan 1923: 6.

<sup>924</sup> «Dieses ist das Jahr, in welchem das Pabstthum hier zu Lande seinen *terminum fatalem* erreichte, und was die äusserliche Verfassung des Kirchen=Wesens betrifft, mehrertheils zu Grunde gerichtet ward, obwohl der alte Sauerteig aus dem Sinn und Herzen vieler Leuten so leicht nicht vertilget werden mochte». Pontoppidan 1744: 888.

<sup>925</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 1.

<sup>926</sup> «det bøiede de stølteste, og bevægede de haardeste Hjerter i en Has». Pontoppidan 1850: 2.

<sup>927</sup> «Derover blev det da ved en halv Reformation, nemlig i Lærdommen alene, ikke i Liv og Levnet.» Pontoppidan 1850: 6.

faith, but did not follow its prescriptions. Such was the lamentable situation immediately after the Reformation, in Denmark-Norway as well as in other Lutheran countries.<sup>928</sup>

In the next chapter, Pontoppidan explained some of the *reasons* why Christianity had been corrupted after the Reformation. He repeated some of the points he had made in his *Everriculum fermenti veteris*, namely that the first period after the Reformation saw a lack of ministers who actually understood the meaning of the Protestant faith, and who had been so preoccupied with tearing down the old faith that they had forgotten to «rebuild God's house with words of truth and encourage the common folk to live a holy life.»<sup>929</sup> Most of the old superstitions were abolished, but had not actually been replaced by true Christianity, as Pontoppidan defined it. Consequently, people were allowed to live in a false security, believing that they could do as they pleased since they were «Evangelical Christians, orthodox Lutherans and members of the sole true church.»<sup>930</sup> Pontoppidan claimed that this was an inherent danger in Lutheranism. People were freed from the papacy, but their misinterpretation of the Evangelical faith led them into even worse excesses than before. A central problem was a misunderstanding of a central article of the Lutheran faith, the doctrine of justification by faith alone:

One knows that heaven cannot be earned with good works; but one forgets that hell can be earned with evil works. One comforts oneself with God's rich mercy in Christ but ignores the order of mercy, rebirth and renewal. One hears that faith alone justifies and saves; but one does not know the nature, life and power of this faith to change the heart, and imagines that memorizing the articles of faith is the same as keeping them in the heart.<sup>931</sup>

Pontoppidan pointed out that the Protestant theologians in the Reformation century had had good reasons to focus exclusively on this article of faith, since they had just been liberated from a church where the main delusion had been the promise that sinners could be saved if they performed certain good works. Luther himself, however, had perceived that the doctrine of justification by faith had led to a false security, and that the common folk had fallen from one extreme to the other, like a drunken peasant who falls off his horse to the one side and who, when one tries to help him up again,

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<sup>928</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 6-10.

<sup>929</sup> «[...] at opbygge Guds Huus med Sandheds Ord og et helligt Levnets Befordring blant Almuen». Pontoppidan 1850: 11.

<sup>930</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 13

<sup>931</sup> «Man veed at Himmelen ikke kan fortjenes ved egne gode Gjæringer. Man trøster sig ved Guds rige Naade i Christo Jesu, men Naadens Orden, Igenfødelse og Fornylse sættes tilside. Man hører, at Troen alene gjør retfærdig or salig; men denne Troes Natur, Liv og Kraft til at omskifte Hjertet kjender man ikke, indbildende sig, at Troens Artikler fattede i Hukommelsen er det samme som Troen i Hjertet.» Pontoppidan 1850: 13.

falls down on the other side.<sup>932</sup> Pontoppidan's advise to his readers, young future ministers of the Danish-Norwegian Lutheran church, was therefore to avoid preaching against justification by good works, which would only be dangerous in a church full of hypocrites and evil people, and rather teach them about the nature of true good works, which should come from within the regenerate as fruits of the faith. He claimed that if this «Evangelical teaching about the sinner's way to God» had been taught since the Reformation, things would have «looked very different in our Evangelical church.»<sup>933</sup> On this point, Pontoppidan followed Spener, who argued in the sixth reform proposal in his *Pia Desideria* that all Evangelical sermons should be geared towards promoting faith and its fruits in the listeners.<sup>934</sup>

We shall turn now to those sermons from the Reformation jubilee in which critical reformist sentiments were particularly pronounced. One of the clearest examples of such an approach is the sermon delivered by Henrik Gerner, minister of Våle parish in Vestfold.<sup>935</sup> Gerner divided the main part of his sermon into two parts. In the first part he discussed «the Reformation in itself», in the second part «the fruits of the Reformation.»<sup>936</sup> The former was a quite conventional exposition of the glories of Danish Reformation and its many likenesses to Josiah's Reformation.<sup>937</sup> It is the latter part, about «the fruits of the Reformation», which shall concerns us here. There is, however, one aspect of the first part that is important for understanding Gerner's argumentation, namely his portrayal of medieval Catholicism. Instead of recounting the same type of Catholic «abominations» as Hojer had done in his brief history (saint worship, purgatory, pilgrimage, indulgences and so on), Gerner wrote that he would only focus on those things that «really pertain to the faith and that we are still in

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<sup>932</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 14-15.

<sup>933</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 15-19.

<sup>934</sup> Spener 1841: 101; See Edwards 2009: 18.

<sup>935</sup> Gerner is one of the ministers in Hersleb's diocese of which he have some biographical information. He became minister in Våle in 1731 where he soon came into contact with a childhood friend, Christian Langemach Leth, minister of Sandherred parish close by. Leth seems to have contributed to a religious conversion experience in Gerner, and together, the two ministers managed to create «a powerful awakening» in their area. After being transferred to a ministry in Copenhagen Gerner came into conflict with his superior, Peder Hersleb, who was now bishop of Zealand. Gerner was at this point strongly influenced by the Moravian Church («Herrnhutterne»), and the reason for the conflict with Hersleb was that he had sent his two sons to Herrnhut. He later worked in Herrnhut from 1747 until 1754, when he returned to Denmark-Norway. Because of his Moravian sympathies, he did not receive any ministry in the last 32 years of his life. «Henrik Gerner» in *Dansk Biografisk Lexikon*. <http://runeberg.org/dbl/5/0615.html> Retrieved 25.03.2014.

<sup>936</sup> Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [36].

<sup>937</sup> Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [39-67].

danger of being seduced by».<sup>938</sup> First, he claimed that the Catholic clergy had preached human words, lies and fables instead of God's word. Second, that only clerics were allowed to read the Bible and, if a layman was allowed to read it, he was obliged to understand it in the same way as the Pope. Third, he claimed that that the Catholics had the mistaken belief that they could believe in, fear and please God in their natural, corrupted condition. Furthermore, he claimed that the nature and quality of true faith was hidden from the people, who were instead taught a faith that consisted of «mere knowledge and consent». He wrote that people were taught justification by good works, and that the people were taught that God was pleased if they participated in «external worship», no matter whether or not they had a devout intention. Finally, he claimed that only the clerical estate was obliged to be serious in their religion, while layfolk could do more or less as they pleased.<sup>939</sup> These were the «abominations» in medieval Catholicism that Gerner chose to highlight. It was not a random selection: the examples were intended to function as a basis for comparison between medieval Catholicism and contemporary Lutheranism.

Gerner started the second part of the exegesis with pointing out that according to the verse of the day, the children of Israel had only followed God for as long as Josiah lived. In one way, he claimed, the same thing could not be said of the subjects of the Danish kings, since they had never reintroduced papist abominations and since they had continued to follow the true forms of worship, the Augsburg confession and the symbolical books of the Lutheran church. However, the Bible showed that even while Josiah was alive the Jews had followed only the correct forms of external and public worship, not «the internal, correct and true worship». When the prophets Jeremiah and Zephania criticised them and preached conversion, they had been even harder to convert than they would have been before the Reformation, since they erroneously thought that the Lord now demanded nothing else of them. According to Gerner, this was also true of most Lutherans in Denmark-Norway who were also much harder to convert now than they could ever have been before the Reformation. They had the false conception that they did not need any conversion since

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<sup>938</sup> «[...]saadane som egentlig andgaaer Lærdommen, og vi endnu staar i Fare for at blive indtagne af[...] ». Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [57].

<sup>939</sup> Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [57-60].

they had the pure Lutheran religion, worshipped in the correct way, went to church, listened to sermons, confessed and took communion.<sup>940</sup>

Gerner dedicated the remaining part of his sermon to showing how «the papacy, although in a more subtle fashion than before the Reformation, is still among us with many abominations.»<sup>941</sup> He claimed once again that there was no point in recounting all the papist abominations that had undoubtedly been abolished, such as the sale of indulgences and the belief in purgatory. These had been completely buried, and talking about them would amount to nothing more than digging them back up again. He would therefore only speak of those things that «really concern Christianity and its main tenets.»<sup>942</sup> Gerner listed a total of ten examples of widespread practices and beliefs that he considered to be corruptions of true Christianity. He introduced each example with the same *interrogatio*: «Is this not a great papist abomination that still exists among us?» Many of the points on the list directly mirrored Gerner's list of the «abominations» of medieval Catholicism. For instance, Gerner's claim that the Catholic clergy had preached human words rather than the Word of God was echoed in his accusation that many Lutheran preachers mixed God's Word with the words of humans so that it was could no longer be considered God's word and therefore lost its power to edify, awaken and comfort. His claim that only the Catholic clergy were allowed to read the Bible was similar to his claim that, although the Bible was no freely available to everyone, almost no one read it since they considered it to be too difficult to understand. His criticism of the merely external worship in Catholicism had a direct parallel in his claim that many Lutherans thought that God was pleased if they only went to church, participated in the service and the sacraments, whether or not they did it with «a devout and godly thought in their heart», whether or not they were in any way improved by it. It could therefore be said, wrote Gerner, that there were four abominable idols in the Lutheran church, namely the baptismal font, the pulpit, the confessional and the altar.<sup>943</sup> Finally, his claim that only the Catholic clergy were expected to be serious Christians was repeated as an

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<sup>940</sup> Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [68-73].

<sup>941</sup> «Jeg vil derfor og kortelig viise eder, hvorledis Pavedømmet, skjønt noget subtilere end for Reformationen, saa dog med mange Vederstyggeligheder endnu er midt iblant os;» Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [73].

<sup>942</sup> «Jeg vil derfor allene melde om saadanne Ting, som egentlig andgaær Christdommen, og dend Christelige Lærdoms fornemste Hovedstycker [...].» Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [73].

<sup>943</sup> This expression is borrowed from the seventeenth-century Lutheran theologian Heinrich Müller. Gerner mentioned explicitly that he had it from Müller.

accusation against contemporary Lutherans: many people thought that only the clergy were obliged to «seriousness and righteousness» in their Christianity («Christendoms Alvor og Retsindighed»), even though it had been known since the Reformation that this was a duty for all Christians, no matter what estate they belonged to.<sup>944</sup>

In the final part of the sermon, Gerner made an even stronger claim about the current state of corruption in the Lutheran church. Not only did the papacy still exist in various subtle ways, he wrote, but «several things have in some cases even become worse here after the Reformation than before the Reformation, due to men's own evil.»<sup>945</sup> Since it had been shown that a minister should no longer have any power over his congregation and could not lord over their faith, many people would no longer listen to or obey their preacher, even though he lovingly tried to gain them for Christ. Many people thought that good works were unnecessary and that they could be saved without them, although it had always been true, «both before and after the Reformation», that «without holiness no one shall see God».<sup>946</sup> Since it was now known that no child of God should doubt his salvation, people who did nothing for their own soul or salvation thought they had no reason to doubt they would be saved. Since it was now known that it did not please God to whip and torment the flesh, many people imagined that this meant they were permitted to live in lust and carnal desires. According to Gerner, all of these things should cause great shame when confronted with the verse of the day: «they departed not from following the Lord their Father». People called themselves Lutheran without knowing or caring about the teachings of the Lutheran Church, and thought that Luther had given them permission to offend God and had abolished good works, so that «if someone now by doing true good works had shown the righteousness of his Christianity, they would no longer consider him a good Lutheran, he would have to be either a Pietist or a Quaker, or at least infested with falsehood».<sup>947</sup>

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<sup>944</sup> The ten examples are found in Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Børns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [74-84].

<sup>945</sup> «[...]Men adskillige Ting i visse Tilfælde formedelst Menniskers egen Ondskab ere blefen verre hos os efter Reformationen end for Reformationen[...]» Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Børns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [84].

<sup>946</sup> «[...]da det dog har stedse hedet, efter saa vel som for Reformationen, uden Hellighed skal ingen see Gud.» Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Børns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhiertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [85]; Here Gerner referred to Hebrews 12 in the margin: «Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;» (Hebrews 12:14).

<sup>947</sup> «at om nogen nu ved de rette gode Gierningers Øvelse viser sin Christendoms Retsindighed, hand kand i deris Tanker icke lengere være god Luthersk, hand maa vist være enten en Pietist eller Qværker, i det ringeste er hand allerede befengt ved vrangne Meeninger [...]» Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Børns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter*

In the conclusion, Gerner stressed that the Evangelical church had absolutely no fault in these abominations. This led him into a reflection on the most notable thing that had actually changed with the Reformation, namely that everybody could now read the Bible for himself. For this, God should be properly thanked. The only true way of showing gratitude to God, according to Gerner, was through a true conversion. Only through conversion could the papist abominations be abolished and the Reformation completed:

I say by a true conversion to God, because as long as we do not righteously convert ourselves to God we shall be papists as long as we live, or at least some papist delusions shall stay with us, and subtle papist abominations shall live within us. But when we now righteously convert ourselves to God, only then we shall get a true understanding of the main tenets of Christianity through our own experience, then the abominations of the more subtle papacy shall be completely removed from us, then we shall leave the papacy, as from a Babylon [...]»<sup>948</sup>

Reading Gerner's sermon, one is struck by how it negates the stated intention of the jubilee itself. The instruction from the Danish Chancery claimed that the jubilee marked that two hundred years had passed since «God saved these Nordic lands from the Papist darkness and the intolerable slavery of the Pope [...]».<sup>949</sup> According to Gerner, on the other hand, there was really no cause to celebrate since the papacy had not yet been completely abolished in Denmark-Norway. As we have seen, the central rhetorical conceit in the sermon was Gerner's claim that «the papacy» still existed in Denmark-Norway. His examples of the «papist» remnants that were allegedly widespread among Lutherans seem, however, primarily to reflect a Pietist critique of the deficiencies of Lutheran orthodoxy rather than serving as proof that Catholicism actually still existed in the kingdoms. Gerner used the negatively loaded word «papacy» not so much as an actual reference to the Roman Catholic Church, but rather made it signify a whole range of qualities that medieval Catholicism allegedly shared with contemporary Lutheran Orthodoxy: both were purely intellectual and therefore dead and useless faiths, both shared a widespread lack of interest in or knowledge about the Bible and a blind

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*sin Barmhertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Faesten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke, [87-88].*

<sup>948</sup> «Jeg siger ved en sand Omvendelse til Gud, thi saa lenge vi ikke retskaffen omvender os til Gud, Vi bliver da Papister saa lenge vi lever, i det ringeste henger der en og anden Papistiske Vildfarelse hos os, boer en og anden subtil Papistiske Vederstyggelighed i os; Men naar vi nu retskaffen omvender os til Gud, saa faar vi først af egen Erfarenhed det rette Begreb om dend Christelige Lærdoms fornemste Hovedstycker, saa bliver alle end og det subtilere Pavedømmets Vederstyggeligheder gandske borttgane fra os; da gaar vi gandske ud fra Pavedømmet, som fra et Babylon [...]». Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Faesten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke, [93].*

<sup>949</sup> SAB. Björgvin biskop. Brev 10. 1735-1739. Letter from Christian VI to bishop Ole Borneman, 21 July 1736.

trust in external ceremony. Gerner's list of abominations in medieval Catholicism was specifically designed to underscore this comparison. The unmistakable implication of the juxtaposition was that Lutheranism, as it was practiced and understood in Denmark-Norway two hundred years after the Reformation, was no better than Catholicism.

Carola Nordbäck has identified a similar rhetorical strategy in Pietist critiques of Lutheran Orthodoxy in Sweden. According to Nordbäck, Swedish Pietists adopted the legacy of «massive anti-Catholicism» in Lutheran Orthodoxy and turned it against the Lutheran church itself. The traditional language of anti-Catholicism surfaced in the form of direct comparisons between the Catholic and the Lutheran churches, but it also supplied the Pietists with a set of motifs that «can be discerned as an undercurrent in Pietist rhetoric.» Nordbäck points out that the Pietists seems to have used anti-Catholic rhetoric to adopt Luther's position in their conflict with orthodoxy.<sup>950</sup> This was the case with Henrik Gerner as well. By claiming that many people had misinterpreted Luther's teachings in such a way that Catholic «abominations» were allowed to live on, Gerner implicitly suggested that Luther's original attacks on the Catholic Church were still valid in a Danish-Norwegian context.<sup>951</sup>

Jens Rennord, chaplain of Moss and Rygge parishes, made similar claims in his sermon. Rennord's sermon was based on a discussion of the concept «foundations». In the same way that no house should be built on a weak foundation, claimed Rennord, a spiritual house can only be built on the one true foundation: Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, many Lutherans built their faith on false foundations. Among the things he criticized was the widespread misinterpretation of Luther's teachings about the meaning of good works. Luther had taught that faith alone was sufficient for salvation, but many had misunderstood this, thinking that leading a holy and god-fearing life, «denying the flesh and casting away all sin» was unnecessary. Interestingly, Rennord explained the reason for this misinterpretation in the exact same manner as Erik Pontoppidan would later do in his *Collegium Pastorale Practicum*. Such people, wrote Rennord, had not understood properly that Luther had dismissed good works because he «had to do with Papists, who placed everything in good works and reduced faith to nothing.»<sup>952</sup> Luther did stress justification by faith, but with faith he meant a living faith that «regenerates heart and mind». People misinterpreted this, and thought they were

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<sup>950</sup> Nordbäck 2004: 278-279.

<sup>951</sup> At one point in his sermon, when discussing whether a believer could be certain about his state of grace, he quoted a whole passage Luther's Church Postil to show what Luther had originally written about the topic, in order to illustrate how others had gotten it wrong. Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] bolden paa Jubel-Fasten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [79].

<sup>952</sup> «(...) hand havde med Papister at giøre, der satte alting i gode gi: og til intet giörde Troen» Jens Rennord, *In Fest: Jubil: d: 30 Octobr: 1736 Text: Vespert: 2 Tim. 2.19:; [8]*.



justified just because «they trusted firmly in Christ’s merit, and called this faith, even though neither mind nor heart is changed and regenerated». This was, according to Rennord, contrary to Luther’s teachings. He proved this by referring directly to relevant articles of Luther’s Small Catechism.<sup>953</sup>

After describing the false foundations of faith widespread among many Lutherans, Rennord addressed the topic of the day. First he pointed out the purpose of the jubilee, which was to praise God for his mercy in rescuing Denmark-Norway from the darkness of the papacy and sending his clear Evangelical light. He then, however, went on to question a fundamental assumption of the jubilee itself, namely that the Reformation had effectively transformed and saved Denmark-Norway from spiritual darkness:

But if I should state my opinion, there is still such a large and dangerous darkness in the midst of the Lutheran Church, not only among lay people but also among so called clerics, that it would be better if such people, that have in their hearts no power, no truth, no life from the pure and true teachings of Luther and the Apostles, but only the mere name, mere ceremonies, the mere letter, though many have not even gotten that correctly, better if they were born under the papacy, since they would then be judged more lightly.<sup>954</sup>

The Lutheran Orthodox minister Niels Dorph’s sermon represents an instructive contrast to Rennord’s discussion of the foundation of the faith. A central difference between Rennord and Dorph’s sermons is the latter’s pronounced emphasis on the need to protect the purity of the Lutheran faith, particularly the doctrine of justification by faith. After comparing Josiah’s Reformation with the Danish Reformation and denouncing the abominations of Catholicism, Dorph described the essence of the true faith, which for him was the belief that God sent his son to redeem our sins:

This teaching about our justification by faith is *Articulis stantis et cadentis Ecclesia*– it has overturned and shamed the entire mighty papacy– That teaching has never since the time of the Apostles been so properly understood, so sufficiently explained and so clearly proposed, as it now happened with Luther and his followers. When this teaching was reformed, everything was reformed with it.<sup>955</sup>

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<sup>953</sup> «Saa efter den Kundskab Folk fatter derom i deres Forstand, gjør de sig sel en Tanke, et Forsæt at de vil forlade sig fast paa Chti Fortieneste, og det kalder de Troen, og meener det virker, skjønt verken Sind eller Hierte er forandret og igienfød, tvert imod Luth: Lærdom.» Jens Rennord, *In Fest: Jubil: d: 30 Octobr: 1736 Text: Vespert: 2 Tim. 2.19;* [9].

<sup>954</sup> «Men skal jeg sige min Meening, da er der endnu midt i den Luth: Kirke saa stort og farl: et Mørke, ikke alleene iblant Verdslige men og de saa kaldede Geistl: at det var bedre saadanne Mensker, der ingen Kraft, ingen Sandhed, intet Lif har af Luth: eller Apostl: reene og sande Lærdom i deres Hierter, men kun det blotte Navn det blotte Ceremonier, den blotte Bogstav, dog mange har ikke den eengang ret, bedre at de var fødte i Pavedømmet, saa maatte deres Fordømmelse blive mindre.» Jens Rennord, *In Fest: Jubil: d: 30 Octobr: 1736 Text: Vespert: 2 Tim. 2.19:* [10].

<sup>955</sup> «Denne Lærdom om vor Retfærdiggjørelse tilegnet ved Troen er *Articulis et cadentis Ecclesia*– Dend har omkastet og beskæmmet det heele mægtige Pavedom– Dend Lærdom har aldrig siden Apostlernis Tid været saa grundig begreben, saa

According to Dorph, it was the duty of the kings to protect this central tenet of the faith and not allow anything to ruin or change it, and it was the duty of the clergy to teach and propagate it. Everything that in any way strayed from it was not worth speaking of.<sup>956</sup>

The doctrine of justification by faith is the central article of Lutheranism, so it is hardly surprising that a Lutheran minister emphasized it so strongly when discussing the Reformation. The significance of Dorph's discussion of this article of faith, however, becomes apparent only when seen in conjunction with Henrik Gerner and Jens Rennord's discussion of the same matter. Both had warned against misunderstanding the article. They claimed that they did not in any way argue against it, instead they pointed that people had misunderstood Luther's meaning with it.<sup>957</sup> The Pietist minister Ole Tidemand, too, argued in his sermon against what he called «misguided opinions about faith» («forvente Meninger om Troen»). It was true that one can only be justified by faith, wrote Tidemand, but there was no using having faith if it was merely a self-invented or dead faith, a «mouth-faith» («Mund-Troe»). Martin Luther himself, claimed Tidemand, had described the true faith as a divine act that converts, regenerates, kills the old Adam and creates us anew. He who has faith does good works without cease; he who does not do good works does not have faith and does not even know the meaning of faith or good works. Faith and good works cannot be separated.<sup>958</sup> As we have already seen, Pontoppidan would also warn theological students against preaching excessively against the merits of good works, rather than speaking of their true nature and their necessity for those seeking salvation. According to him, good works were the fruits of faith, and the only means to try oneself and see whether one had true faith.<sup>959</sup> Herein lies an important difference

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tilstrekkelig forklaret og saa klarlig fremsat, som nu det skeede af Luthero og hans Efterfølgere. Da denne Lærdom blef reformeret og rensat fra vederstyggelig Vildfarelser, da blev alt andet rensat tillige.» Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærværelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736*, GKS 1512 kvart, [12-13].

<sup>956</sup> Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærværelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736*, GKS 1512 kvart, [13-15].

<sup>957</sup> Henrik Gerner, *Reformationen i Israels Börns Lande Som en Afbildning paa dend Reformation Gud effter sin Barmhertighed for 200 Aar siden lod skee i disse Nordiske Lande betragtet i en Prædiken over dend andordnede Text af 2 Chron: XXXIV. V. 33, 34 [...] holden paa Jubel-Fæsten d. 30 Octobr: 1736 i Waale Kirke*, [74]; Jens Rennord, *In Fest: Jubil: d: 30 Octobr: 1736 Text: Vespert: 2 Tim. 2.19;* [8-9]; See also Otho Holmboe's sermon: «[...]Vi maa jo bekiænde det reent du til vores Beskiæmmelse, at de sande Evangeliske Lærdomme, i sær om Retfærdiggjørelse og den Saliggjørende Troe oftest misbruges iblant os til et Ondskabes Skiul, saa at den største Deel iblant os mit paa denne klare Evangeliske Dag udviser sig at være Nattens og Mørkets Börn [...]». Otho Holmboe, *Den Evangeliske Dags Opgang i dette vores kiære Fæderland paa d: 30 Octobr Ao 1536*, [42].

<sup>958</sup> Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Proedicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fæsten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestæt Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at belligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [60-61].

<sup>959</sup> Pontoppidan 1850: 15-16.

in the interpretation of the meaning and consequences of the Reformation. In Dorph's account, the article of justification by faith alone was the crucial element in Luther's Reformation, and its preservation was the paramount task of the Danish kings and clergy. He did not at all discuss whether an undue attention to this article had led to misunderstandings among common folk. On the contrary, he praised the early reformers for their relentless and uncompromising propagation of this article.<sup>960</sup> This does not mean that he necessarily would have disagreed that good works are the fruits of faith. In fact, in his discussion of the Reformation of manners towards the end of his sermon he exhorted his congregation to follow the example of the first Protestants and do good works. The point is rather that he did not see the need to qualify his anti-Catholic polemics with an explicit discussion about how justification by faith should properly be understood.

Ole Tidemand launched an even more explicit attack on the corruptions of contemporary Lutheranism in his sermon. One of the central arguments in the main part of Tidemand's sermon was the lingering existence of «papist abominations» in the Lutheran church and the need for a new Reformation. Like Henrik Gerner, he stressed that Lutheran doctrine («Lærdøm») itself was perfect and not in need of any further reforms. It was rather the religious practices of most so-called Lutherans that needed to be reformed. He particularly attacked the way they abused the sacraments of the Lutheran church and treated them as idols.<sup>961</sup> Gerner had used the same figure of speech in his sermon when he argued against superficial and empty worship, but he had not discussed the topic of the sacraments in any detail. Tidemand, on the other hand, spent several pages on discussing the dangers of abusing the sacraments.

According to Tidemand, people misunderstood the meaning of the baptism and thought that there was no need to renew their baptismal pact through daily penitence and rebirth. They confused the means of rebirth with the rebirth itself. They lived in sin and evil, foolishly thinking they would be saved just because they had been baptised when they were children. Tidemand claimed this was the same as mocking God and committing idolatry.<sup>962</sup> Lutherans committed the same type of idolatry with the Holy Communion. Sinners trusted blindly in the external ceremony, thinking they would be saved if they only took communion even though they were not converted and continued with their

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<sup>960</sup> Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærværelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736*, GKS 1512 kvart, [14].

<sup>961</sup> Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Prædicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fæsten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestæt Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at helligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [44].

<sup>962</sup> Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Prædicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fæsten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestæt Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at helligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [44-50].

sinful habits. Many people became penitent, read the Bible, sung psalms, prayed and avoided sins a few days before and after the communion, falsely believing this was enough to save them.<sup>963</sup> Next, Tidemand discussed the «horrible abuses» of the confession. He conceded that confession in itself could be a great opportunity for the minister to deal with the individual sinner, but in most places he lacked the time, opportunity and proper measures to do it correctly. As a consequence, it strengthened people's lack of penance rather than awakening them from their false security. Most people did not care what the minister said to them. As long as he eventually placed his hand on their hand and gave them absolution they thought they were certain of their salvation, thus treating the confession as an «opus operatum». Tidemand prayed to God that he would open the eyes of «all worldly and spiritual authorities» so that they could see what had to be done with the confession, and so that they pass judgement on the Day of Judgment. If not, wrote Tidemand, «I fear that the confessional will eventually become no better in God's eyes than the papist letters of indulgence [...]».<sup>964</sup>

Tidemand's criticisms of the abuse of sacraments, particularly the confession, must be seen in light of the theological controversies in Denmark earlier in the decade. At the core of these controversies was the question of confession and absolution. According to the Church Ritual of Denmark and Norway (1685), all members of the congregation had to confess and receive absolution before they could partake in the Holy Communion.<sup>965</sup> While the confession had originally been intended to be done in private between the priest and the parishioner it had developed in the course of the seventeenth century to become a public confession where the congregation confessed collectively, and the minister administered absolution according to a standard formula. According to Johannes Pedersen, this practice had been criticised since the seventeenth century, but it became particularly intolerable for Pietist ministers who saw the practice as a blatant contradiction to what they preached about true repentance and conversion.<sup>966</sup> In 1733, Pietists in Copenhagen had started to complain that the Church Ritual forced them to administer absolution to members of the

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<sup>963</sup> Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Proedicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fæsten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestat Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at belligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [51-58].

<sup>964</sup> «Ja Gud for Jesu Skyld oplade fornemmelig Øynene paa ald Verdslig og Geistlig Øfrighed, at de dog maa see, hvad der bør at giøres ved Skriftestolen, at de eengang paa hin Dag kand bestaa for Domstolen! Thi ellers seer jeg ikke andet ved Skriftestolen til sidst vil blive lidet bedre i Guds Øyne, end hidset de Papistiske Avlads Breve[...]». Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Proedicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fæsten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestat Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at belligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [59].

<sup>965</sup> *Danmarks og Norgis Kirke-Ritual* 1685: 143 ff.

<sup>966</sup> Pedersen 1951: 130.

congregation whom they doubted were truly repentant or who were even blatant sinners. Some ministers started to add qualifications to the absolution formula or admitted people to communion without saying the absolution formula altogether, due to reasons of conscience. Notable among these was Ole Hersleb, bishop Hersleb's brother, who was suspended and eventually left his office because he was not allowed to stop giving public absolution. On the other hand, changing the ritual was strongly condemned and branded as separatism and heresy by the Orthodox clergy. According to Johannes Pedersen, the king dealt with this contentious issue in a faltering manner. Ole Hersleb was dismissed for not following the ritual, while the royal confessor Frawen was suspended for defending the ritual and openly attacking the Pietists in his sermons. Pedersen claims that the most probable explanation for the suspension of these two clergymen was their insubordination against the absolute monarch rather than their views on the ritual itself. In any case, the controversy petered out after this climax. At the time of the jubilee, individual ministers could receive dispensation from using the absolution formula, but the matter itself was unresolved. The government had started discussing a revision of the church ritual in 1735, but only the bishops and theological professors were involved in the discussions and, in the end, the revision was not carried out.<sup>967</sup>

With this conflict in mind, it is interesting to see that Tidemand so explicitly condemned the current abuses of the sacraments and openly discussed this contentious issue from the pulpit. He pointed out that his hands were tied and that he personally could do nothing else than follow the ritual, but at the same time he strongly stated that something had to be done to change the current state of things. Tidemand thus used the bicentenary not only to preach conversion to his congregation, but also as an opportunity to criticise a state of corruption in the Danish-Norwegian church and point out specific things that needed to be corrected. Although his primary criticism in this matter was directed at how most Lutherans abused the sacraments, he also suggested in his sermon that the reformation of worship had not necessarily been completed with Martin Luther. Tidemand claimed that his purpose was not to talk of a «Reformation of ceremony» («Ceremonie-Reformation») and that he would leave the question of what was harmful or useful to others who had better judgement than him. He added, however, that

a matter is neither right nor perfect just because it was not changed by Luther, since it was an impossibility for him in such a short time and with so many obstacles in his way to fix everything and

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<sup>967</sup> Pedersen 1951: 128-137.

put it in order as it should be. No, the good man of God did enough, he made a good foundation, and his descendants should, in this case as well as in others, complete the building.<sup>968</sup>

Tidemand suggested, in other words, that Martin Luther should not be seen as the last reformer of the church. Again, Niels Dorph's sermons offers an instructive contrast. Dorph made an unequivocally positive assessment of the Reformation of worship and its consequences in Denmark-Norway. He started by giving a negative description of the nature of worship under the papacy. Among his main accusations were that God's Word had not been present in the churches, that they had worshipped images, that the clergy had not preached the Gospels, and that the Catholics had invented several sacraments and perverted the Holy Communion. All this had changed after the Reformation. The abominable «opus operatum», that is, mere external worship without edification, had been abolished. Dorph did urge his listeners to worship with body *and* soul, and to avoid a Pharisaic worship consisting of mere ceremony. This exhortation sounded similar to those we have already seen uttered by Tidemand and other Pietist preachers. Unlike them, however, Dorph did not suggest that such was indeed the present situation in the Lutheran church. His final word on the matter was much more optimistic than Tidemand's, and suggested that God himself would ensure that worship was done correctly:

Praise the merciful Lord for giving us his pure worship, he won't punish us for every fault in it, and he will let us have it until the end of the world. He makes all of you worthy to such a calling, fills your heart with goodness and promotes the works of faith with force so that the name of our Lord Jesus can be in all of you, and you in him, thanks to God and the mercy of our Lord Jesus.<sup>969</sup>

In contrast to Pontoppidan's description of the unfinished state of the Lutheran church in the first period after the Reformation, Dorph idealised the first generations of Protestants. He urged his congregation to follow their forefathers who had left the papacy after the Reformation. According to

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<sup>968</sup> «[...]at derfor er icke een Sag rigtig, ikke eller derfor den beste, fordi den ikke just af Luther er bleven forandret, siden det var ham een Umuelighed i saadan kort Tiid, og igiennem saamange Forhindringer, at faae alle Ting til rettesadt, og bragt i den Orden, som det burde at være udi, nei, den dyre Guds Mand hand gjorde nok, hand lagde een goed Grund, og hans Efterkommere bør det fremdeelis til Kirkens beste, ligesom i andre Tilfælde, saa og i denne Fald at fuldføre Bygningen.» Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenhed. Udi Een Prædiken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Fasten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestæt Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at helligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [43-44].

<sup>969</sup> «Dend naadige Gud være høylovet som gav os sin reene Guds-Dørkelse, hand straffe os ikke for hver Mangel i dend, hand unde os dend fremdeelis uforfalsket indtil Verdens Ende. Han gjør Eder alle værdige til saadant Kald, fylde eder med al Godheds Velbehagelighed, og forfremme Troens Gjæringer med Magt, paa det vor Herres Jesu Navn kand æres i Eder alle, og I udi Ham, formedelst vor Gud, og dend Herres Jesu Naade.» Niels Dorph, *Prædiken paa 6te Søndag efter Trinit. over Matth. V. 20 i Anledning af Det Kongel. Herskabs Nærvarelse paa Hedemarken. Item hans Jubelprædiken 30. Oct. 1736* (GKS 1512 kvart).

Dorph, these first Protestants had not had a word of treachery in their mouths and had been faultless in their worship.

Although many of the sentiments expressed in Gerner, Rennord and Tidemand's sermons implicitly or explicitly questioned the celebratory message of the jubilee, one should be careful in drawing the conclusion that they expressed an oppositional version of Danish Reformation history. As we have seen, many of the claims made in the sermons about the corrupted state of the church and the need of further reform were shared by Erik Pontoppidan, described by some as «the chief ideologue of state Pietism».<sup>970</sup> Furthermore, Tidemand's complaint about the confession is echoed by bishop Hersleb in his suggestions for the revision of the Church Ritual.<sup>971</sup> In other words, the rhetoric of reform in the sermons corresponded to the opinions of two of the most important churchmen in the period, both of whom were key actors in the contemporary church reforms.

It seems that a major preoccupation for ministers of a Pietist inclination was to awaken their congregations from the self-congratulatory and false sense security they had from being Lutherans. Some preachers, such as Brink, Wessel and Wejdemann, primarily criticised the individual member of the congregation for not measuring up to the standards of the faith and urged them to repent and convert. Others, such as Rennord, Gerner and Tidemand, suggested that the problem was larger and that the entire Lutheran church needed further reform. In both cases, the idea of commemorating, celebrating and giving thanks for the Danish Reformation needed a reformulation. These preachers seems to have thought that many members of their congregation did not properly understand or practice the true Lutheran faith, and that this problem was rooted in a misguided notion that Lutheranism demanded nothing else of them than «faith alone» and participation in the ceremonies and rituals of the church. In this context, celebrating a bicentenary where the main message was that the congregation should be grateful they were no longer Catholic would be counter-productive. Consequently, they redefined the bicentenary as a day of repentance (and hopefully, conversion and rebirth), rather than a day of thanksgiving.

A similar tendency has been identified by Harm Cordes in his study of the Reformation jubilee in the German universities in 1717. He claims that two ways of interpreting the Reformation as an historical epoch ran parallel in the jubilee. On the one hand, jubilee texts followed a traditional Lutheran orthodox pattern of historical interpretation, according to which the Reformation was understood as a merciful divine intervention in the course of salvation history. In such narratives, the

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<sup>970</sup> Gilje & Rasmussen 2002: 316

<sup>971</sup> Lindhardt 1986: 61 ff.

centuries before the Reformation formed an important background to establish the necessity of the Reformation. In these negative descriptions of the first fifteen centuries of Church history, writes Cordes, the academic jubilee texts show their roots in a Lutheran Orthodox tradition of writing church history.<sup>972</sup> Viewed against the dark background of the decay of the Church in the Middle Ages, the life and work of Martin Luther revealed God's will to renew his Church and spread the light of the Gospel. On the other hand, some texts written for the 1717 jubilee expressed a more nuanced understanding of the Reformation as historical event. Inspired by Pietism, writes Cordes, some theologians in 1717 saw the Reformation neither as a closed historical epoch nor a unique salvation-historical event, but as a call to and model of future reforms.<sup>973</sup> In the conclusion to his study, Cordes claims that orthodox theologians lacked the ability to turn the historical legitimation of their faith into a revitalization of Protestantism with a contemporary relevance, making the jubilee a mere «historische Erinnerung und Vergegenwärtigung gemeinsamer Glaubenserfahrung.»<sup>974</sup> Pietists, on the other hand, used the jubilee both to demonstrate that they were a part of Protestantism, and to emphasize their own interpretation of Luther and the Reformation. They exhorted their audience and readers to repent, they stressed personal rebirth as a prerequisite for regeneration, they encouraged the continuation of the unfinished Reformation and they advocated a relativization of the authority of Luther in the church. All in all, writes Cordes, it was the Pietist preachers that were the most successful in making manifest the significance of the Reformation for the present and the future.<sup>975</sup>

## Concluding remarks

The bicentenary in 1736 was the first time the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway celebrated a historical jubilee of their own. Instead of commemorating the deeds of Martin Luther, Christian VI and his subjects would now mark Denmark and Norway's belated entry into the Evangelical fold. The novelty of this situation required the government to decide on a date that could represent the Danish-Norwegian equivalent of Luther's posting of the 95 theses on 31 October 1517. As we have seen, several options were considered at one point: when bishop Christen Worm entered the

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<sup>972</sup> Cordes 2006: 140.

<sup>973</sup> Cordes 2006: 140-144.

<sup>974</sup> Cordes 2006:307.

<sup>975</sup> Cordes 2006:308



discussion, the day of the arrest of the Catholic bishops (12 August 1536) and the day of the public meeting on the Old Market Square in Copenhagen (30 October 1536) had been proposed as alternatives. Worm saw none of these dates as significant enough for a centennial commemoration, however, and instead proposed a third option: the day the first Lutheran superintendents were ordained and the Danish Church Ordinance was issued (2 September 1537). Worm's objections were ignored and the king settled for 30 October 1536, a solution that, according to the politician Johann Ludvig von Holstein, had the benefit of stressing «the close [connection] that the sovereign absolute power, the hereditary succession; the royal house, and the security of the religion have with one another.»<sup>976</sup> Christian VI chose to commemorate the historical event that most effectively symbolized the historical relationship between the Oldenburg monarchs and the Lutheran religion.

The king's decision launched the canonization of 30 October 1536 as the day when the Reformation was introduced in Denmark and Norway. The importance of the date was emphasized by Andreas Hojer, who claimed in his short history that

this year 1536, and in particular the great Estates General in Copenhagen, and especially its last day 30 October [...] is such a noteworthy day, and in particular such a blessed day for God's church in these kingdoms, to which no days in the past can be compared, the memory of which must never die out among us.<sup>977</sup>

The significance of the day, and particularly the role of king Christian III on it, was amplified in the clergy's jubilee sermons. Their analogies between Christian III and the Jewish reformer-king Josiah reduced the complexities of the past and concentrated the history of the Danish Reformation into one simple and potent image: the young king who, upon his accession to the throne, discovers the abominable idolatry in his kingdom and decides to remove the idolatrous priests and purify public worship in order to please the Lord. While the history of the Danish Reformation might have gained narrative clarity, emotional intensity and a dose of sacrality by the transposition of the Josiah-template to Danish conditions, it lost much of its nuance and precision. Centuries of medieval history were branded as a time of darkness and delusion. The original multitude of historical actors and the complex lines of conflict during the Count's War were reduced to just a few main characters

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<sup>976</sup> «[...]den nöye [Connexion] som den souveraine eenevolds Magt, Arve Successionen; det Kongel. Huus, og Religionen Sikkerhed har med hinanden.» Johann Ludvig von Holstein, «Uforgribelige Tanker om Jubel Festen», *Reformationsjubilaet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>977</sup> «Ja hvem maae ikke tilstaae, at dette 1536 Aar, og deri i Særdeleshed den store Rigs-Dag i Kiøbenhavn, og helst den sidste Dag deraf, den 30 October, da alle forhen opregnede stoor Ting bleve af heele Riget vedtaget og fastsat, er een saa merkelig, og helst for GUds Kirke her i Riget saa velsignet Dag, hvorimod ingen i fremfarne Tider bør lignedes, og hvis Ihukommelse aldrig iblant os bør uddøe.» [Hojer] 1736: c1v.

in a morally two-dimensional universe: The Catholic clergy was portrayed as evil, false and greedy, Christian III as good, pious and God-given.

One obvious «victim» of these simplifications was the history of the kingdom of Norway. In his memorandum to the king, Johann Ludvig von Holstein simply stated that the Reformation was introduced in Norway at the same time as Denmark, since it had been decided at the Estates General in 1536 that the Denmark and Norway would have the same Council of the Realm and that its decisions would be valid in both kingdoms. Andreas Hojer made it appear in his *Kort Forestilling* as if the decisions made in Copenhagen in October 1536 had equal validity and simultaneous effect in both kingdoms. Hojer claimed, moreover, that the Reformation had been introduced «without the slightest tumult, or the shedding of a single drop of blood [...]».<sup>978</sup> Even in the kingdom of Denmark, this claim was dubious: the assembly in Copenhagen in October 1536 may have happened without any violence taking place, but it was preceded by a long and bloody civil war and a siege of Copenhagen that, according to the eighteenth-century historian Ludvig Holberg, had been accompanied by «hunger, disease, murder and death.»<sup>979</sup> In Norway, however, the claim was completely erroneous: Danish forces raided and pillaged the strongholds of the supporters of Olav Engelbrektsson in Norway well into 1537, in order to break the Norwegian resistance against Christian III. Although all but one of the surviving sermons from the bicentenary were delivered in Norway, there is an almost complete absence of references to these events. The Reformation bicentenary in 1736 is therefore evidence of the strength of the collective amnesia in Norway after the kingdom lost its independent status in 1536.

It is significant in this context to note that, when the tercentenary of the Norwegian Reformation was celebrated in the nineteenth century after the end of the union with Denmark, the date selected for the jubilee was different: 5-6 November 1837. The Ministry of Church Affairs asked the University and all the bishops for their opinion about which of the years 1836 or 1837 should be considered the right one. All of the respondents unanimously agreed that «the Reformation can not be said to have been introduced in Norway before 1537, and that the year 1837 is the correct year to hold the celebrations».<sup>980</sup> The representatives from the University in Christiania added, moreover, that no day in 1537 could be identified as «historically correct», since the religious change had not

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<sup>978</sup> «Hvem maae ikke i Særdeleshed deri præise Guds Viisdom og Retfærdighed [...] at det skee uden ringeste Tumult, eller en eeneste Draabe Bloods Udgydelse;» [Hojer] 1736: c1v.

<sup>979</sup> It should be mentioned that Holberg saw this violence as a necessary hard cure to «heal the rage» and open the blind eyes of the commoners in Copenhagen. Holberg 1733: 330.

<sup>980</sup> «Alle have været enige i, at Reformationen ikke kan siges at være indført i Norge før 1537, og at altsaa Aaret 1837 er det rette Aar for Festens Afholdelse». Arntzen, Møinichen, Arntzen & Glükstad (ed.) 1837: 77-78.

been decided by any of the nation's representatives, but had rather been gradually introduced, and «partly with force». It was therefore suggested that the celebration of the jubilee either began on 31 October (which marked the start of Luther's Reformation) or 1 November (the annual commemoration of the Reformation).<sup>981</sup> Due to differing opinions on the specific date, form and duration of the celebrations, a commission of clergymen, teachers and professors was established on 14 January 1837 to make concrete plans for the jubilee. In its recommendations, the committee suggested that the jubilee should last only for two days, rather than for 3-4 days as had happened in 1817. One of the reasons for this suggestion was that the «sad memories that are related to that period in the history of our fatherland when the Reformation was introduced here, should cause the expressions of joy to be somewhat restricted».<sup>982</sup> Since the introduction of the Reformation in Norway could not be dated to any specific day, moreover, the committee suggested that the tercentenary be placed on the first Sunday after All Saint's Day, the day on which the Reformation was commemorated annually according to the decree of 26 October 1770.<sup>983</sup>

In a short history written for this event, the Norwegian clergyman, historian and later member of parliament Andreas Faye mourned the fact that the Danish noblemen sent to Norway in 1537 to introduce the Reformation by force had razed beautiful churches to the ground and destroyed precious books and papers. In Faye's account, 30 October 1536 did not mark the moment the Reformation was introduced in Norway, but rather the day when the «offensive and unjust political changes» took place, when Norway was declared to be «a province of Denmark», a decision that had invoked the ill will of a «freedom-loving people» against the Reformation.<sup>984</sup> The simultaneity of Norway's loss of independence with the Reformation meant that the former threw a dark shadow upon the latter in the Lutheran minister Faye's account. This view of the Reformation as a national disaster for Norway was effectively summed up in one sentence in the Latin speech delivered at the University in Christiania during the centenary: «*Tristia fuere prima reformationis*

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<sup>981</sup>Arntzen, Möinichen, Arntzen & Glükstad (ed.) 1837: 78.

<sup>982</sup> «[...] Tanken om de sørgelige Minder, som knytte sig til den Periode af vort Fædrenelands Historie, i hvilken Reformationen hos os blev indført, bør bevirke, at Glædesyttringene noget indskrænkes». Arntzen, Möinichen, Arntzen & Glükstad (ed.) 1837: 498.

<sup>983</sup> Arntzen, Möinichen, Arntzen & Glükstad (ed.) 1837: 498.

<sup>984</sup> «Den voldsomme Maade, hvorpaa de danske Høvdinger gik frem, og de for Nordmændene saa krænkende og uretfærdige politiske Forandringer, som knyttede sig til Reformationens Indførelse, i det nemlig den samme danske Herredag, som i Kjøbenhavn 1536 paabød den Lutherske Kirkeforbedring, tillige erklærede Norge for en Provinds af Danmark, kunde ikke andet end opvække et frihedselskende Folks Uvillie mod en Forandring, hvis Fortrinlighed de i deres Uvidenhed deels ei indsaae, eller paa Grund af Overtroe og Fordom ei kunde erkjende, og hvorom de fleste af Mangel paa duelige Lærere knapt havde noget Begreb.» Faye 1837: 40-41.

tempora».<sup>985</sup> In Denmark, in contrast, the tercentenary of the Danish Reformation was celebrated on 30 October 1836, on the exact same date as one hundred years before.<sup>986</sup>

The government's planning documents from 1736 do not give us a clear impression of what motivated the government to arrange the celebration of a bicentenary in the first place. They do allow us to follow the planning process in some detail, but I have not found any discussions of a more political-strategical nature. Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen suggests that both of the Reformation centenaries can be interpreted as part of a pattern of «crisis therapy». In 1717, the crisis at hand was the Great Northern War, while in 1736, it was the recent turbulence in the Danish church that provided the motivation. «[T]he 1736 bicentenary», she writes, «should be regarded in the context of furthering a stabilising strategy during moments of internal disruptions between different religious groupings, Pietists, separatists and the conservative supporters of orthodox Lutheranism.»<sup>987</sup> Bøggild Johannsen's explanation is inspired by Pierre Nora's theory that the recent upsurge in global commemoration is a «reaction to the growing uncertainty about an unpredictable future, equally nourished by major political and economic ruptures and crises.»<sup>988</sup> While there are no direct statements in the sources to suggest that the administration felt an acute sense of crisis in the Danish church at the time, or that the jubilee was devised to meet such a crisis, the jubilee did coincide with a sustained programme of church reforms. Henrik Horstbøll has suggested that the bicentenary was devised to launch a series of reforms that was intended to induce a «second Reformation» of the Danish church. These reforms came in the wake of short but intense period of religious turbulence and conflict, and were aimed at improving, uniforming and supervising the clergy and the religious education of the subjects. In this sense, the bicentenary might well be interpreted as a stabilizing measure, in that it legitimized and supported the king's *Sonderweg* between the conservative Orthodox Lutherans and the impatient Pietists. The way that the centenary was devised stimulated comparisons between the biblical reformer-king Josiah, the seventeenth-century reformer-king Christian III and the present reformer-king Christian VI.

One thing is what the government in Copenhagen intended the centenary to be about, another thing is what the clergy made of it. Although their historical accounts of the Danish Reformation were generally quite homogenous, the ways in which the clergymen defined the purpose and meaning of the centenary itself were much more varied. In fact, the jubilee sermons from the

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<sup>985</sup> Quoted in Kolsrud 1937: 3.

<sup>986</sup> See for instance Luplau 1836.

<sup>987</sup> Johannsen 2013: 213.

<sup>988</sup> *ibid.*

bicentenary in 1736 are the most heterogenous of all the jubilees with regards to how the preachers addressed their congregations.<sup>989</sup> In 1749 and 1760, sermons were overwhelmingly positive in tone and geared towards encouraging the congregation to appreciate and give thanks for God's blessings towards the kingdoms. In 1736, on the other hand, we find many sermons that are full of stern exhortations to the congregation to do penance, repent their sins and change their sinful way of life. If their audience did not do this, these minister claimed, God would take away the blessings he had shown the kingdoms 200 years before. A few preachers went even further, claiming that the Reformation had not been completed in 1536, that a «subtle papacy» lived on in the Danish church, and that there was a need for further reforms of worship. The local interpretation of the meaning of the bicentenary was thus highly dependent on the personal inclinations of the preacher: the chaplain Ole Mandal's congregation in Ramnes parish in Jarlsberg, for instance, would have had a completely different experience of the bicentenary than Ole Tidemand's parish in nearby Hedrum and Larvik.<sup>990</sup> Mandal's sermon conveyed an impression of Denmark-Norway as a well-ordered kingdom with a prospering church under a godly Josiah. Tidemand, in contrast, conveyed the image of a church in crisis, a Christianity that had more in common with the Papist delusions than God's Word, a Lutheranism that was so full of abominations that «there has never been more need of reform than now».<sup>991</sup> For Tidemand and his Pietist peers, Luther's Reformation in 1517 and Christian III's Reformation in 1536 not merely «closed» historical events to be praised and revered, but rather inspiring models for continued reform of the Church.

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<sup>989</sup> I am excluding the bicentenary in 1717 from this discussion, since I have found only four sermons from this event, written by one preacher.

<sup>990</sup> Not only as an intellectual experience, but also as a physical experience: Mandal's sermon is 19 pages long, while Tidemand's is 96. If both preachers spoke at a normal pace without any extemporization, Mandal would probably be finished after an hour, while Tidemand would carry on for almost five hours.

<sup>991</sup> «[...]vil man alleniste tage den nu brugelige Christendom, og paa den eene Siide holde den imod Guds Ord, og igien paa den anden Side mod de Papistische Vildfarelser. Da skal man nok befinde at den langt fra ikke ligner saa meget efte det første, som efter det sidste, og altsaa nok kunne skionne, at der endnu findes i den Lutherske Christenhed saa mange Vederstyggeligheder at der aldrig meere end nu har haft fornøden at reformeris.» Ole Tidemand, *Den Lutherske Reformation (I.) Af sin høye Fornødenhed. (II.) Af sin rette Beskaffenbed. Udi Een Proedicken over 2 Chron. 34. V. 33. 34. paa Jubel-Faesten hvilcken Deris Kongelig Mayestat Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette. Allernaadigst haver anordnet at belligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736*, [42].

## Chapter 6: Continuity, Prosperity and Peace: the Dynastic Tercentenary in 1749

In the mid-eighteenth century, Denmark-Norway stood on the threshold of an extended period of economic growth and peace. In the area of domestic politics, the accession to the throne of Frederick V in 1746 marked a change in how the monarchy was perceived by its subjects. His father, Christian VI, had practiced a style of kingship that emphasized the distance between king and subjects, and his personal piety had led to restrictions of the cultural life at the court and in the capital. Theatrical productions and balls were replaced by religious services and devotions.<sup>992</sup> In contrast to the sombre and devout atmosphere of Christian's reign, the young and sociable king Frederick V represented a «breath of fresh air».<sup>993</sup> The king and his popular queen were often seen socialising with their subjects from all ranks. Cultural life was revived in the capital, with the reopening of theatres and a revival of court festivities.<sup>994</sup>

If the early years of Frederik's reign were generally an optimistic era, 1749 seems to have been a particularly good year for the monarchy. In an absolute hereditary monarchy where the birth of a male heir was an important event that helped secure political stability in the kingdoms, the birth of crown prince Christian in January 1749 gave ample grounds for celebration. Frederick's journey to Norway in the summer of 1749, which was the first royal visit there in 16 years, seemed to demonstrate the new king's love and concern for his Norwegian subjects.<sup>995</sup> The late 1740s were, moreover a growth period in Denmark-Norway's economy. After a prolonged post-war crisis in the export trades in the first decades after the Great Northern War, which affected major export products such as grain, fish and timber, the kingdoms experienced a period of sustained economic growth from the end of the 1740s.<sup>996</sup> The expansion of trade was stimulated by the absence of war: the kingdoms had managed to stay out of armed conflicts since the end of the previous hostilities in 1720. The peace in Denmark-Norway seemed even more propitious in light of the recently

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<sup>992</sup> Holm 1897: 15; Lyngby 2010: 134-136.

<sup>993</sup> Holm 1897: 21; Bobé 1935: 53.

<sup>994</sup> Lyngby 2010: 136; Holm 1897: 18-19.

<sup>995</sup> Frederick V's journey to his Norwegian subjects was, however, in many ways a fiasco: due to very bad weather and a smallpox epidemic in the south of Norway, the planned itinerary from Christiania to Trondheim had to be cancelled. The royal party therefore never left the eastern part of Norway. It was also the last visit by a Danish monarch to Norway before the dissolution of the union in 1814, but this was obviously not known in 1749. For more about the royal visit, see Gundersen 2009.

<sup>996</sup> Fossen 1992: 89.

concluded War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) a devastating and long-lasting war that had included most of the kingdoms of Europe, including Denmark-Norway's neighbour Sweden.

The celebration of a dynastic tercentenary in 1749 thus coincided with positive trends that seem to have fostered a general sense of optimism among the cultural and political elites of the kingdoms. The burgeoning positive developments were widely disseminated and praised in sermons, speeches, poems and illuminations during the dynastic jubilee. The relationship between past, present and future was cast as a constantly rising trajectory of improvement under the benign and God-fearing kings of the Oldenburg dynasty. Whether the examples used were spiritual, such as the development of the Lutheran state church and the consolidation of the Protestant reformation in Denmark-Norway, or temporal, such as the introduction of absolutism, the expansion of trade or the improvement of the Danish legal system, commemorative texts generally followed the same basic narrative structure, presenting the dynastic succession from father to son as a cumulative improvement of Danish-Norwegian society. The culmination of this development was the reign of the present king, Frederik V, «the very best and wisest of the kings [...], the most beloved of the twelve.»<sup>997</sup>

In this chapter, I shall first investigate what the central components of the message the tercentenary was intended to convey about the royal dynasty: that it had been elected by God and that it had brought political stability, peace and prosperity to the kingdoms. I will then look into the two aspects of the dynasty's past that seems to have posed a challenge to preachers and other public panegyrists, namely the history of the third Oldenburg king Christian II and the history of the Catholic Oldenburg monarchs. The very first step, however, is to find out why the government chose to commemorate the royal dynasty in the first place, and how it came to define 28 October 1449 as the moment that marked the beginning of Oldenburg rule in Denmark and Norway.

### **The first dynastic jubilee ever celebrated?**

The commemoration of the advent of the royal dynasty represented yet another novel development in the concept of the centenary in Denmark-Norway. All of the previous jubilees had commemorated events somehow connected with the Protestant Reformation: Luther's 95 theses, the Augsburg Confession, and the Danish Reformation in 1536. In 1749, however, the object of

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<sup>997</sup> *Texter og Bønen* 1749: 5r.

celebration was a political event that had taken place almost a hundred years before Luther: the coronation of king Christian I. The dynastic jubilee therefore represented a significant departure from established practice in Denmark-Norway. In fact, a foreign observer believed that the dynastic tercentenary was the very first of its kind in Europe: the Göttingen historian Johann David Koehler wrote in his numismatic journal that he had not been able to find any previous examples of a dynastic jubilee, neither in Denmark nor in other countries.<sup>998</sup> The rector at the Gymnasium in Oldenburg, Johann Michael Herbart, made much the same claim in the speech that he delivered at his school on the second day of the jubilee, and which he later published.<sup>999</sup> The dynastic jubilee was not, however, completely unprecedented in Europe: in March of 1750, the learned journal *Hamburgische Berichte von Gelehrte Sachen* printed a letter from an anonymous writer from Brandenburg. The correspondent protested that Herbart's claim about the uniqueness of the Danish jubilee was erroneous, since the subjects of Brandenburg had celebrated a similar jubilee thirty-five years before.<sup>1000</sup> To this, the editor of the journal replied that while rector Herbart had spoken about *kingdoms*, the anonymous writer wrote about an *Electorate*, which were two different things. Only when the king of Prussia king ordered the celebration of a jubilee in the year 2000, wrote the editor somewhat sarcastically, could one speak of the same thing.<sup>1001</sup>

There had indeed been a tercentenary for the Hohenzollern dynasty in the lands of the Prussian king in 1715, in memory of the bestowal of electoral dignity on Frederick I in 1415.<sup>1002</sup> But

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<sup>998</sup> «Diese Königl. Dänische Jubelfeyer ist wohl die allererste, die jemahls ist angestellet worden; ich zum wenigsten kan mich nicht erinnern, daß mir dergleichen in den Geschichten der christlichen Königreiche jemahls vorgekommen wäre». Koehler 1749: 407.

<sup>999</sup> «Es habe dis dänische Jubelfest in keinem Geschichtsbuche seines gleichen. Man finde in den Geschichten kein Exempel aufgezeichnet, daß == irgendwo ein ganzes Reich in der Welt ein Fest von dieser besondern Art gefeiert hatte.» Quoted in *Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen. Neunzehnter Tomus*. 1750: 153.

<sup>1000</sup> «Daß ienes dänische Jubelfest in keinem Geschichtbuch seines gleichen habe, und man in den Geschichten kein Exempel aufgezeichnet finde, daß irgendwo ein ganzes Reich in der Welt ein Fest von dieser besondern Art gefeiert hätte; daß die gütige Vorsehung des Himmels dieses seltene Glück dem oldenburgischen Stam allein vorbehalten habe: dagegen dürfte wir Märker, und übrige Unterthanen des preußisch-brandenburgischen Scepters, mit Fug protestiren, als die wir noch bei Menschen Gedenken, vor fünf und dreißig Jahren, in allen königl. preußischen Landen eben dergleichen Jubelfest gefeiert haben, nachdem vor dreihundert Jahren Herrn Friederich, Burggrafen zu Nürnberg, die Mark Brandenburg, samt der Kur- und Erzkämmererswürde zugeeignet, und dessen höchbeglückte Nachkommenschaft von Zeit zu Zeit immer höher, bis zur königlichen Maiestet, erhaben worden.» *Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen. Neunzehnter Tomus*. 1750: 154.

<sup>1001</sup> «Wir geben dem ungenannten Hn. Verfasser dieses Aufsatzes in allem völligen Beifal, bemerken aber dabei dieses, daß der Hr. Consistorialassessor und Rektor Herbart, zu Oldenburg, wie der Augenschein weiset, von Königreichen rede, der ungenante Hr. Gelehrte aus der alten Mark aber schreibt von einem Kurfürstenthum. So lange dieses, wird der Hr. Rektor sagen, unterschiedene Dinge sind, so lange finde er sich auch nicht getroffen. Wan wir zweitausend schreiben, und der zu der Zeit regierende König in Preussen aus eben dem Grunde, als der ieszige König in Dännemark gethan, ein Jubelfest verordnet, so haben wirt den ähnlichen Fal. *Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen. Neunzehnter Tomus*. 1750: 158.

<sup>1002</sup> See Hortleder 1716; Körber 2008; Kragelund 1999: 253.



was the Danish government aware of this precedent? While I have not managed to find any sources to the planning of the tercentenary in which any precedents are explicitly discussed, a short reference in a sermon delivered by the *primus inter pares* among the Danish clergy show that the government was not unaware of the tercentenary in Brandenburg. In his jubilee sermon, delivered to the king and royal family on the first day of the jubilee, the Zealand bishop Peder Hersleb claimed that Danish and Norwegian crown's (nearly) uninterrupted succession from father to son for 300 years was completely unique in the history of the world, except for David's royal dynasty. There had, however, been a dynastic tercentenary in Europe before:

I must confess that I find that such a jubilee has been celebrated in Europe before, namely in 1715 in the house of Brandenburg, [a jubilee] that had many similarities with ours; there, too, had three hundred years passed, there, too, there was twelve generations, twelve kings in an unbroken line, except once, when a brother, in the lack of a son, followed another. But the difference consists in the fact that it was not a crown, but the electoral dignity that had come to that house three hundred years before, which was why the jubilee was celebrated.<sup>1003</sup>

The Brandenburg tercentenary might well have inspired the Danish government to celebrate a dynastic jubilee of its own, although Hersleb's sermon is one of only two direct references I have found to the event.<sup>1004</sup>

The first documentary evidence of awareness of an impending dynastic tercentenary dates from as early as 4 October 1746. On this day, the rector of the University of Copenhagen, Christian Ludvig Scheidt, delivered a Latin oration in memory of the recently deceased king Christian VI. In the midst of his effusive praise of the dead monarch, Scheidt reminded his audience that in two years time the royal dynasty could celebrate its threehundredth anniversary on the Danish throne.<sup>1005</sup> According to Scheidt's calculation then, the dynastic anniversary would occur in 1748. What he could not have known at this point, was that the actual jubilee that commemorated the royal dynasty's accession to the throne would in fact occur the following year, in 1749. Behind this

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<sup>1003</sup>«Vel maa jeg tilstaae, at jeg finder saadan Jubel=Fest at være før holden i Europa, nemlig 1715 i det Brandenburgske Huus, som havde stor Liighed med denne; thi ogsaa der vare tre hundrede Aar forløbne, ogsaa der vare tolv Led, tolv Regentere i een Linie ubrudt, undtagen eengang, da en Broder, i Mangel af en Søn, fulgte den anden. Men Forskiellen bestaaer derudi, at det var ikke en Krone, det var den Chur-Førstelige Værdighed som tre hundrede Aar tilforn var kommet til det Huus, og derfor blev holdet Jubel=Fest.» Hersleb 1749: 23.

<sup>1004</sup> The tercentenary in Brandenburg was also known to an ordinary Danish parish minister: «Thi enddog et høyt Chur-førstelig Huus i Tydskland, nemlig Brandenburg, har haft samme Naade og Lycke i 300 Aar, for hvilked og blev holt Jubel-Fest Ao 1715, 2<sup>dre</sup> Jule-Dag, saa var det da ikkun et førstelig Huus, af førstelig Stamme, men nu ogsaa ophøyd til Kongelig Høyhed og Værdighed.» Gregers Weile, *Dauids Inderlig Tacksigelse for Guds store og vigtige Velgierninger imod sig*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67.

<sup>1005</sup> Scheidt 1747: 578; See also Holm 1879a: 13.

apparent contradiction lies a conscious decision based on a scholarly discussion between two of the leading historians of the age. It is to this discussion that we shall now turn.

### Defining the framework: 1748 or 1749?

Before the dynastic tercentenary could commence, a central question had to be resolved: which date marked the actual start of the reign of Christian I, the first monarch of the Oldenburg dynasty? The main participants in the discussion were the historian and royal archivist Hans Gram, and his younger protégée and later successor as royal archivist, Jacob Langebek. I have discovered two separate set documents pertaining to the discussion: one is located in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, the other in the University Library in Trondheim. The file in Copenhagen contains Gram's text and a short, unsigned and undated text on the same topic in German.<sup>1006</sup> The file in Trondheim contains a copied version of Gram's text as well as a text about the same topic by Jacob Langebek.<sup>1007</sup> Together, these documents allow us to reconstruct the context of the discussion, although some points still remain unclear. From the text itself, it appears that Gram wrote his proposal sometime in 1747.<sup>1008</sup> According to the Trondheim version, it was presented to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and later approved by the king.<sup>1009</sup> Langebek's text was written some time in 1748, and was also presented to the Academy. We know that the king approved Gram's suggestion and, consequently, that the jubilee was eventually celebrated on the date that he had suggested, 28 October 1749. What the texts do not reveal, however, is the exact reason why the discussion took place in the first place.<sup>1010</sup> The meeting protocols from the first years of the Academy are currently lost, but index cards in the Academy's archive in Copenhagen provide some basic information. Gram had delivered his proposal to the Johan Ludvig Holstein, who was the President of the Academy, before his death in January 1448. The text was later read aloud to the Academy by its secretary, Henrik Hielmstjerne. Langebek was not yet a member when he submitted his proposal,

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<sup>1006</sup> H. Gram: *Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio)

<sup>1007</sup> *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k). The Trondheim copy is attributed to Benjamin Dass, rector of the Cathedral school in Trondheim. Dass corresponded with Gram in the period 1735 to 1747, so it is possible that Gram received a version of the text directly from Gram. The correspondence between Dass and Gram is described in Erichsen 1897.

<sup>1008</sup> Gram writes «det indeværende Aar 1747», which roughly translates to «the present year 1747».

<sup>1009</sup> *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k).

<sup>1010</sup> The proposals are not mentioned in Gram's and Langebek's published correspondence. Rørdam 1895; Gram 1907.

so it was probably read by Hielmstjerne as well, possibly at the same meeting.<sup>1011</sup> A probable scenario is that von Holstein asked the historians for their opinion and that the king was eventually presented with the alternatives after they had been presented to and debated by the members of the Academy.

In 1747, the 62-year old Hans Gram was the senior academic member of the Academy. Gram had been Professor in Greek at the University of Copenhagen since 1714. In his youth, he had been given access to collections of historical manuscripts in the private libraries of various patrons and made important contacts in the small milieu of researchers and collectors in Copenhagen. In 1730, his efforts were rewarded when he was awarded the posts as secretary of the royal archives, royal librarian and royal historiographer.<sup>1012</sup> Attached to Gram's proposal was a list of the most important dates pertaining to the circumstances surrounding the accession of the first Oldenburg king to the Danish and Norwegian thrones. The list, written by Gram himself, was derived from the Danish nobleman and historian Arild Huitfeldt's chronicles, written in the late sixteenth century.<sup>1013</sup> Huitfeldt's account, according to Gram, went as follows: After king Christopher of Bayern died in early January 1448, the Danish Council of the Realm had invited the Norwegian and Swedish Councils to discuss the election of a new king, according to the rules of the Union of Calmar between the three kingdoms. The Swedes, however, were dissatisfied with the union and offered the Swedish throne to the nobleman Carl Knudsson. The Danes looked for a king of their own and eventually offered the throne to Adolph, Duke of Schleswig and Count of Holstein, due to his «good and Christian government». The Duke declined because of «old age and weakness», but suggested that they offer the throne to Count Christian of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, who was also related to the ancient royal line of Denmark. Christian accepted, and on 1 September 1448 he gave the Danish subjects their privileges and his charter. On 28 September he swore his royal oath and was acclaimed by the Danish estates at Viborg Landsting. In July 1449 he was acclaimed by the Norwegian estates and gave them his charter. On 28 October 1749 he was crowned in Copenhagen and, finally, he was crowned in Trondheim on 29 July 1750.<sup>1014</sup>

The facts at hand appear relatively straightforward, and Gram did not dispute any of these dates in his proposal. It was more problematic, however, to determine which of the dates was best

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<sup>1011</sup> This information is gathered from two index cards, filed under Hans Gram and Jacob Langebek. According to the cards, their proposals were recorded on the same page (page 182), which suggests that they were presented at around the same time.

<sup>1012</sup> Jørgensen 1964: 187-188.

<sup>1013</sup> The caption read «According to Arild Huidtfeldt's history». *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

<sup>1014</sup> *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

suites to mark the start of Christian's reign and the rule of the Oldenburg dynasty. The rules and customs that had regulated the procedures for the election of a new king in the late Middle Ages, exacerbated by the difficult political circumstances in 1448, had led to a long and protracted process from the old king had died in January 1448 till Christian I had been crowned in both kingdoms in July 1450. The contrast was great to the hereditary transfer of royal dignity in the eighteenth century. According to the Royal Law of 1665 (§ XV), the oldest son of the monarch became king at the very moment his father drew his last breath. All the traditional political ceremonies that had involved the subject's acclamation and election of the king had thus been made obsolete after the introduction of the absolute monarchy: the royal charter was abolished, and the kings had replaced the coronation ceremony, which had traditionally involved the royal oath, the investiture, and the subjects' acclamation of the king, with the anointment ceremony, a purely devotional act that merely symbolised the king's God-given power.<sup>1015</sup> For Gram, the question was to establish at what point during the two-year long process Count Christian had actually become Christian I of Denmark and Norway, *de facto* and *de jure*. As we shall see, this was a sensitive matter with political ramifications.

In the proposal itself, Gram's discussion centred around two issues. On the one hand, he tried to pinpoint when Christian had actually become king according to the customs of the time and, on the other hand, he considered which date was most suitable to commemorate from a present point of view. According to Gram, the coronation was the crucial constitutional act in medieval times. He could not explain why the coronation had been postponed more than a full year after Christian had sworn his oath and been acclaimed, but he claimed that this was «against all rules and customs in the old times.»<sup>1016</sup> After a king had sworn his oath and been acclaimed, one had always rushed the coronation, since it was a «ceremony that in the old centuries was considered to be most essential for the monarchy.»<sup>1017</sup> The version from Trondheim, which might be a paraphrase of the original text rather than Gram's own formulation, stated that «the coronation was such an essential element in those days, that one emphasized it much more than a royal charter and a mere acclamation.»<sup>1018</sup> The reason why, wrote Gram, king Waldemar of Schleswig («Woldemarum

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<sup>1015</sup> Eller 1976: 8-11; Olden-Jørgensen 1997: 247-249.

<sup>1016</sup> «Virkeligen var dog dette imod alle Regler og Sædvaner i de gamle Tiider.» *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

<sup>1017</sup> «Thi saasart en Konge hafde svoret og var hyldet, hafver mand stædse hastet med Kroningen, saasom en Ceremonie der var i de gamle Seculis agtet som tres-essentielle til Kongedømmet.» *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

<sup>1018</sup> «Endeligen var Kroningen regnet for en saa essentiell Post i de Dage, at man langt meere saae derpaa, end paa en Haandfæstning og en blot Hyldning.» *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k).

Slesvicensem») was excluded from the royal line and was called «After-König» [i.e. vice-regent or usurper], was that one could not find when and where he had been crowned. Gram suspected that the Danes had acclaimed Christian early to put pressure on the Swedes and Norwegians, with success in the case of the latter, by showing how ready and willing he had been to confirm their privileges. When the Danish council decided that they would no longer wait for a reunion with Sweden, which they realized would take too long, they had decided to proceed with the coronation. Gram concluded his historical discussion by stating that one had

always counted the honourable king Christian I and the Oldenburg dynasty's access to the government, not from 1448, when he had only been elected by one of the kingdoms, but from 1449, when he had become king over both Denmark and Norway, and in the same year had been crowned in the first.<sup>1019</sup>

This was Gram's main historical argument in favour of celebrating the jubilee on 28 October 1749. In support of this, Gram added that the Danish almanacs, both past and present, counted the start of Christian's reign from 1449, which meant that in 1749 the almanacs would state that Oldenburg dynasty had ruled for 300 years. On a more practical level, Gram pointed out the difficulties of locating a suitable date in 1748. Christian had signed his charter on 1 September 1448, had sworn an oath to the common subjects on Viborg landsting on 28 September the same year, and had repeated the oath on all the other ting-assemblies in Denmark in the remainder of the year. Which one of these days, asked Gram, should one define as the day of his acclamation? He claimed that it would be difficult to «reduce so many oaths and acclamations, performed on various times and locations, to one day, and celebrate a jubilee based on this», unless one wished to celebrate the royal charter alone, which Christian had indeed given and sealed on 1 September 1448.<sup>1020</sup> Gram did not seem to consider this a good solution, however. Not only was 28 October 1749 the most historically correct day, due to the importance of the coronation in the Middle Ages, but he claimed that «the coronation day is a much more appropriate day for a jubilee than that of the royal charter.»<sup>1021</sup> Gram used the Danish word «anstændigere», which translates to «appropriate» in the sense of being «decent» or

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<sup>1019</sup> «Samme er ogsaa Aarsagen, hvorfor mand stædse og altid hafver regnet Høystbemt Kong Christiani 1. og den Oldenburgiske Stammes Adkomst til Regeringen, ikke fra An. 1448, da hand ikkun af det ene Rige var blefven udvaldt, men fra Anno 1449, da hand var blefven Konge ofver begge Riger Danmark og Norge, og i samme Aar blef kronet til det første.» *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenburgiske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

<sup>1020</sup> «Her blifver nu ondt at reducere saa mange Eder og Hyldninger, holden paa adskillige Tiider og Stæder, til een Dag, for derpaa at feire et Festum Jubilæi.» *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenburgiske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

<sup>1021</sup> «[...]og Kronings-Dagen en langt anstændigere Dag til et Jubilæum, end Haandfæstningens.» *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenburgiske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

«dignified».<sup>1022</sup> The comment is significant. The royal charter, a formal contract that confirmed the subjects' privileges and stipulated various limitations on the monarch's power, was the fundamental constitutional document of the elective monarchy before 1660. The sovereign had to accept the terms of the charter before he could be elected. The last royal charter before the introduction of absolutism, signed by Frederik III in 1648, was the most restrictive ever accepted by a Danish monarch and represented the historical apex of the Council's power.<sup>1023</sup> When hereditary monarchy was introduced at the Estates General in October 1660, the royal charter Frederik III had signed twelve years before was annulled, opening the door for absolute monarchy.<sup>1024</sup> Gram's remark suggests that Christian's charter, the foremost symbol of the constitutional limitations on royal power, was not seen as a suitable event to celebrate in the contemporary political context.

The other proposal, written by Jakob Langebek, went in a somewhat different direction. The 38-year old Langebek was Gram's protégé, had lived in his household and worked as his assistant in the Royal library. He had a theological exam from Copenhagen University, but his interest in history and antiquities led him to pursue a career as a professional historian. The lack of certain and steady income, however, made him dependent on the support from Gram and other patrons in his early career. Langebek had founded and edited the first editions of a learned journal in German, *Dänische Bibliothec oder Sammlung von alten und neuen gelehrten Sachen aus Dännemarc* (first edition 1737), together with the clergyman Ludvig Harboe. Langebek apparently resented his intended role in the Academy as a member of the third class, that is, as a mere assistant. In addition, he was dissatisfied with the fact that it was not exclusively a society for the antiquities. These factors contributed to him founding, in 1745, the Royal Danish Society for the Improvement of Nordic Language and History (*det Kongl. Danske Selskab til det Nordiske Sprogs og Historiens Forbedring*), which published its findings in the journal *Danske Magazin*.<sup>1025</sup> After Gram's death in January 1748, Langebek succeeded him as royal archivist.<sup>1026</sup>

This was probably Langebek's occupation at the time he wrote his proposal.<sup>1027</sup> His text was formulated as a rebuttal of Gram's arguments for celebrating the jubilee in 1749. Langebek never explicitly mentioned Gram's name, but as he directly contradicted all of his main arguments we can

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<sup>1022</sup> Query «anstændig» in *Ordbog over det danske sprog*. <http://ordnet.dk/ods/ordbog?query=anstændig>. Retrieved 10.04.2014.

<sup>1023</sup> Jespersen 1989: 70-75.

<sup>1024</sup> Jespersen 1989: 164-165; Olden-Jørgensen 2010: 50; See more about the introduction of absolutism in chapter 7.

<sup>1025</sup> The royal epithet was added in 1746, when the Society received royal protection. Jørgensen 1964: 205.

<sup>1026</sup> Langebek's career is described in Paludan-Müller 1883: 87-114; Jørgensen 1964: 203-209.

<sup>1027</sup> It is clear from the text that it was written in 1748, but it does not state precisely when. Langebek became archivist already in February 1748, so the odds are greater that he wrote the proposal after this.

be certain that Langebek was familiar with his mentor's text. Langebek argued that the most appropriate year to celebrate the jubilee was the present year, 1748. Like Gram, he justified his claim by referring to the political practices of the late Middle Ages. According to Langebek, one should reckon the start of Christian I's reign from when he had signed his charter, sworn his oath and been acclaimed by the Danish subjects. After this, he claimed, no one could deny that Christian I was the ruling king of Denmark and in legitimate possession of the throne, although he had not yet been crowned. Langebek pointed out three reasons why this was the case: Christian had used the royal title both before and after his coronation, he had issued privileges, granted fiefs, sent ambassadors to foreign countries and done other royal business before the coronation and, finally, Christian himself reckoned the start of his reign in 1448 in various official documents. Therefore, claimed Langebek, the jubilee should be held «in memory of the year 1448, and fall on the day the honourable king Christian I started to govern according to his acclamation and oath, and first acceded to the Danish throne [...]»<sup>1028</sup> The proper date should therefore be 28 September 1748.

Langebek went on to criticize the claim, made by Gram, that the king's accession to the throne was not complete before his coronation. It was true, he wrote, that the coronation was considered to be more than a mere ceremony in those days, that it was seen as something holy and elevated. However, it was still only a ceremony that solemnly proclaimed the royal dignity and majesty that had already been conferred on the king, as well as the agreements made between the king and his subjects. Christian would still have been a true king even if circumstances had prevented him from ever being crowned. Langebek mentioned a few later examples of kings who had not been crowned immediately after their acclamation, Christian III and Frederik II. If one wanted to celebrate a jubilee in memory of the start of their reigns, asked Langebek, should it happen on the day they had been crowned? His answer was no, it should take place on the day the first was acclaimed and the second «enjoyed the fruits of his acclamation», unless one wished to «exclude two of their most honourable deeds from their royal reigns, namely the holy Reformation and the conquest of the Ditmarsk, which both took place before their coronations».<sup>1029</sup> Langebek did not stop at this. He pointed out that a coronation was nothing unusual, but something that happened to

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<sup>1028</sup> «[...]om der skal holdes noget Jubilæum, maa det skee i Erindring af det Aar 1448, og falde paa den Dag, da høybemeldte Konge Christ. 1. ved sin Hyldning og Eed antog Regjeringen, og først besteg den Kongl. Danske Throne [...]» *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k).

<sup>1029</sup> «[...] med mindre man vilde udelukke tvende deres meest ærefulde Gierninger fra deres Kongelige Regjering, nemlig den salige Reformation og Ditmarskens Erobring, som begge skeede før deres Kroning.» *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k).

all kings in the past. To be the first king of a royal dynasty and being followed by eleven kings in a straight line through three centuries, however, was something quite exceptional and worthy of commemoration. This had not happened with Christian's coronation, but when he was acclaimed on Viborg landsting and his royal government confirmed.

Langebek's next comment sharply illuminates the political implications of the discussion, particularly when read in light of Gram's remark about the impropriety of commemorating Christian's charter. Langebek disagreed with Gram's argument, and explained his own view as follows:

The objection that some may make, that it could be somewhat unpleasant for a sovereign monarch to celebrate the time and day on which his ancestor swore on a charter and bound himself with an oath to his subjects, is of no importance; because, in order to celebrate a jubilee, the question here is not how king Christian I became king, but rather the matter in itself, that he became king of Denmark, and was the first king of the honourable ruling house, and that happened in September 1448. Even less could there be a jubilee on his coronation day, since on such coronations in those days, the Council of the Realm unfortunately tried to show their own [highness and authority], and reduce the highness and authority of the kings, more than having any other use of this ceremony.»<sup>1030</sup>

For Langebek, in other words, the crucial factor was to determine the *exact moment* Christian became king, rather than the *manner* in which he became king. It was, furthermore, fallacious to assume that a coronation was more appropriate to celebrate than the day the king signed his charter, since the coronation was just as, if not more, tarnished by the ambitions of the nobility. Langebek also countered Gram's argument about the almanacs. He claimed that they contained a chronological error, apparently first made by a Danish mathematician in the middle of the previous century, which had been allowed to stand uncorrected in subsequent almanacs. Langebek concluded by stating that if it was eventually decided, contrary to his recommendation, that the jubilee be celebrated in 1749, it should not commemorate Christian's coronation, but rather «his happy marriage, which has

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<sup>1030</sup> «Den Indvendning, om nogen vilde sige, at det maatte falde noget ubehageligt for en souverain Monark at hellig holde den Tiid og Dag paa hvilke hans Stamfader havde besværgt en Haandfæstning og med Eed forbundet sig til sine Undersaatter, er af ingen Betydenhed; thi til at holde Jubilæum spørges her ikke om Maaden, paa hvilken K. Christ. 1. blev Konge, men om Sagen i sig selv, at han blev Konge i Danmark, og var den første Konge af den høylovlige regierende Huus, og det skeede in Septembri 1448. Meget mindre kunde der da holdes Jubilæum paa den Dag han blev kronet; thi ved saadan Kongernes Kroning i de Dage søgte disverre og Rigets Raad meere at viise deres egen, og indskrænke Kongernes Høyhed og Myndighed, end havde Grunder til nogen anden virkelig Nytte af denne Ceremonie.» *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k).



produced such a powerful and blessed offspring, under whose mild hearts we Danish still live, and consider it our greatest happiness to live under until the end of days.»<sup>1031</sup>

We have thus far seen the main arguments made by Gram and Langebek, two of the most important and influential historians of the day, about when it was most appropriate to celebrate a jubilee. Their respective proposals illuminate how two Danish intellectuals close to the government approached politically sensitive elements of the national past, and reveal the latent tensions that arose to the surface when the historical record was confronted with the political situation in the present. Their challenge was to establish how the genesis of the royal dynasty could be celebrated without reminding ordinary subjects of those aspects of the medieval political system that were less appealing from a contemporary point of view. Both Gram and Langebek touch upon the same crucial question, although reaching opposite conclusions, namely how to present the accession to the throne of the first Oldenburg monarch without tarnishing it with references to the political power of the late medieval nobility. We must assume that their proposals were never intended for publication; at least they only survive in manuscript form. The semi-private atmosphere of the Academy allowed the historians to conduct a candid discussion, which gave the monarch and his advisors a basis for deciding on both a historically correct, and politically sound, date for the jubilee.

Another matter worthy of note in this context is the complex question of how and when the estates in Norway elected Christian to the Norwegian throne. Early on in his chronicle, Arild Huitfeldt claimed that the Norwegians had declared in 1448 that they would elect Christian and stay in the union with Denmark if he agreed to confirm their privileges, since he was related by blood to queen Margaret.<sup>1032</sup> According to Gram, this was one of the many places in Huitfeldt's chronicle where the historian had made a mistake, either because he had read the documents incorrectly, or because he had lacked the relevant documents. Gram pointed out that the Norwegians had not declared themselves in favour of Christian as early as 1448. In fact, documents in the Swedish archives showed clearly that there had been two parties in Norway, one in favour of the union with Denmark, the other against. The former, according to Gram «the best and greatest part of the clerical and lay council members», had declared no later than in the spring of 1449 that they were in favour of Christian. In Trondheim, however, Carl Knudsson had a «strong party» led by the archbishop Aslak Bolt on his side. The archbishop had eventually changed his mind, claimed Gram, and when

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<sup>1031</sup> «[...]hans lyksalige Giftermaal, der har bragt saa mægtig og velsignet en Afkom til Veie, under hvis milde Hierter vi Danske endnu leve, og skatter det for vor høyeste Lyksalighed derunder at leve til Dagernes Ende.» *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k).

<sup>1032</sup> Huitfeldt 1977 [1599]: 5.

king Christian travelled to Marstrand in Norway in July of 1449, the lay and clerical members of the Norwegian council, including archbishop Bolt, elected him to the Norwegian throne and swore him allegiance.<sup>1033</sup> What Gram failed to mention, however, was that Huitfeldt indeed discussed the «Swedish party» in the Norwegian council in his chronicle. Huitfeldt wrote that Carl Knudsson had plotted secretly with the archbishop of Trondheim Aslak Bolt and «some of the Northern Norwegians» and was crowned in secret in Trondheim on the Thursday before St. Clements Day [20 November] 1449 and, finally, that Carl's claim to the Norwegian throne was later reneged by the Swedish delegates at the negotiations in Halmstad in 1450.<sup>1034</sup>

Why did Gram not refer to this part of Huitfeldt's account? It might simply have been an oversight, but this is not very likely.<sup>1035</sup> A more reasonable explanation is that Carl Knudsson's coronation in Trondheim, which took place as late as 20 November 1449 and proved the lingering existence of a pro-Swedish party in Norway, was difficult to reconcile with Gram's claim that Christian had become king in both countries in both kingdoms by 28 October 1449. What Huitfeldt's chronicle showed was in fact that Christian's accession to the Norwegian throne had not been secured before the meeting in Halmstad in May of 1450.

To a modern reader, this detailed discussion of late medieval politics might seem to have been of mere academic interest. The issue had, however, serious political implications since it concerned such sensitive issues as the legitimacy of the Union of Kalmar, the Norwegian subjects' allegiance to the Oldenburg kings, and the historical rivalry between the kings of Denmark and Sweden. The legacy of the Union of Kalmar had been a matter of hot dispute between the Danish and Swedish governments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While the Swedes saw the years 1397 to 1523 as a period of Danish tyranny, the Danes claimed that the Swedes had behaved as illegitimate rebels when they broke out of the Union.<sup>1036</sup> Although the conflict had cooled off somewhat by the eighteenth century, the continuing contested nature of the issue is evident from how it was handled by two of the most renowned historians in Sweden and Denmark-Norway, respectively.<sup>1037</sup> Samuel von Pufendorf, royal historiographer in Sweden (1677-1688), followed the traditional Swedish historical interpretation of the Union of Kalmar when he claimed that the union

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<sup>1033</sup> *Sal. Etats Raad Grams Betænkning om Tiden paa hvilken den oldenborgiske Jubel-Fest bør holdes* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 211k); *H. Gram: Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

<sup>1034</sup> Huitfeldt 1977 [1599]: 17-25.

<sup>1035</sup> Gram's chronological list of pertinent events was derived from Huitfeldt and extended all the way to 1450. It is reasonable to assume that Gram must have read all of the relevant pages when he prepared this list.

<sup>1036</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2009; Skovgaard-Petersen 2012: 455-464.

<sup>1037</sup> For the «historiographical dialogue» between Ludvig Holberg and Samuel Pufendorf, see Berndtsson 2014.

had become weak and broken, inasmuch as it was to great advantage to one kingdom, i.e. Denmark, and great damage to the two others.<sup>1038</sup> He wrote that the Norwegians sent a message to king Carl in 1449 and «begehrten ihn zum Könige/weil sie bey der Dänen Vereinigung übel gefahren waren.» The Norwegian commoners («de gemeinen Mann») then acclaimed the Swedish king, while only a few noblemen opposed him, whereupon he was crowned in Trondheim. According to Pufendorf, king Carl's claim to Norway was not reneged before the negotiations in Halmstad in 1450, against his will.<sup>1039</sup> The Norwegian-Danish historian Ludvig Holberg, on the other hand, claimed that the Norwegians had declared themselves satisfied with Christian's election to the Danish throne as soon as they had heard of it, and wanted to elect him to the Norwegian throne to continue the union between the two kingdoms. According to Holberg, this «voluntary offer» showed that Norway was «pleased with the behaviour of the previous kings, and serves as proof that the Swedish grievances has not been altogether well founded.»<sup>1040</sup> Holberg did mention Carl's coronation by archbishop Aslak in Trondheim in November 1449.<sup>1041</sup> In contrast to Pufendorf, however, Holberg claimed that king Carl only had marginal support in Norway: «The Swedish writers say that this happened on the demand of the majority of the inhabitants, but history proves otherwise.»<sup>1042</sup> As proof of this assertion, Holberg claimed that the Norwegian Council of the Realm had in 1451 solemnly protested against Carl's coronation and confirmed the acclamation of Christian. The Northern provinces of Norway had followed suit in 1453, and protested against claims that they supported the Swedish king. According to Holberg, this proved that it was «not Norway, but only a few rebellious people that had invited king Carl.»<sup>1043</sup>

Pufendorf, then, made it appear as if the majority of the Norwegians had wanted to break out of the Union of Kalmar and elect Carl Knudsson to the Norwegian throne; Holberg claimed the exact opposite, that the coronation had been the work of a small group of rebels. Hans Gram chose

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<sup>1038</sup> Pufendorf 1686: 204.

<sup>1039</sup> Pufendorf 1686: 209-211.

<sup>1040</sup> «Dette deres frivillige Tilbud giver tilstrækkeligen tilkiende, at Norge har været fornøyd med de forrige Kongers Opførsel, og tiener til Beviis, at de Svenske Gravamina ikke i alle Maader have været vel grundede». Holberg 1732: 640.

<sup>1041</sup> Holberg 1732: 643.

<sup>1042</sup> «De Svenske Skribentere sige, at saadant skeede, efter de fleste Indbyggers Forlangende, men Historien viiser annerledes.» Holberg 1732: 655; The Swedish historian Olof von Dalin later questioned the truth of Holberg's assertion in his own *Svea Rikes Historia*, arguing that the Norwegian estates were either lured or threatened into reneging their support for king Carl. Dalin 1750: 718; Another Swedish historian, Anders Botin, also claimed that Holberg erred on this point, and argued that the error was a result of Holberg's unawareness of Johann Hadorph's 1674 edition of the Swedish rhymed chronicle, where there was incontrovertible evidence that most Norwegians wanted Carl to be their king. Botin 1771: 211-212.

<sup>1043</sup> «Man seer da heraf, at ikke Norge, men allene nogle faa uroelige Mennisker, havde indkaldet Kong Carl.» Holberg 1732: 655.

a third option and bypassed the problem by claiming, contrary to available evidence at the time, that bishop Aslak Bolt had decided to change sides before the meeting in Marstrand in June 1449. Although we cannot know for certain his motivations for making this claim, it is likely that he saw this as way of solving the chronological dilemma of when to celebrate the jubilee. If the government planned to celebrate a tercentenary soon, and if the almanacs stated that Christian I became king in 1449, it would be impractical to recommend that the jubilee should commemorate the Norwegian coronation in 1450.

We know that the king must have chosen at some point to follow Gram's recommendation, since the jubilee was eventually celebrated on 28 October 1749. A document in the same case file as Gram's proposal may have constituted the main basis for the king's final decision. It is written in German, and is unsigned and undated. The handwriting, however, resembles Johan Ludvig von Holstein's, so it is possible that he wrote the text.<sup>1044</sup> It is a list of the relevant dates connected to the accession of Christian I, with short explanations of what took place on each date. The document concludes that 28 October is the only suitable date. The reasons given seem to be based on Gram's arguments. According to the text, only particular acts had taken place on the other dates, none of which were sufficiently important to commemorate. They had, furthermore, only relevance for one of the kingdoms, namely Denmark. 28 October 1449, on the other hand, was the only day in which the Oldenburg dynasty had acceded to both thrones. Finally, the coronation was held to be most important in the old days, which was why Waldemar of Schleswig had not been counted as part of the royal line. Therefore, the text concluded, the tercentenary should commemorate the coronation of Christian I as the start of the God-given happiness of the Nordic kingdoms.<sup>1045</sup>

Christian I's coronation was eventually defined as a formative event, but only after the historians Gram and Langebek had sifted through and analysed the historical evidence and presented their respective alternatives. Although the basic theme and purpose of the jubilee, the origins of the royal status of the Oldenburg dynasty, remained the same throughout the discussions, the actual date selected could easily have turned out differently if the government had prioritized differently. Both the alternatives 1748 and 1749 did have factual significance, but the actual selection of one of them was based on practical and political considerations. A telling incident that occurred in 1748 underlines the contingency in the selection of date. According to Lars N. Henningsen, the city council of the town of Oldenburg in the ancestral lands of the royal dynasty had been disappointed

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<sup>1044</sup> Gigas attributes them to the Law professor Peder Kofod Ancher, but not with certainty. Gigas 1911: 42.

<sup>1045</sup> H. Gram: *Betænkning om den Oldenborgske Stammes Jubelaar 1749* (NKS 594 o folio).

when Frederick V had passed by the town on his journey through the Duchies in the summer of 1748. As a substitute, they had struck upon the idea of celebrating, in September 1748, the tercentenary of Christian I's election to the Danish throne and in the Duchy of Schleswig. Fortunately, someone had been prescient enough to make sure that the city council's plans did not collide with similar plans on the government level, so the city council humbly presented their idea to Johan Sigismund Schulin, head secretary of the German Chancery. Schulin replied that «although it was pleasant to the king that the subjects in Oldenburg wanted to show their affection, the celebration would be better placed in 1749, for the jubilee of the coronation in the twin kingdoms.»<sup>1046</sup> Embarrassment was thereby narrowly avoided, but the story shows clearly that the coronation was not the obvious choice for the celebration of a jubilee. Another example is a «jubilee speech» («Jubelrede») delivered at the Georg Augustus University in Göttingen in 1748 by a certain Henrich Otto von Gössel from Schleswig.<sup>1047</sup> According to the title page, von Gössel delivered the speech for the academic senate and a large assembly of spectators on 28 September 1748, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the homage of Christian I at Viborg.<sup>1048</sup> The impression of contingency is strengthened further by the fact that when, a century later, the Danish government planned for the celebration of a dynastic quadricentenary, they opted for the date 28 September 1848.<sup>1049</sup> Several later commentators, being unaware of the debate between Gram and Langebek, have either pointed out that the tercentenary was celebrated a year too late or mistakenly assumed that it was indeed celebrated in 1748.<sup>1050</sup>

## A voluntary anachronism

The argument that the tercentenary was celebrated a year too late is not novel: the government's decision to commemorate Christian's coronation on 28 October 1449 was in fact publicly criticized before the tercentenary in a journal written and edited by a young and irreverent Frenchman. Laurent Angliviel de la Beaumelle was a Huguenot from Languedoc who, after having studied theology in Geneva, arrived in Copenhagen in 1747 to work as a private tutor for the children of the Master of

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<sup>1046</sup> «Ministeren svarede, at vel var det kongen behageligt, at undersåttene i Oldenburg ville vise deres hengivenhed, men festen ville være bedre placeret i 1749, til jubilæet for kroningen i tvillingrigerne.» Henningsen 2000: 31.

<sup>1047</sup> I have not managed to find information about von Gössel, but the absence of any formal title beneath his name suggests that he was a student at the Georg Augustus University at the time.

<sup>1048</sup> Von Gössel 1748.

<sup>1049</sup> The plans were never realized, due to the First Schleswig War and the political turmoil in Denmark in 1848. The plans are described in Wegener 1856; See also Clausen & Rist 1910:156; Holm 1879:8.

<sup>1050</sup> Baden & Tobiesen 1799: 486; Feldbæk 1994; Adriansen 2011: 52.

the Hunt («Overjægermester») Carl Christian von Gram. In the years 1748-1750, la Beaumelle wrote and published his own periodical, *La Spectatrice Danoise, ou l'Aspasie moderne*. In the journal, which was initially well-received and commercially successful, la Beaumelle adopted a female persona and wrote witty, elegant and slightly disrespectful comments on a variety of cultural and political matters of current interest in contemporary Copenhagen. According to Ellen Krefting, la Beaumelle's irreverence and polemical style eventually caused him trouble with leading cultural personalities, publishers and booksellers, censorship authorities, high protectors, the court and the royal family. He was eventually forced to leave Copenhagen in 1751, although the circumstances surrounding his departure are not entirely clear.<sup>1051</sup>

In the 42<sup>nd</sup> instalment of *La Spectatrice Danoise*, la Beaumelle published a text that had ostensibly been sent to «Madame la Spectatrice» by a «Louïs Antoine De \*\*\*» from the County of Delmenhorst in Northern Germany, a territory belonging to the Danish kings. Such letters to the editor appeared regularly in the journal. Krefting points out that it is difficult to know which of them letters are authentic and which are fictional, but claims that we must suppose that most of them were written by la Beaumelle himself.<sup>1052</sup> In the text, Louïs Antoine (or la Beaumelle) proposed a problem («une difficulté») to the public: he wondered why the learned men of Copenhagen had postponed the celebration of the beginning of the glorious reign of the House of Oldenburg to the present year 1749, instead of celebrating it in 1748. Louïs Antoine presented himself as a zealous patriot that felt obliged to correct the «voluntary anachronism» («Anachronisme volontaire») that had been made by the learned men of Copenhagen with regards to the jubilee. The people of Delmenhorst were so proud to have given Denmark its august ruling house that they could not patiently suffer any errors concerning it.<sup>1053</sup> Louïs Antoine wrote that, since Christian had not been crowned before 1749, the scholars of Copenhagen had probably assumed that his reign had not begun before then. But was this not the same as saying that the king's supreme authority and, consequently, the start of his reign depended on his coronation?<sup>1054</sup> Such an assumption went against universally held sentiments that were supported by history and natural law, which taught that «unless expressly stipulated otherwise, the royal authority in a elective monarchy, such as Denmark was then, emanates from the election by

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<sup>1051</sup> Krefting 2008: 37-45.

<sup>1052</sup> Krefting 2008: 47; See also Clausen 1897: 25-26.

<sup>1053</sup> Christian I was Count of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst before he was elected king of Denmark.

<sup>1054</sup> «Mais n'est-ce pas dire, que l'exercice de l'autorité suprême, & consequemment l'Epoque du Règne dépendent du sacre?» La Beaumelle 1749: 369.

the estates or by the people.»<sup>1055</sup> It was common knowledge and had been demonstrated by historians that Christian had been elected and universally recognized as monarch in 1448.<sup>1056</sup> There could therefore be no doubt about when the reign had truly started and what year the jubilee should have been celebrated: «Donc, lad. Année est la véritable & seule époque de son Règne. Donc l'année 1748 étoit celle qui devoit être consacrée au Jubilé.»<sup>1057</sup>

Loüis Antoine (or la Beaumelle) went on presenting four arguments to prove the great flaws («de grands défauts») in the hypothesis of those who dated the beginning of the reign to Christian's coronation: first, it went directly against common practice in all the Christian kingdoms. Second, it was opposed to the «famous convention» between emperor Otto the Great and pope Leo VIII. Third, it encroached on the rights of the people in an elective monarchy and on the rights of the sovereign in a hereditary monarchy. Fourth, it obscured the chronology. Loüis Antoine summed up the refutation by claiming that it was not good to prolong the pious pretensions of the ambitious clergy in the good old days, who wanted the royal authority to depend on the coronation ceremony.<sup>1058</sup>

Loüis Antoine from Delmenhorst (or la Beaumelle) did not stop at this, however. He also criticized the idea that by celebrating the coronation day one could kill two birds with one stone and celebrate a jubilee in Denmark *and* Norway at the same time. This pretext, he wrote, fell under the weight of its own contradiction. Choosing to celebrate Christian's coronation in Denmark and his election in Norway meant saying yes and no to the same proposition. Christian I, he pointed out, had been elected by a party in Southern Norway, but since a northern party chose to follow the Swedish king Carl Knutsson, he was not crowned in Trondheim before 1460 [sic!]. Consequently, there were two distinct dates that marked the beginning of his reign in each of the two kingdoms («Voilà deux Epoque dinstinctes.»). Loüis Antoine addressed the learned men of Copenhagen in a challenging tone, mocking them for their inconsistency: «Pourquoi n'en faites-vous qu'une? Pourquoi donnés-vous la preference à l'année de l'Electon, après l'avoir rejetée? Soiez au moins d'accord avec vous-

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<sup>1055</sup> «Et le dire, n'est-ce pas faire main basse sur le sentiment universellement recû & appuié de l'Histoire & du Droit Naturel, qui nous apprennent, que l'autorité Roiale, à moins de quelque stipulation expresse, émane, dans les Roiaumes Electifs, tel qu'étoit alors le Dannemarc, de l'élection des Etats ou du Peuple.» La Beaumelle 1749: 369.

<sup>1056</sup> The author referred in the footnote to «Hamelman & Hvitfeldt». The latter is of course the Danish historian Arild Huitfeldt's chronicle of the reign of Christian I. The second must be Herman Hamelman's *Oldenburgische Chronicon* (1599). Hamelman was the Lutheran superintendent of the County of Oldenburg. See Hamelman 1983.

<sup>1057</sup> La Beaumelle 1749: 369.

<sup>1058</sup> «En un mot, elle n'est bonne, qu'à étendre les pieuses prétentions du Clergé ambitieux, qui a, quelquefois, dans le bonvieux tems, voulu faire dépendre de cette Cérémonie l'autorité Roiale.» La Beaumelle 1749: 369.

mêmes.»<sup>1059</sup> Louis Antoine wrote that he was aware that people claimed that it was the late Monsieur Gram that had advanced the mistaken claim that Christian I had become king of Denmark and Norway after his coronation in 1449. He claimed, however, that those who had known Gram would know that he had been incapable of proposing such a paradox.<sup>1060</sup> As we have seen, Gram was precisely the man that had argued that 28 October 1749 was the best date for the jubilee, and La Beaumelle was probably well aware of this. He had little regard for Gram's intellectual capacities, so his defense of the late historian's reputation was doubtlessly ironic.<sup>1061</sup>

La Beaumelle ended the discussion of the tercentenary with a comment from the fictive editor, Madame la Spectatrice. She claimed that she had not had time to check the facts of the case but that, if they were true, the jubilee should strictly speaking have been celebrated last year. It was, in any case, an indifferent matter if the jubilee was celebrated a year too late. Besides, she claimed, there was little one could say against the will of the court.<sup>1062</sup> The final words in the matter was a small verse: «Le meilleur est toujours de suivre/ Le prône de notre Curé», which roughly translates to «It is always best to follow/ the sermon of our priest.»<sup>1063</sup> Judging by some of his arguments, it seems that la Beaumelle believed that the clergy was responsible for the choice of commemorating the date of Christian's coronation. The assertion that the coronation served to bolster the pretensions of the ambitious clergy was in fact a reference to the Catholic clergy in 1449, but it could easily be taken as an oblique reference to contemporary conditions. The concluding verse supports this reading of la Beaumelle's critique. If the assumption is correct, la Beaumelle's criticism was directed at the wrong recipient. As we have seen, religious arguments were virtually non-existent in Gram and Langebek's discussion, which was solely dedicated to political matters. Apart from this, la

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<sup>1059</sup> La Beaumelle 1749: 370.

<sup>1060</sup> «Je n'ignore pas, que pour colorer cette contradiction palpable, on dit, que feu M. GRAM a avancé, qu'en l'an 1449 CHRETIEN I. fut couronné à Copenhague Roi de Dannemarc & de Norwège. Mais j'en appelle comme d'abus. On a beau dire. Ceux, qui ont connu ce savant homme savent, qu'il étoit incapable de mettre en avant un tel paradoxe.» La Beaumelle 1749: 370.

<sup>1061</sup> After Gram's death in January 1748, the king arranged for a medal to be struck in his memory. In a letter to his brother Jean Angliviel, la Beaumelle expressed his incomprehension as to why Gram was shown such an honour: «M. Gram le bibliothécaire du roi est mort ces jours passés. Le roi a fait fraper une médaille à son honneur; on ne sait pourquoi. Ce professeur n'a pas joué un grand rôle dans la République des Lettres, & ses aveugles admirateurs seroient bien embarrassés de donner une seule preuve de son mérite littéraire.» Bost, Lauriol & de la Beaumelle 2006: 146.

<sup>1062</sup> «Ajoutés à cela qu'il n'y a pas le petit mot à dire, puisque la Cour le veut ainsi.» La Beaumelle 1749: 370.

<sup>1063</sup> The verse was a quote from an anecdote about the poet Malherbes, which is found in the article about Madame Desloges in Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*: Malherbes is courting Madame Desloges and visits her house. Desloges is not home, but he finds a large, open book on her desk, the Protestant clergyman Dumoulin's book against Cardinal du Perron. Malherbes then writes a small poem which contains the quoted verses. Madame Desloges responds by writing a verse of her own. Malherbes' entire poem reads: «Quoique l'auteur de ce gros livre/ Semble n'avoir est toujours de suivre/Le prône de notre curé./Toutes ces doctrines nouvelles/ Ne plaisent qu'aux folles cervelles./ Pour moi, comme une humble brevis,/ Sous la houlette je me range:/ Il n'est permis d'aimer le change/ Que des femmes et des habits.» Bayle 1820: 294.



Beaumelle's arguments were quite incisive: Christian *had* been elected king of Denmark in 1448, and if one rather chose to emphasize the coronation, it was not entirely consistent to claim that he had become king of Denmark *and* Norway in October 1449. La Beaumelle's arguments were also quite radical in the Danish political context. In fact, they amounted to a critique not only of the scholars of Copenhagen, Hans Gram chief among them, but also of the royal will. The king himself had decided that the jubilee would be celebrated in 1749, so it was unusually impertinent to second-guess the decision, although the criticism was not directed against the king himself.

La Beaumelle's questioning of the «voluntary anachronism» did not cause him any trouble: he was still friendly with leading politicians and intellectuals in Copenhagen and, thanks to Adam Gottlob Moltke's influence, he was promoted to the post as Professor of French in 1750. Neither does it seem to have caused any public debate or scandal. The journal was read by a relatively small and exclusive group of courtiers, noblemen and government officials, as well as a few bankers and clergymen, and the majority of subscribers were from Copenhagen.<sup>1064</sup> It could therefore be that the journal had too limited an impact to cause a big stir. Despite the apparent lack of consequences, however, la Beaumelle's criticism clearly shows that the decision to celebrate the tercentenary in 1749 could be perceived as politically motivated also in the contemporary context.

## Preparations

The decision to celebrate the jubilee in October of 1749 must have been made sometime in the spring or summer of 1748. The next step in the preparations was a meeting in the Royal Academy on 16 December 1748, where the members discussed designs for three jubilee medals. The relevant sources are presently lost, but Asger Lomholt records the discussions in his history of the Royal Academy. According to Lomholt, the government official and Academy member Otto Thott presented many inventions that he had prepared in advance, while Frederik Raben presented an invention depicting the twelve kings of the Oldenburg dynasty. The members decided that the largest of the three medals should indeed be inscribed with portraits of the twelve kings. On the next meeting on 14 January 1749, Thott presented two drawings that the president Johan Ludvig von Holstein sent to the king for approval. It was also decided that Thott should design the inscription for the smallest medal, which would be thrown to the crowds during the jubilee. An agreement was

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<sup>1064</sup> Krefting 2008: 45.

made with the medallists Magnus Gustavus Arbien, Peter Christian Winsløw and Georg Wilhelm Wahl to engrave the medals.<sup>1065</sup>

The three medals all somehow thematized the longevity and the virtue of the royal dynasty. The largest medal, engraved by Arbien, bore an image on the obverse of a bust of Frederick V surrounded by medallic portraits of his eleven dynastic predecessors. The hope of the everlasting rule of the Oldenburg kings was expressed with a quotation from the *Aeneid* of Jupiter's words about the Romans: «For these, I set no limits in space and time, etc.».<sup>1066</sup> On the reverse was a long Latin inscription that explained that the third century of exemplary Oldenburg rule was completed in the reign of Frederick V, and that one could only hope that sons would follow their fathers on the throne in the coming centuries.<sup>1067</sup> The medium-sized medal, engraved by Winsløw, depicted Frederick V in profile on the obverse and, on the reverse, the Northern hemisphere under the North Star. The Latin inscription identified the North Star as a symbol of the everlasting rule of the Oldenburg dynasty.<sup>1068</sup> The smallest medal, engraved by Wahl, bore a short Danish verse that described the royal dynasty as virtuous and expressed hope that God would allow it to increase in age and prosperity.<sup>1069</sup>

Later in the spring of 1749, the government started making concrete plans for the celebration of the tercentenary. The central planning document appears to be a memorandum dated 22 April and written by the king's closest advisor, Adam Gottlob Moltke. In the memorandum, Moltke drew up the basic framework for the jubilee. This plan resembled how the two previous centenaries had been celebrated earlier in the century, apart from the fact that the tercentenary would last only for three rather than eight days. It would start on 28 October 1749, and would be announced from the pulpits on the preceding Sunday. In the afternoon on the day before the jubilee, the bells would chime for an hour in all the churches. The first day of the jubilee would be celebrated just like the three annual holidays, with music in the churches and ringing and chiming of all church bells. All the

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<sup>1065</sup> Lomholt 1960: 22-23; Galster 1936: 272-273.

<sup>1066</sup> «HIS EGO NEC METAS RERVVM NEC TEMPORA PONO ETC.» Galster 1936: 272; Kragelund 1999: 225.

<sup>1067</sup> «REGNANTE GLORIOSISSIMO MONARCHA FRIDERICO QVINTO DELICIS POPVLI SVI TERTIVM ABSOLVTVM SECVLVM EX QVO AVGVSTISSIMA DOMVS OLDENBVRGICA DIVINI FAVORIS VENERANDO EXEMPLO DANIAE NORVEGIAQVE SCEPTRA EA TENET PIETATIS INSTITIAE CLEMENTIAE PRVDENTIAE ET CONSTANTIAE GLORIA VT VOTIS SVPERSIT NIHIL NISI VT LONGA POST INTERVALLA ILLA EX STIRPE SVCCEDAT DONEC VOLVVNTVR SECVLA PATRI REGI REX FILIVS MDCCXLIX.» Galster 1936: 272.

<sup>1068</sup> «OCCIDERE NESCIA. DOMUS OLDENBURGICA PER TRIA SECVLA IN SEPTENTRIONE REGNATRIX» Galster 1936: 247.

<sup>1069</sup> «DET OLDENBORGSKE HUUS VED ALLE KONGE DYDER ALT I TRE HUNDREDE AAR NY GLANTZ TIL THRONEN YDER. MENS BELTET DRAABE VAND MENS DOFRE HAVER FIELDE. GUD LAD DET TAGE TIL I TAL I FLOR I ÆLDE.» Galster 1936: 240.

bishops in the kingdoms would preach in the cathedral churches, and the service should end with the thanksgiving psalm, «O store Gud Vi love Dig!». On the second day of the jubilee, the king would walk to the University of Copenhagen attended by his suite and the Knights of the Elephant, and attend a Latin oration in the large auditorium. At the same time, Latin orations would be delivered by the professors at Sorø Academy and the schools in Altona and Odense, as well as the lectors and rectors in the cathedral schools and the schools in Frederiksborg and Herlufsholm.<sup>1070</sup> Two days later, on 25 April 1749, orders went out to all the bishops in the kingdoms, describing how the jubilee should be celebrated in their diocese.<sup>1071</sup> The bishop of Zealand, Peder Hersleb, was given the task of proposing appropriate Bible verses and psalms, as well as writing the prayer and collect for the jubilee church services.<sup>1072</sup> I shall return to Hersleb's texts later on.

The final element of the preparations for the tercentenary pertained to the construction of a completely new city quarter in Copenhagen. The district that would come to be known as *Frederiksstaden* was located to the empty plot of land where the Sophie Amalienborg palace has stood from 1673 until it burnt down in 1689. At the time of the tercentenary, the area was occupied by the Amalienborg gardens and an open square used for military exercise. Christian V had entertained plans of building a new castle in the area in the 1690s, but his successor Frederick IV chose to renovate the old Copenhagen castle instead. When Christian VI decided in 1731 to demolish Copenhagen castle and replace it with the new Christiansborg castle, the Amalienborg gardens no longer had any specific function.<sup>1073</sup> A few months before the tercentenary, on 5 September, the government made the decision of founding a new city quarter in the area. A week later, the king wrote a rescript to the Magistrate of Copenhagen in which he donated the grounds to the city and explained the plans for its development. Among other things, the first inhabitants would receive free property and be excused from billeting troops, on the condition that they built a house within five years. The rescript was published three days later, whereafter the burghers of Copenhagen were free to sign up for a plot.<sup>1074</sup>

In his study of the first ten years of Frederiksstaden's history, John Erichsen argues against what he takes to be a widespread conception, namely that the city quarter was developed *because* of the jubilee, and claims that it would probably have been developed anyway. He suggests that the

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<sup>1070</sup> DRA. DK. D21-102: no. 223 («Pro Memoria»).

<sup>1071</sup> DRA. DK. D20-25: no. 223.

<sup>1072</sup> DRA. DK. D20-25: No 222.

<sup>1073</sup> Erichsen 1972: 15-19.

<sup>1074</sup> Erichsen 1972: 21-24.

impetus to develop Frederiksstaden actually came from a group of wealthy timber merchants who already owned storage facilities on the waterfront adjacent to the Amalienborg area, and who were eager to acquire new property on which they could build. The decision to found the district appears to have been made independent of the plans for the celebration of the tercentenary. On the one hand, there is no mention of the quarter in the jubilee planning documents from April 1749 and, on the other, the upcoming tercentenary was not mentioned in the rescript of 12 September 1749. Only after the decision to develop the Amalienborg area had been made, he claims, was the foundation of Frederiksstaden combined with the celebration of the jubilee. More specifically, the third day of the tercentenary was used to publicly present the plans for the construction of a new church in Frederiksstaden.<sup>1075</sup>

In the seventh point of the royal rescript of 12 September, king Frederick V promised that a church would be built for the convenience of the inhabitants of the new district.<sup>1076</sup> As it turned out, the government's plans went far beyond mere convenience. At some point in the autumn of 1749, the decision was made to construct a quite extraordinary church of unhitherto unprecedented scale and ambition in Frederiksstaden. As Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen has shown in an insightful analysis, the *Frederik's Church* (Frederik's kirke) was construed as a monumental votive and memorial church for the Oldenburg dynasty. From the outset, it was envisioned that it would be a circular central-plan church topped by a high dome. According to Bøggild Johannsen, the main architectural components and stylistic details referred to such symbolically potent predecessors as Solomon's Temple and the Peter's Church in Rome.<sup>1077</sup> The church's character as a memorial church for the royal dynasty was expressed in some of the earlier plans for the building: the first architect Niels Eigtvedt intended to adorn the outside of the church with medals of the twelve kings of the dynasty, while the next architect Laurids de Thurah described the twelve corners on his project as architectural references to the twelve Oldenburg monarchs.<sup>1078</sup> The projected shape of the building itself also emphasized its memorial function, as the circle represented eternity or immortality and was often used in memorial buildings and mausoleums.<sup>1079</sup> Finally, as noted in chapter four, king

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<sup>1075</sup> Erichsen 1972: 28-29.

<sup>1076</sup> Erichsen 1972:188.

<sup>1077</sup> Based on the shape and design of the Frederick's church, Bøggild Johannsen argues convincingly that it may have been conceived as an Evangelical pendant to the Peter's Church in Rome. This conjuncture is supported, among other things, by the fact that Christian VI entertained plans of building a central-plan domed church during the Reformation bicentenary in 1736. Johannsen 1999: 133-143.

<sup>1078</sup> Johannsen 1999: 138.

<sup>1079</sup> Johannsen 1985:117; Johannsen 1999: 149.

Frederick deposited a foundation stone on the future site of the church that contained medals with messages to posterity about the royal dynasty.<sup>1080</sup>

The construction of the church was hampered almost from the outset, first by the death of the original architect Eigtved in 1754, and later by its astronomical costs. The latter was compounded by the king's decision to build the entire church out of Norwegian marble rather than sandstone with a marble surface. According to Hanne Raabyemagle, the king's decision was justified by «the completely exceptional status of the church as the Oldenburg-dynasty's thanks to God.» Construction was suspended by Struensee in 1770, and the torso of the church was left standing as a ruin in the middle of Copenhagen until the end of the nineteenth century. The church was not completed before 1894.<sup>1081</sup>

None of this was of course known during the jubilee, when the atmosphere was rather characterized by heady enthusiasm and grandiose ambitions. Niels Eigtved's initial sketches for the new church were displayed to the public in a pavilion in the Amalienborg gardens during the foundation-laying ceremony on the third day of the jubilee.<sup>1082</sup> A contemporary who witnessed the ceremony, Hermann Woldemar von Schmettow, commented on the expense of the enterprise and admired the beauty of Eigtved's plans.<sup>1083</sup> There can be no doubt that the plans for the new monumental church, and the development of the city quarter in which it would be located, contributed immensely to the prestige of the tercentenary.

## A festive jubilee

In the previous chapter, we saw that the bicentenary in 1736 was characterized by a relatively sombre atmosphere, with almost no worldly splendour and even less public festivities. The absence of splendour and festivity had been a direct consequence of the king's and Johan Ludvig von Holstein's decision that the jubilee should only be celebrated with sermons and orations that pertained to church services. The contrast could therefore not have been greater to how the tercentenary in 1749

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<sup>1080</sup> Johannsen 1999: 149.

<sup>1081</sup> Raabyemagle 2010: 240-247; Johannsen 1999: 132-133.

<sup>1082</sup> The entire ceremony appears to have been arranged rather hastily, since there is no mention of neither the church nor the ceremony in the earlier plans for the jubilee. In addition, Bishop Hersleb was asked by Adam Gottlob Moltke to deliver a sermon at the ceremony only three days before it took place, on 27 October. See Hersleb 1749: b1r; Johannsen 1999: 131-132.

<sup>1083</sup> «[...] le troisième jour, le roy fut à la place du jardin d'Amalienbourg, pour y poser la première pierre d'une église qu'on y bâtit, à laquelle le roy destine 100 mille écus et qui sera fort belle suivant le plan qui en a été dressée». Friis 1907: 472.

was celebrated by Christian's successor Frederick V. Just like his father and grandfather before him, Frederick placed his own personal imprint on the jubilee. Unlike what had happened in 1717, Frederick and his advisors seem to have made no special preparations for elaborate ceremonial. According to a program published in the newspaper the day before the jubilee, the king and the royal family would proceed to the church «without ceremony».<sup>1084</sup> Unlike the jubilee in 1736, moreover, the tercentenary in 1749 was celebrated with much public festivity. In marked contrast to both of the previous jubilees, king Frederick and queen Louise participated in these festivities and interacted in person with their subjects.

The newspapers are indeed full of references to a variety of public entertainments. In Copenhagen, the city was illuminated for the entire duration of the jubilee. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, the magistrate commissioned a fantastic and immensely expensive Honour-Temple that adorned the Old Square. According to Charlotta Dorothea Biehl, the royal couple drove around in Copenhagen to witness all the illuminations, and the pregnant queen even stepped out of her carriage to get a closer look at the Honour Temple. When her pannier got in the way, she went into the City Hall to take it off, and had walked around in the Honour Temple wearing only her undergarments.<sup>1085</sup> The wealthy merchant Andreas Biørn commissioned the General Trading Company's («Almindelig Handels Kompagni») cooper Galathe to construct «an extraordinarily large» barrel of wine. According to a newspaper report, the barrel was four meters in length, almost three meters in diameter, and contained 80 «ox heads» (approximately 18.000 litres) of wine.<sup>1086</sup> Most likely, the barrel was constructed to be part of the launching ceremony for a new ship that Biørn launched on the second day of the jubilee. The ship, which was destined for trade on Greenland, was called *Jubel-Festen* («The Jubilee»)<sup>1087</sup>.

The most significant departure from the previous jubilees, however, was the inclusion of the recently reopened Danish Theatre (in 1748) as part of the celebrations. While the first day of the jubilee was «dedicated to God alone», the court attended theatre performances on the second and third days. On 29 October, the Danish theatre performed a new Italian opera (unspecified), while it performed Molières *The Miser* and a Danish translation of Guyot de Merville's one-act comedy *Le Consentement Forcé* on 30 October.<sup>1088</sup> Yet again, the king used the opportunity to interact in person

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<sup>1084</sup> «Hans Kongel. Majestet og de øvrige Høy-Kongel. og Durchlauchtigste Personer begive sig i Kirke uden Ceremonie.» *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post Tidender Anno 1749. No 86. Af 27 Octobr.*

<sup>1085</sup> Bobé 1909: 28.

<sup>1086</sup> *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post Tidender Anno 1749. No 86. Af 31 Octobr.*

<sup>1087</sup> The launching was commemorated with a poem by the musician Peder Sparkiær. See Sparkiær 1749.

<sup>1088</sup> The Danish title of de Merville's play was «Det aftvungne Samtykke». Overskou 1856: 90.

with his subjects: according to Biehl, the king sent parterre tickets to the soldiers and officers of the citizen militia («Frieskytterne») and chatted with them throughout the entire performance. In a private letter to Count J.H.E. Bernstorff in November 1749, Hermann Woldemar von Schmettow described his experiences of the celebrations in Copenhagen. On the evening of the third day of the jubilee, wrote von Schmettow, the court had gone to see a performance of *The Miser*, which had been an enjoyable and surprisingly impressive experience:

le theatre et tout le bâtiment en est fort beau; il y a de belles decorations, et les acteurs sont infiniment meilleurs que je n'aurai jamais osé me l'imaginer; on joua l'Avare, et celui qui fut chargé de ce role l'exécuta si bien que je suis sûr que, quand au jeu, il auroit été applaudi à Paris même; les amoureux qui ordinairement sont de fades personnages, jouent avec décence et dignité; ils ont bonnes façons et sont tous bien habillés; il y a un valet admirable et une suivante supportable; enfin le tout surpasse infiniment ce que l'on croit pouvoir s'attendre d'une troupe qui s'est nouvellement formé dans un pays dont les spectacles étoient bannis.<sup>1089</sup>

What von Schmettow alluded to in the final sentence was the closing of the theaters for the last two decades, from 1728 to 1747. After the Danish theatre in Grønnegade had burnt down in the great fire in Copenhagen in 1728, the theatre did not receive renewed royal support and was therefore unable to reopen. The hegemony of Pietism at the royal court in the reign of Christian VI produced an atmosphere that was very hostile to comedies, in which Pietist theologians such as Erik Pontoppidan criticized theatre as an ungodly and infamous activity.<sup>1090</sup> It is therefore quite remarkable that the new king included the performance of comedies as an integrated part of what was, to all intents and purposes, a religious commemoration. The association between the theatre and the dynastic tercentenary was even officially emphasized in the form of medal engraved by the medallist Magnus Gustavus Arbien. On the obverse was a portrait of Frederick V, underneath of which was an inscription that stated that the medal had been struck for the tercentenary of the Oldenburg house. («A:1749 D: 28. OCT: DOM: OLDENB: TRISECLISEN:»). On the reverse, there was an image of the new theatre at Kongens Nytorv and an inscription that described the theatre as a teacher of wit, language and lifestyle («INGENII LINGVÆ VITÆQVE MAGISTRA») and as a royal gift to the people («MVNIFICENTIA AVGVSTI»).<sup>1091</sup> The medal was actually never struck, but the design strengthens the impression that the tercentenary was indeed conceived as an opportunity to promote the image of king Frederick as a royal Maecenas and patron of culture.

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<sup>1089</sup> Friis 1907: 473.

<sup>1090</sup> Holm 2004: 164-205.

<sup>1091</sup> Galster 1936: 273.

The festive atmosphere was not restricted to the king's residential city. In the days and weeks following the tercentenary, reports poured in from the provincial towns about all the entertainment and festivities that had taken place there. Typically, such celebrations included illuminations, a fireworks show, some form of procession or parade by the local burgher militia and a ball or dinner party. In the eastern Danish town of Køge, for instance, the nobility, clergy, magistrate and burghers assembled in the illuminated Town Hall for a gala on the second day of the jubilee. To the accompaniment of cannon shots, trumpets and timpani, the party drank toasts for the king, the queen, the queen mother, the crown prince, the princesses, the royal dynasty, the royal ministers, the army and the navy. After the dining and drinking was finished, the guests danced until 5 o'clock in the morning. The procedure was repeated on the third and final day of the jubilee, when the party ended in 6 o'clock in the morning.<sup>1092</sup> In the town of Randers on the second day of the jubilee, the magistrate and the «finest burghers, married and unmarried of both sexes» celebrated with a ball with music, dancing, eating and drinking, «until they could go home at sunlight on the third day of the jubilee, when not a single one was dissatisfied.» Similar events took place in many other places.<sup>1093</sup> The contrast to the sombre celebration of the previous jubilee is striking. No accounts of provincial celebrations were published in the newspapers in 1736. If there had been any parties or galas in the provincial towns back then, which seems rather unlikely, they were never reported. In the reign of Frederick V, then, the repertoire of the jubilee as a form of celebration was expanded considerably from what it had been in his father's reign. Whereas the bicentenary in 1736 was celebrated only with sermons and academic orations, the tercentenary in 1749 seems to have occasioned widespread popular festivities, including elements that Christian VI would almost certainly have disapproved of as parts of a religious commemoration, such as dancing and theatrical performances.

### Continuity, stability and divine election: the history of the royal dynasty in jubilee sermons

As previously mentioned, Bishop Peder Hersleb was given the task of preparing the materials for the jubilee church services. Hersleb wrote a list of no less than thirteen main suggestions, as well as some supplementary verses. All of them described either God's special care for and protection of the nation of Israel in general (Deut 4, 7-8) or the kings of Israel (Judges 5, 9) and the royal dynasty of

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<sup>1092</sup> *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post Tidender. Anno 1749. No 89. Af 7 Novembr.*

<sup>1093</sup> See the reports from Korsør, Flensborg, Holbek, Kolding, Viborg, Nyborg, Odense, Nestvedt and Nysted in *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post Tidender. Anno 1749.*



David (2 Samuel VII, 16-22; 1 Kings 2, 33) in particular. Hersleb evidently found it hard to decide the most appropriate verses for the jubilee. He wrote that «of the 13 suggested verses I cannot easily say which are the most appropriate. However, if I was ordered to suggest only two to each sermon, I would be very hesitant, but my thoughts would quickly land on the following».<sup>1094</sup> For the morning service, Hersleb suggested the verses 2 Samuel 7, 16-22 and Psalm 61, 6-9, both of which dealt with God's promise to David to preserve his royal house forever. For the noon service, he proposed Judges 5, 9 («My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD») and Proverbs 8, 15-18 («By me kings reign, and princes decree justice»). For the evening service, he proposed Psalm 147, 12-15 (God's blessings towards Israel) and 1 Kings 8, 65-66 (Solomon's thanksgiving feast). Two of Hersleb's suggestions were eventually selected by the king, but not entirely in the suggested order: Judges 5, 9 was prescribed for the noon service, while Psalm 147 was prescribed for the early morning, rather than the evening service. For the morning and evening service, the king selected two verses suggested by a second person that had written a separate list of suggested verses, possibly the court preacher Johannes Bartholomæus Bluhme.<sup>1095</sup> The verse selected for the morning service was Psalm 89, 1-6, and for the evening service, 2 Samuel 7, 18.

In Psalm 89 1-6, David thanks the Lord for showing him mercy, while God promises to establish David's dynasty and protect it through the generations.<sup>1096</sup> The selection of these verses clearly encouraged the ministers to draw parallels between the royal dynasty founded by David, on the one hand, and the Oldenburg dynasty, on the other.<sup>1097</sup> Frederick V thereby established a connection between himself, the founder of the royal dynasty Christian I, and the biblical king David. Imposed on the Danish context, the text suggested that God had made a pact with Christian I, just as he had done with David.<sup>1098</sup> The theme of divine election and protection was developed

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<sup>1094</sup> «Men af de 13. anførte Texter vidste jeg ikke lettigen at sige, hvilke ere de beqvemmeste. Dog, om det mig blev paalagt, at skulde ikkun foreslaae tvende til hver Prædiken, saa vilde jeg være meget tvivlraadig, Dog vilde mine Tanker falde snarest paa følgende:»

<sup>1095</sup> The second list is unsigned, and written in German. DRA. DK. D21-102: no. 223.

<sup>1096</sup> "I will sing of the LORD's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself. You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations. "Selah" The heavens praise your wonders, O LORD, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies above can compare with the LORD? Who is like the LORD among the heavenly beings?"

<sup>1097</sup> Part of the same psalm (Psalm 89, 21-25) was read by bishop Hans Munk during Frederick IV's anointment ceremony in 1700. A motet based on the psalm was also sung on the occasion, as well as during Christian VI's anointment. See Hermansen 2005: 180, 185.

<sup>1098</sup> Henningsen 2000: 32.

further in bishop Hersleb's prayer text. The prayer opened with a series of statements about God's rule over human affairs: God establishes kings and princes, bestows crowns and decides the duration of governments. All of God's ways are just and praiseworthy. Denmark-Norway had been given proof of God's «fatherly care» and should therefore pray to him for mercy, so that he could make them properly appreciate his blessings and be thankful for what he had done to the kingdoms in the past. The prayer text also thanked God for making the kingdoms a “wonder for the whole world”, the only kingdom of which it could be said, with the words of David: “Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”<sup>1099</sup>

According to Øystein Idsø Viken, the central proposition in Hersleb's prayer was that the kingdoms prospered under Oldenburg rule, that the present government was exceptionally good compared to earlier times and in other states and that God had established the royal dynasty and protected it through history.<sup>1100</sup> All of this is quite correct. A subtle nuance can, however, also be identified in Hersleb's statements about the historical development of the kingdoms. On the one hand, he described the development as one of cumulative and gradual improvement: each king had been «better, more merciful, more careful than the other», and each king had «surpassed the other in royal mildness and fatherly care, and the government has therefore increased in splendour and the kingdoms in happiness.»<sup>1101</sup> On the other hand, Hersleb highlighted three ruptures in the history of the kingdoms. The first was, of course, the advent of the Oldenburg dynasty. Hersleb did not say anything in particular about the conditions before the Oldenburg kings acceded to the throne, but the implicit message of the prayer was that God's blessings had commenced only after the election of the first Oldenburg monarch. The second rupture was the Reformation. Under the Oldenburg kings, the church had been liberated from the «delusions of the papacy» and been given peace and quiet from external persecutors and internal seducers. The third rupture was the introduction of absolutism. «We particularly appreciate», wrote Hersleb,

that in the last century, which we now end in order to begin a new one, your mercy has increased so notably, and the glory and happiness of the kingdoms has grown and increased, by four kings of the

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<sup>1099</sup> «Saligt er det Folk, hvis Gud Herren er, det Folk han haver udvalgt sig til Ejendom!». *Texter og Bønen Som skal forklæres og bruges Til den almindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses=Fest 1749*: 3v.

<sup>1100</sup> Viken 2014: 238.

<sup>1101</sup> «[...] den Eene haver overgaaet den Anden i Kongelig Mildhed og faderlig Omhygelighed, og derfor Regeringen tiltaget i Herlighed, og Rigerne i Lyksalighed.» *Texter og Bønen Som skal forklæres og bruges Til den almindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses=Fest 1749*: 3v.

same dynasty that have been the greatest as well as the very best and most pious, the most careful and God-fearing, so that it has been a blessed century[...].<sup>1102</sup>

We find, in other words, two slightly different claims about the historical development of the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway. According to the first claim, the kingdoms' material and spiritual improvement was a consequence of the steady increase of the monarchs' virtues. Each king had been better and more virtuous than the previous. According to the second interpretation, God had intervened at three moments in the history of Denmark and Norway and markedly improved their happiness. This latter interpretation suggested a division of the past into distinct periods: before and after the election of the Oldenburg kings, before and after the Reformation and before and after absolutism. Consequently, only the last hundred years had been completely perfect, since only in this period had the kingdoms been ruled by Lutheran absolute monarchs of the Oldenburg dynasty. This reading of the past was based less on dynastic than confessional and political priorities. The two interpretations were not mutually exclusive. The net result was, furthermore, the same: the kingdoms had reached a temporary peak with the reign of the present monarch, «the very best and wisest of the kings, the twelfth in number, and the dearest of the twelve [...]».<sup>1103</sup> The second interpretation reflects, however, a periodization of the past that might be considered as slightly at odds with the unconditional praise of the entire dynasty that was the ostensible purpose of the tercentenary. We shall return to this question later on in the chapter.

In bishop Hersleb's official prayer, one underlying argument emerges as particularly important, namely that Denmark-Norway was a chosen land and the dynasty an elected dynasty that had been protected by God through its history. This idea was based on an analogy between the sacred history of the Israelites as described in the Old Testament and the history of Denmark-Norway. Several clergymen did indeed develop this scriptural analogy and made it a key point in their portrayals of the history of the kingdoms. In some sermons the analogy between Denmark-Norway and Israel took the form of direct comparisons, where the fortunes or misfortunes of the Israelites were compared to those of Denmark-Norway. In others, it was incorporated into the historical narratives. In both cases, the analogy provided a sense of sacred meaning to profane history. It organized the historical contingencies of war, epidemics and political manoeuvring into a

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<sup>1102</sup> «Men vi erkende i sær, at i det sidste Seculo, som vi nu ende, for at begynde et nyt, haver Din Naade saa kiendelig forøget sig, og disse Rigers Herlighed og Lyksalighed voxet og tiltaget, ved fire Konger af same Stame, som de vældigste, saa og de allerbeste og fromeste, omhygeligste og gudfrygtigste, saa det haver været et velsignet Seculum [...]». *Texter og Bønen* 1749: 4v.

<sup>1103</sup> «[...] den allerbeste og viseste af Kongerne, den Tolvte i Tallet, og den kiereste af De Tolv [...]». *Texter og Bønen* 1749: 5r.

meaningful narrative where everything happened for a reason. The history of Denmark-Norway history was like a canvas on which one could view the unfathomable will of God unfold.

We shall now examine more closely some of the ways this fundamental framework of historical interpretation shaped the narratives in jubilee sermons. The analysis will focus on two key arguments that are among the most prominent in the sermons, and which are all manifestations of the same idea of divine providence as the true driving force in temporal affairs. First, we shall examine what may be termed a *myth of origins* of the Oldenburg dynasty, which took as its point of the departure the election of count Christian of Oldenburg to the Danish throne in 1448. Second, we shall consider what I call a *myth of dynastic continuity and stability*, meaning the claim that God had always provided the kingdoms good and virtuous kings and that the kingdoms had avoided turmoil and anarchy since they had never lacked a crown prince to follow his father on the throne.

### **A myth of origins: The election of the Danish David**

The jubilee commemorated the accession of Count Christian of Oldenburg to the Danish and Norwegian thrones. As we have seen, the date selected to mark the genesis of the royal dynasty was 28 October 1449, the day of Christian's coronation in Denmark. Ludvig Holberg relates the process leading up to this event in the first volume of his *Dannemarks Riges Historie*: when king Cristopher of Bavaria died without heirs in 1448, the Danish estates notified the estates in the two other kingdoms of the Kalmar union and called for a meeting to elect a new king. The Swedish estates, however, chose to break out of the union and elected the Swedish nobleman Carl Knudsson to the Swedish throne in 1448. The Danish estates then offered the throne to Adolph, Count of Schleswig and Duke of Holstein, in the hope of uniting these principalities with the kingdom. He declined due to his old age and weakness, and suggested that they elect his nephew instead, Count Christian of Oldenburg, «a gentleman of great qualities», who was also related to the Danish royal house. The estates followed his advice and elected Christian, who became the first Oldenburg king on the Danish throne. As soon as they received the message of the election, the Norwegian estates elected Christian to the Norwegian throne as well.<sup>1104</sup> Holberg's version of this

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<sup>1104</sup> Holberg 1732: 637-639.

story was more or less the same as how the nobleman and historian Arild Huitfeldt had recounted it in his history of Christian I from 1599.<sup>1105</sup>

The ministers relating the same story in their sermons saw stronger forces than mere human agency determining the course of events. They drew a parallel between the election of Christian to the throne and the biblical story of how David was anointed king of Israel. In 1 Samuel 16: 1-13, the Lord commands the prophet Samuel to go to the house of Jesse the Bethlehemite to anoint king Saul's successor. When Samuel sees Jesse's son Eliab, he is convinced he has found the right man, but God tells him that he is wrong: «Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the *Lord seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the *Lord* looketh on the heart.» Jesse lets nine of his sons pass before Samuel, but none of them are the right one. Samuel is then told that Jesse's youngest son is out watching the sheep. They immediately fetch David, and when he appears, the Lord commands that Samuel anoint him.

The clergy seized upon the structural similarities between the two narratives in their sermons. After briefly relating the historical circumstances of Christian's election, Otho Holmboe compared the first Oldenburg king's rise to the throne with the election of David. He claimed that «in this ancestor's election to the throne, we surely find something that resembles David's election.»<sup>1106</sup> Just like the prophet Samuel, the Danish estates had originally intended to choose an older king, and had seen «an Eliab in the duke of Holstein and thought, like Samuel, surely he is the one who shall be anointed before the Lord 1 Sam.16.6.» God had then shown the kingdoms mercy by choosing «a younger, a David» to the Danish throne, whose seed had been established through the generations, leading to peace and happiness in the kingdoms.<sup>1107</sup> The most obvious effect of making this parallel between the election of king David and Christian I was that events that might at first glance seem random and incidental instead appeared to have been directed by divine providence. Mathias Hwiid claimed in his sermon that one of the many similarities between the Jewish and Danish royal dynasties was that both the dynastic founders seemed to have received the crown by blind luck, but

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<sup>1105</sup> Huitfeldt 1977 [1599]: 1-12.

<sup>1106</sup> «[...] udi denne Stamme Faders Udvælgelse til Thronen, finder vi visselig noget, som ligner Davids Udvælgelse.» Holmboe 1749: 39.

<sup>1107</sup> Holmboe 1749: 39-40; See also Treschow 1749: 56; Bang 1749: 57; Bredenberg 1749: 35; Brorson 1956: 301; Hersleb 1750: 12; Peder Dorscheus, *Een Konges Taknemmelighed imod Gud for Sine imod Ham og Hands Bevüiste Velgierninger Efter Kongelig Mayestats Allernaadigste Ordre Allerunderdanigst forestillet I een Jubel=Prædiken d: 28 October Anno 1749*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [11]; Peder Grove Beyer, *Sions Glæde over Davids Regering Og Israels Tak til Gud for Guds bestandige Naade imod Kongen og Kongens Huus betragtet paa Jubel= og Taksigelses Festen Den 28de Octobr 1749 I Anledning af den allernaadigst anbefalede Text Ps:89:1...6 Og forestillet Guds Meenighed i Glumsøe og Bavelse Sogner [...]*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [69-70].

both had in fact divine access to their thrones and royal dignity. In the same way that he had turned the young and unassuming David's shepherd's staff into a royal sceptre, he had unexpectedly elevated Count Christian to the Danish throne.<sup>1108</sup>

The argument against historical chance led, by extension, to another claim with implications for the understanding of the history of the dynasty. According to the same chapter in Scriptures (1 Sam. 16,7), God ignores outward appearances and «looketh on the heart». Accordingly, he must have seen something in the young count Christian that could not have been known to his contemporaries. Marcus Frideric Bang claimed that God had not cared about Christian's blood and royal pedigree, although his descent from king Valdemar ensured that it was noble enough, he had only considered the virtue of his dynasty and their «sincerity and faithfulness, in their time and for all time, to execute the will of God and prove that they are God's servants.»<sup>1109</sup> In other words, the all-knowing and all-seeing God knew and had known for all eternity that Christian and all his descendants would be his loyal servants and protect and further his church as kings of Denmark and Norway. The election of Christian in 1448 was thus predestined to happen, as part of God's plan to further his glory in the world.

The Lord had elected Christian, a count from a small German principality, and elevated him to royal status. The biblical model for this act was the shepherd David's election to the throne of Israel and Judah. King David had, however, not only received royal status, but had made a covenant with God who promised that his royal house, kingdom and throne would be established forever (2 Samuel 7). The bible verses selected for the morning service, Psalm 89:1-6, refers directly to this covenant: «I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I stablish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations [...]». As previously mentioned, the selection of this particular verse seems to have been intended to stimulate direct comparisons between the blessings enjoyed by the dynasties founded by David and Christian. But was it simultaneously intended to imply the much stronger claim that Christian, like David, had made a covenant with God when he was elected king of Denmark and Norway? Did the ministers claim that God had actually promised the first Oldenburg king that he would establish his dynasty forever?

The Bible is ambivalent regarding the nature and scope of the Davidic covenant. God's promise to David was unconditional: if David's children forsook God's law and broke his

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<sup>1108</sup> Hviid 1749: 13-17.

<sup>1109</sup> «Oprigtighed og Troefasthed til i sin Tiid, ja Tidernes Længde at udrette Guds Villie og beviise sig Guds Tienere.» Bang 1749: 58; See also Bagger 1750: 23-24; Johannes Schive, *Jubel=Prædiken holden i Tostrup og Uggerløse Kirker i Mierløse Herred d 28 oct: 1749*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [17].

commandments, he would punish them, but he would never break his promise: «My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my Holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me» (Psalm 89: 34-36).<sup>1110</sup> But the historical books of the Old Testament also contain passages where the promise is conditional. After Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant into the temple and sacrificed and made prayers to the Lord, the Lord appeared to the king and repeated the promise he made to Solomon's father. This time, however, God told Solomon that if he or his children turned from following him and started serving other gods, he would «cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and *this* house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people» (1 Kings 9:7).<sup>1111</sup> In old age, Solomon loved «many strange women» from other nations who turned him away from the covenant and God's commandments, whereupon God stated that he would take away the kingdom of Israel from his son Rehoboam and give it to Solomon's servant Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:11-13). The United Kingdoms were divided and David's royal house was left with only the southern kingdom of Judah. When Jerusalem was eventually besieged and destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC, the royal house lost the throne permanently (2 Kings 25). In later Judaism, the expected Messiah was supposed to descend from David's royal line and restore the kingdom.<sup>1112</sup> Christians, on the other hand, saw Messianic prophecy fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who was thought to descend from David's dynasty. In this context, the promise of the eternal kingdom in Psalm 89 was believed to be a reference to the coming of Christ's eternal kingdom, rather than a promise to establish the temporal dynasty of David forever.

For an eighteenth century Lutheran minister, then, the idea of Davidic covenant had multiple layers of meaning. It could refer to the temporal establishment of David's dynasty as kings of Israel and Judah, in which case the covenant had repeatedly been broken by many of the kings of David's dynasty, who had eventually lost the royal throne. It could also refer to the promise that the Messiah would be a descendant of David. It should be mentioned that the jubilee text, Psalm 89, is particularly ambiguous in this respect. There is a marked change in tone around the mid-section, from verse 38, where Ethan the Ezrahite goes from praising God for his mercy and recounting his

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<sup>1110</sup> See also 2 Sam 7:12-16, where God promises David, through Nathan the prophet, that his mercy shall never depart from David's son Solomon.

<sup>1111</sup> The same scene is described in 2 Chronicles 7:17-22. See also 1 Chronicles 29:9, where David tells Solomon that «if thou see [God], he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.»

<sup>1112</sup> Jensen 2007: 125.

promises, to complaining that God has removed his blessings from the king, «made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.». According to the commentary in a Danish Bible edition from 1740, Ethan complained in these verses about the «great tribulations that God had invoked upon his people and congregation, so that it seemed as though he would not keep his promises.»<sup>1113</sup> In isolation, therefore, the selected verses were quite appropriate for the celebration of a dynastic jubilee. For those familiar with the psalm in its entirety, on the other hand, it could create unpleasant connotations.<sup>1114</sup>

In the jubilee sermons, we observe that the ministers were well aware of the ambiguities of the Davidic covenant when they discussed the fortunes of the Oldenburg dynasty in terms of a covenant with God. This is evident from the ways in which they conceived of the exact origins of the divine protection of Christian and his dynasty. Bishop Peder Hersleb was quite explicit that the Oldenburg dynasty had *not* received an explicit promise or made a covenant with God. For Hersleb this did not, however, detract from the great mercy shown to the kings of this dynasty. On the contrary: God had shown the same mercies, and more, to the Danish kings as he had done to David and his seed.<sup>1115</sup> It was, wrote Hersleb, because of «God's faithfulness towards the royal house of Oldenburg that, even though God has not made any special promise to the Danish kings, still he has done more than he has promised, done that which he has never promised and that which no one has asked or presumed from God.»<sup>1116</sup> Other clergymen similarly claimed that although there was no record of an actual covenant made between Christian and the Lord, the events in the past proved that God had protected the royal dynasty as if there had indeed been a covenant. Friderich Monrad, who spoke extensively of how God's «particular Providence» had governed the election of Christian I, argued that although «we have no oral promise and pact that God has made with king Christian I»,

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<sup>1113</sup> Biblia 1740: 675.

<sup>1114</sup> Bishop Hersleb actually commented on this ambiguity in his published jubilee sermon. He pointed out that the psalm could be divided in two parts, «a song of jubilation» and a song of lamentation («En Fryde-Sang, og en Jammer-Sang»). The true meaning of the text, wrote Hersleb, was that it referred to «Christ and his kingdom», so «it would therefore seem that it is not appropriate for our jubilee joy». Hersleb still claimed that it could be applied to the history of the Danish kingdoms, since «David's children also had their part and advantage of this God's promise, at least as prefigurations [Forbilleder]» of the kingdom of Messiah. David's seed had ruled for some centuries, so David's thanksgiving could be seen as relevant also in the Danish context. Hersleb 1749: 34-35.

<sup>1115</sup> Hersleb 1749: 36 ff.

<sup>1116</sup> «Saa er det Guds Trofasthed mod det Kongelige Oldenborgske Huus, at, skjønt Gud ikke har forbundet sig til de Danske Konger, med noget special Løfte; saa har Gud gjort meere end han har lovet, gjort det, han aldrig har lovet, og det, som aldrig nogen har begiert, eller formodet af Gud.» Hersleb 1749: 45; See also C.S. Mangor, *Een Prædiken holden for Gentofte og Kongens Lyngbye Meenigheder paa dend Aldmindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses Fæst d 28 Octobr. 1749*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [37].



it could still be considered a God's pact that he had established his throne for 300 years.<sup>1117</sup> The vicar J. Arctander's sermon provides a possible explanation for this reticence about positing the existence of an actual covenant between God and the first Oldenburg king. God had made a particular promise to David, wrote Arctander, but «such a promise from God's own mouth has not been given to any king in our time; no prophet arises anymore who can tell how long various royal houses shall govern; even the most God-fearing kings cannot know what is decided in the decree of the watchers (Dan 4.17.)». <sup>1118</sup> Arctander thus acknowledged the unique character of the relationship between David and God, a relationship that neither the Danish monarchs nor any other contemporary rulers could claim to have. Although everything that happened in the world was a consequence of God's will, he no longer made himself manifest to human beings in the same way as he had done in the books of the Old Testament. In other words, the divine election and protection of the Oldenburg dynasty had never been openly proclaimed in the form of a pact of a promise, but God's protection could still be grasped retrospectively when one considered the great blessings the kings had enjoyed through history.

Other ministers did nonetheless describe the relationship between God and the Danish kings as an actual covenant. The most explicit and confident expression of this idea is found in Jacob Bagger's sermon, which repeatedly refers to a «pact» between God and Christian I. Like the ministers quoted above, Bagger had to admit that there existed no record of such a covenant, but unlike them, he posited the historical reality of a covenant anyway:

In the certainty of faith I boldly call it a pact that God has made with this dynasty and its ancestor. Even if we cannot read that God has said these same words to king Christian I as he said to David, experience teaches us that we can conclude with certainty that God must have made a pact with this dynasty and its ancestor, since God had shown the same blessings here that he has shown David and his house, in giving them the government, in letting it pass on to the successors until this day.<sup>1119</sup>

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<sup>1117</sup> Friderich Monrad, *Guds Særdeles Forsiun over Davids Huus og over Den Oldenborgiske Stamme vores Allernaadigste Stormægtigste Kongers Huus, betragtet efter Höy Kongelig Befalning, d 28 Octob. 1749 paa Jubel Festen og forestillet Tømmerup Meenighed [...]*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [50]; See also Glatwedt 1750: 31-32; Iochum Friderich Zarth, *Guds Velgjæringer og Forsiun formedelst Den Kongelige Oldenborgiske Stammes Opholdelse forestillet paa Jubel=Festen Anno 1749: Den 28de Octobris udi Denne Prædiken, Saaledes holden for Ølstöche Meenighed [...]*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [54]; Peder Cristopher Stenersen, *J: N: J: Paa Jubel Fæsten d. 28: Octob: 1749. Texten Psal: 89, 1-6.*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [26].

<sup>1118</sup> «Nu, dette var et besonderligt Løfte, som Gud havde gjort David, fornemmelig for Messia Skyld, men saadant Løfte af Guds egen Mund har nu omstunder ingen Konge; der opstaaer nu ingen Prophet meere, der kand sige, hvor længe den og den Konge-Stamme skal regiere; de gudfrygtigste Konger selv kand ikke viide hvad der er besluttet i Vægternes Raad Dan.4.» J. Arctander, *Guds Miskundbed og Sandhed Mod den Kongelige Davids Stamme, Kiendt I den Kongelige Oldenborgiske Stamme; og paa Jubel=Festen d: 28 Oct: 1749 forestillet af Psalm: 89.1-6 til Höymesse for Egeberg Meenighed [...]*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [43].

<sup>1119</sup> «Jeg kalder det med Frimodighed udi Troens Forvisning en Pagt, som Gud har gjort med denne Stamme og Stammes Fader. Læse vi end ikke at Gud har ladet sige disse samme Ord til Kong Christian den Første, som til David, saa lærer

Another minister, Peder Grove Beyer, wrote that Christian I had good reasons to sing God's praises for arranging it so that he could sit on the throne of the two kingdoms. But this was not everything, he claimed, «because it appears to me that the Lord has spoken the same words to him that we heard in the introduction: if thou wilt walk before me in integrity of heart; then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom for ever and there shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.»<sup>1120</sup> Gerhard Treschow proved the existence of such a covenant in the Scriptures, where various verses in the Old Testament proved that God promised to protect all kings that fear him. God had made this covenant with God-fearing kings in general, with David in particular, and he had also made it with the Danish royal house.<sup>1121</sup>

In other sermons, the idea of a covenant was conceptualised in terms of the New Testament: Jesus Christ was seen as the new covenant, the fulfilment and the replacement of the covenant once made with David and his seed. In this context, the divine protection of the Oldenburg kings was a consequence of their strong faith in Jesus Christ and their efforts to protect the church and promote the true Evangelical religion in the kingdoms. This approach can be exemplified by the words of Eyler Cristopher Kaasbøll, minister of The Church of the Holy Ghost (Hellig Geistes Kirke) in Copenhagen. Kaasbøll claimed that the covenant between God and the Danish royal house was founded on Jesus Christ, in whose name alone God had promised to bless the great and the small, «because blessings, whether they are spiritual or temporal, are shown us for the sake of Christ alone.» Since the Danish kings placed all their hopes in Christ and considered it their greatest honour to be called the servants of God, he had always protected them and established their dynasty. This was the nature of the covenant between God and the Danish kings.<sup>1122</sup>

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dog Erfarenhed, at vi med Vished kand slutte, at Gud maa have gjort en Pagt med denne Stamme og dens Stamme-Fader, da Gud har beviist her de samme Velgierninger, som imod David og hans Huus, i at give Regieringen, i at fortplante den paa Efterkommerne indtil denne Dag.» Bagger 1750: 23.

<sup>1120</sup> «Thi det kommer mig for som Herren har talt de Ord til ham, som vi have hørt til vor Indgang: Om Du vandrer for mit Ansigt i Oprigtighed; Da vil jeg stadfæste dit Riges Throne ævindeligt og Dig skal ikke fattes en Mand paa Thronen.» Peder Grove Beyer, *Sions Glæde over Davids Regering Og Israels Tak til Gud for Guds bestandige Naade imod Kongen og Kongens Huus betragtet paa Jubel- og Taksigelses Festen Den 28de Octobr 1749 I Anledning af den allernaadigst anbefalede Text Ps:89:1...6 Og forestillet Guds Meenighed i Glumsøe og Bavelse Sogner*, [71].

<sup>1121</sup> Treschow 1749: 62.

<sup>1122</sup> Eyler Cristopher Kaasbøll, *Troe Undersaatteres Lovsang og Taksigelse til Gud fr hans store beviiste Naade og Miskundhed mod Dannemarcks Og Norges Rüge ved at bygge, beskierme og opholde den høylorlige Oldenborgiske Stamme paa Tronen nu i tre hundrede Aar, Pss Jubel-Festens første Dag den 28de Octobr: 1749. ved en Prædiken til Höymesse udi Hellig Geystes Meenighed i Kiøbenhavn [...]*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [60]; For a similar argument, see Debes 1749: 44; Scheen 1749: 23; Leigh 1749: 52-56; Heiberg 1749: 60-64.

The meanings invested in the concept of a covenant provide a key to understanding the strength of the ministers' claims that Denmark-Norway was a chosen kingdom. Pasi Ihalainen points out that scholars who have studied the use of biblical models in Protestant political rhetoric have offered different interpretations of both «the degree of seriousness» and the meaning of this phenomenon. In his own comparative study of perceptions of national identity in the public churches of three eighteenth-century Protestant nations, Ihalainen distinguishes between claims that the realm was favoured compared with other nations, which he finds were widespread in England, the Netherlands, and Sweden throughout the period he investigates (1685-1772), and claims that there was a «concrete covenant» between God and the realm, which were not.<sup>1123</sup> Implicit in this distinction is the assumption that the latter claim is stronger than the former. In the case of England, for instance, Ihalainen argues that «[p]reachers rarely claimed that England really was an Israel-like chosen nation, though many emphasized the favoured position of the country.»<sup>1124</sup>

The most obvious implication of positing the actual existence of a covenant was that Christian I was not only claimed to be *like* David, but that he was in fact seen as the *new* David. We have seen that some of the ministers were willing to go this far, while the majority treated the covenant as a unique promise to David. Whether or not they believed in the existence of an actual covenant, however, most clergymen claimed that Christian had been elected, and the royal dynasty he founded protected, by God. Even those who saw David's covenant as unique claimed that Denmark-Norway had been more blessed than ancient Israel.<sup>1125</sup> There is, furthermore, a remarkable degree of agreement in their claims about the similarity between the accession of David and Christian I. I have not managed to discover any pre-existing version of the history of the election Christian I that incorporates this motive of divine election and that might have been a direct inspiration for these narratives. It therefore seems likely that they arrived at more or less the same

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<sup>1123</sup> Ihalainen 2005: 87.

<sup>1124</sup> Ihalainen 2005: 97 ff.

<sup>1125</sup> See for example Isach Schwartzkopf's sermon: «We can truthfully say, that the promise («Forjættelsen») made to David and his house, has been fulfilled by God with the high royal house of Oldenburg; God has established this house and built it for 300 years and built their throne for 300 years in twelve generations, but God has shown even greater mercy towards Denmark than the kingdom of Judah: For while only 8 of 20 of the kings of this kingdom were pious, but twelve kings that gave them bad times, the Danish kingdom has had 12 kings of one house, who have all cared for the worship of God [...]». Isach Schwartzkopf, *Jubel Prædiken Efter Hans Kongl: Majestets Vor Allernaadigste Konges Kong Friderich Dend Femtes Befalling til Een Erindring om Dend stoere Velgierning, som Dend Naadige Gud har beviist disse Rigger og Lande i 300 Aar at give os 12 Naadige Konger af Dend Oldenborgske Stamme fra Christian Dend Første indtil Vores nu Regierende Kong Friderich Dend Femte, holden i Kregome og Winderöd d: 29 October 1749*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [31]; See also Rasmus Øgler, *Aftensangs Prædiken i Roeskilde Domkirke ofver denne anordnede Text 2 Sam: vii, v 18 [...] holden, efter Kongl. Allernaadigste Befaling paa dend almindelige ofver alt i Danmark og Norge, samt alle Förstendömmene, anbefalede Jubel- og Taksigelses Fest d: 28de Octobr. Ao 1749, for dend Oldenborgske Stammes velsignede Regering paa denne Danske Throne, nu i 300 Aar, fra Christiani 1mi Regerings Tiltrædelse Anno 1449*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [39].

narrative independent of each other, through similar methods of historical interpretation.<sup>1126</sup> The result of the merging between the Old Testament and Danish history was, in any case, the creation of a *myth of origins* for the Oldenburg dynasty. The story of Adolph/Eliab and Christian/David signified that the Danish king had been elected because of his great virtues and piety, and that God had therefore established his successors for 300 years.

Similar foundational myths are known from other European royal houses in the medieval and early modern periods. In the Habsburg dynasty's family tradition, the life and deeds of Rudolf I (1218-1291) was transformed into legend only a few generations after his death. Among the most important of the legends told about this ruler, was the story of Count Rudolf's meeting with the priest, which came to symbolise the deep piety of the first Habsburg emperor and the promise of divine favour towards his dynasty. When Count Rudolf was about to cross a stream with his horse, so this story went, he met a village priest carrying the Host. Out of veneration for the Lord, Rudolf let the priest mount his horse and guided him safely over the stream. Afterwards, he refused to accept that the priest returned his horse, insisting that he was not worthy to mount a horse that had carried the Lord. Depending on the version of the story, either the priest himself or a hermit then prophesized that the Count would be elevated to greatness for his veneration. According to historian Andrew Wheatcroft, «this story, told and retold, and constantly depicted in images, was a potent statement of the Habsburgs' claim to divine favour. [...] What this story presents is a lineage, in the person of their founder and great hero, that puts the service of God before its own ends; and the unspoken assumption was that in time the Lord would favour his own. *Semper patientia.*»<sup>1127</sup> In France, the sainted Louis IX became an «icon of dynastic legitimacy» that his Capetian successors, as well as the kings of the Valois and Bourbon dynasties, would repeatedly draw on in order to legitimize their claim to the throne and to sanctify their reigns.<sup>1128</sup>

The myth of Christian's divine election was neither as ancient, nor as well known, as these European counterparts. There are indications, however, that it at least later became part of the Oldenburg dynasty's family tradition. When crown prince Frederick (later Frederick VI) commissioned a series of historical paintings for the throne chamber in the rebuilt Christiansborg castle from the Danish artist C.W. Eckersberg in 1805, the story of the election of Christian was the

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<sup>1126</sup> The divine election of Christian I was also the topic of the first of eight speeches held by pupils at the Domschule in Schleswig. According to the *Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen*, 23 December 1749, the first pupil «redete von den sonderbaren Führungen, wodurch die himlische Vorsehung dem glorwürdigsten Christian dem I. den Weg zum Tron gebahnet habe.» *Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen Achtzehnder Tomus* 1749: 794.

<sup>1127</sup> Wheatcroft 1996: 29.

<sup>1128</sup> Gaposchkin 2008: 237-239.

topic of two of four paintings.<sup>1129</sup> The first painting depicted the meeting between the representatives of the Danish estates and Duke Adolph, in the exact moment when he turned down their offer and suggested that they elect his nephew. The suggestion is illustrated by Adolph pointing his finger towards a painting of Christian on the wall. The second painting depicted the election of Christian I at Viborg landsting. According to Peter Michael Hornung and Kasper Monrad, the artist Eckerberg originally drew a sketch of the scene where the crowd enthusiastically swore their oath of fidelity and acclaimed their new king. Frederik VI had turned this down, however, since it emphasized the popular support rather than the divine sanction of the monarchy. He therefore made Eckerberg change the scene, «so it instead shows the king swearing fidelity to God», while the enthusiasm of the people was changed to «quiet devotion».<sup>1130</sup>

### A myth of dynastic continuity and stability: 300 years under the same king

The election of Christian I was one important manifestation of divine providence at work in the history of the dynasty. Another central facet of the same phenomenon was the uninterrupted biological perpetuation and the unchanging virtuous character of the dynasty itself. In Hersleb's prayer text, these blessings were praised with the following words:

Thou hast now, O Lord! given us twelve kings after one another, all of the same branch, one root, one shoot after another in a straight line, of which one has surpassed the other in royal mildness and fatherly care, and therefore the government has increased in glory, and the kingdoms in happiness.<sup>1131</sup>

This short passage from Hersleb's text contained two main arguments that were reiterated in many sermons: that the Oldenburg kings had followed one another on the throne in an unbroken line and that the virtues of the dynasty had increased from king to king. None of the claims were entirely correct. The succession had in fact been interrupted once, when Christian II was deposed and followed on the throne by his uncle Frederick I in 1523. Although the Danish and Norwegian crown thus stayed within the Oldenburg dynasty, it was transferred to another branch of the family. The same unfortunate monarch, widely referred to in eighteenth century-Europe as «Christian the

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<sup>1129</sup> The two remaining paintings depicted scenes from the introduction of absolutism in the 1660's. Hornung & Monrad 2005: 182-83.

<sup>1130</sup> Hornung & Monrad 2005: 180-181.

<sup>1131</sup> «Du haver nu, O GUD! givet os Tolv Konger efter hinanden, alle af een Stame, een Rod, det eene Skud efter det andet i lige Linie, af hvilke den Eene haver overgaaet den Anden i Kongelig Mildhed og faderlig Omhygelighed, og derfor Regeringen tiltaget i Herlighed, og Rigerne i Lyksalighed.» *Texter og Bønen* 1749: 3v.

Tyrant», «Christian the evil» or «the Nordic Nero», also fit rather uneasily with general claims about the virtues of the entire dynasty. Later on I shall deal with the question of how Christian II was discussed during the jubilee. Here I shall rather focus on how the clergy promoted the idea of the unique continuity and stability of the entire dynasty.

Apart from Hersleb's prayer text, one particular author seems to have influenced the way the ministers spoke of these matters. In the first volume of his *History of the Kingdom of Denmark* (1732), Ludvig Holberg ended his account of the reign of Christopher of Bavaria, who was the last king to rule before the first Oldenburg monarch, with a panegyric paragraph about the new royal dynasty:

From Waldemaro 3. until these times [1448], one can see that the succession had faltered greatly, since by a particular fatality no Danish prince had been born for almost a 100 years. But from this point on one finds in the praiseworthy kings of the Oldenburg house a lasting and proper succession, and that Denmark from Christian I., who was the ancestor, has been ruled by nothing but Fredericks and Christians, and, just as the same kings have all had the same names, they have also resembled each other in virtues, so that one in both cases can consider the Oldenburg royal dynasty as the most notable and noteworthy in history. The only blemish in the following history is the reign of Christian 2; since it otherwise seems that Denmark in almost 300 years have been ruled by one and the same king, since one has seen the virtues of Christian I. shine in the same strength in all his descendants. A peculiar God's gift and glory, that I cannot see has happened to any other kingdom.<sup>1132</sup>

The religious conclusion and enthusiastic tone of the paragraph made it especially well suited as a source of inspiration for ministers searching for arguments for their sermons. There are, in fact, explicit references to and even verbatim quotes from it in several jubilee sermons. This is particularly interesting due to the fact that the very same paragraph has been interpreted quite differently by modern Holberg-scholars. Some have perceived it as ironic or detached, while others see it as a genuine expression of Holberg's royalism or as an expression of his genuine will to flatter the monarchy to further his career.<sup>1133</sup> In the sermons, however, Holberg was taken at face value and his paragraph served as a small arsenal of commonplaces about the reproductive fortunes and

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<sup>1132</sup> «Fra Waldemaro 3. indtil denne Tiid seer man, at Successionen temmeligen haver vaklet, eftersom fast udu 100 Aar ved en synderlig Fatalitet ingen Dansk Printz var bragt til Verden. Men man finder herefter udi de høylovlige Konger af det Oldenborgske Huus en bestandig og ordentlig Succession, og at Dannemark fra Christianio I, som var Stam-Fader, er bleven regieret af lutter Fridericis og Christianis, og, ligesom samme Konger alle have haft eens Navn, saa have de ogsaa alle lignet hinanden udi Dyder, saa at man i begge Henseende kand holde den Oldenborgske Konge-Stamme som den Merkværdigste og Anseeligste udi Historien. Den eeneste Plet udi efterfølgende Historie er Christiani 2. Regimente; thi det synes ellers i det øvrige, at Dannemark fast udi 300 Aar haver været regieret af een og den selsamme Konge, saasom man har seet Christiani I. Dyder skinne udi lige Grad hos alle Christiani I. Efterkommere. En synderlig Guds Gave og Herlighed, som jeg finder ikke noget Rige at være vederfareet.» Holberg 1732: 636-637.

<sup>1133</sup> For claims about irony or detachment, see Bull 1913: 86; Damsholt 1992: 95; Thomsen 1954: 83; For claims about sincerity, see Holm 1879a: 40; Berthelsen 2004: 99; Rian 2012:31; I discuss the clergy's use of Holberg as an historical source more extensively in Slettebø 2014a.

great virtues of the dynasty. One of the ministers who quoted Holberg in extenso was Gerhard Winge, vicar of Sande parish and dean of Tønsberg and Jarlsberg, who pointed out that the Oldenburg dynasty had been remarkably fertile and virtuous. The relevant paragraph from his sermon leaves no doubt that Winge had used Holberg as source, since the words are almost identical:

Both kingdoms, Denmark and Norway, were for a long time subject to a special fate, which was that there in Denmark from the days of Waldemar the 3. that is, almost for a 100 years, and in Norway from the days of Olav the 5; that is, over 50 years, had not been born a prince and heir to the kingdoms. [...] From the time the most praiseworthy kings of the great Oldenburg dynasty ascended to the throne, one finds a perpetual and proper succession for 300 years; the most remarkable thing is, that since the ancestor Christian the First, nothing but Friderichs and Christians have ruled over Denmark and Norway, when one excepts king Hans, the son of Christian the first. Just as these kings have had the same names, they have not resembled each other less in virtue. Yes, it seems almost as if these kingdoms have been ruled by on single king [...] O! a remarkable divine mercy and goodness, which has not been shown to any other kingdom in the whole world.<sup>1134</sup>

Other ministers referred explicitly to the famous historian, although not necessarily by name. Andreas Bredenberg of Merløse and Holbæk parishes on Zealand, for instance, wrote that «a faithful and judicious author has said that king Christian the First's virtues shine in all his successors, but we can say in truth, that king Christian's virtues have been increased with the improvement of the times, and all the virtues and high qualities of the house of Oldenburg are joined in Friderich the Fifth.[...].<sup>1135</sup> Ancher Borch, minister of Fanefjord parish on the Danish island of Møn, wrote that God had blessed the dynasty more than any other by letting it inherit the throne for such a long time in a straight and unbroken line. According to Borch, the kingdom of Denmark had since, «in the words of a certain famous author, been ruled by nothing but Friederichs and Christians, yes, as if by one king, since one here can see the virtues of the first ancestor Christian the First shine with the

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<sup>1134</sup> «Begge Rigerne Dannemark og Norge vare i lang Tid underkastede en besynderlig Skiebne, hvilken bestod derudi, at der i Dannemark fra Kong Waldemars den 3dies Tid, alt saa næsten i 100de Aar, og i Norge fra Kong Olufs den 5tes Tid, alt saa over 50de Aar icke var bleven født nogen Printz og Rigs Arving til Verden [...] Efter at de høystberømmelige Konger af den høløvlige Oldenborgske Stamme komme paa Thronen, finder man siden den Tid i ganske 300de Aar et bestandig og ordentlig Arve-Følge; Det besynderligste er, at fra Stamme Faderen Christian den Første af lutter Fridericher og Christianer har behersket Dannemark og Norge, naar man allene undtagen Kong Hans, Christian den Førstes Søn: Ligesom nu alle disse Konger har været hinanden lige i Navn, saa har de icke mindre lignet hinanden i Dyd; ja det synest fast ligesom disse Riger nu i 300de Aar var bleven regeret af en eneste Konge [...] O! en besynderlig Guds Naade og Godhed, som icke er vederfareet noget andet Rige i den heele Verden.» Winge 1749: 18; See also Bildsøe 1750: 43.

<sup>1135</sup> «En trofast og judicieus Auctor haver sagt, at Kong Christian den Førstes Dyder skinne udi alle hans Efterkommere, men vi kand sige med Sandhed, at Kong Christians Dyder ere ved Tidernes Forbedring forøgede, og alle det Oldenborgiske Huuses Dyder og høje Qvaliteter er samlede i Friderich den Femte.» Bredenberg 1749: 40.

same strength in all the successors of Christian the First. [...] Truly an example without equal in the whole known world.»<sup>1136</sup>

Holberg's praise for the royal dynasty was reminiscent of the claims in bishop Hersleb's prayer, but the paragraph in question contained some additional components that were utilized by the clergy in order to prove the unique character and fate of the dynasty. One of these was his remark about the naming traditions of the Oldenburg kings. As Holberg pointed out, the Danish kings had regularly alternated between the names Christian and Frederick, so that the kingdoms had been ruled by «nothing but Fredericks and Christians». What Holberg did not mention here, but of which he of course was well aware, was that the second king of the dynasty was called John (Danish: Johannes/Hans). While Holberg might have intended his remark to be nothing more than a fancy rhetorical conceit, some clergymen perceived the regular pattern of alternating Christians and Fredericks as another highly significant sign of God's work in worldly history. Gerhard Treschow pointed out that, with the exception of king John, God had established the names of the royal dynasty so that a Christian had always followed a Frederick all the way up to the present times. At one moment in the history of the dynasty, Treschow pointed out, the order was almost broken when a crown prince named Christian was elected to succeed his father Christian IV on the throne. However, since prince Christian had died a year before his father (in 1647), the crown passed to his younger brother Frederick (III). «I am not one of those who seek secrets in names», wrote Treschow, «even though history is full of the good or evil significance that the royal names have had, but still I cannot deny that there is something unusual and without equal in history, that two names have alternated in this way within a royal dynasty.»<sup>1137</sup>

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<sup>1136</sup> «[...] Dannemarches Rige har siden, som en vis berømmelig Auctor skriver, været regiæret af lutter Fridericher og Christianer, ja ligesom af een Konge, efterdi een her seer den første Stamme-Fader Christian den Førstes Dyder i lige Grad at skinne hos Christian den Førstes Efterkommere; [...] Sandelig et Exempel uden liige i den heele bekiendte Verden.» Ancher Borch, *Skiönsome Undersaatters pligtige Taksigelse til Gud for den besynderlig store Velgierning, at hand skienker dem prüssvärldige Konger af een Stamme i een arvelig vedvarende Fölge. Paa den allernaadigst anordnede Jubel-Fæstes 1ste Dag d 28 Octobr. 1749 for Sönder Sogns eller Phangfiord-Meenighed paa [Vestöens] Land i en Prædiken over Psalm. LXXXIX v 1-6*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [36-37].

<sup>1137</sup> «Jeg er nu ikke i deres Tal, som søge Hemmeligheder i Navne, omendkiönt Historien er fuld af den gode eller onde Betydning, som de Kongelige Navne have havt, men jeg kand dog ikke nægte, at det er jo noget usædvanligt og ellers ikke i Historien at finde, at tvende Navne saaledes have vexlet om med hinanden i en Kongelig Stamme.» Treschow 1749: 62; See also Knud Arild Friis, *Paa dend, Den Höyeste Gud til Ære, Og af Deres Höj=Kongl: Mayestet, Kong Friderich den 5te anordnede Almindelige Jubel= og Tacksigelses=Fest, som helligholdtes udi Danmarch, Norge, og alle dertil behörende Fyrstendömmen dend 28 Octobr. Anno 1749. Til Erindring om Guds Naade imod disse Riger, at hand nu, udi 300 Aar, har paa den Danske Kongl: throne opholdet, og af den Kongl: Oldenborgiske Stamme velsignet Röggerne, udi en ubrudt Linie, med Konge efter Konge, Sön efter Fader af samme Stamme, fra Konge Christian den 1ste, som kom ind en Græve fra Oldenborg, hans Regierings Begyndelse*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [30].



The rector of the cathedral school in Schleswig, Andreas Hojer, made the names of the Oldenburg kings, particularly the steady alternation between the names Christian and Frederick, the central topic of the speech he held in Schleswig's orphanage (Waisenhaus) for the town's notables on 29 and 30 of October.<sup>1138</sup> Whereas Gerhard Treschow only mentioned one instance where a prince Christian almost followed another Christian on the throne, Hojer cited a long list of similar examples. He started his detailed history of Oldenburg royal names with king Christian I, whom he claimed had been advised by the Councils of the Realm in Denmark and Norway to give his first two sons the ancient Norse royal names Olaus and Canutum in order to please his new subjects. Both of the princes had died young, however: just as God had wanted to glorify the kings Oldenburg dynasty more than he had their predecessors on the Danish throne, he also wanted to distinguish them through their names. Therefore, the next king of the dynasty was John, a royal name never previously used in Denmark.<sup>1139</sup> Hojer went on to discuss some contrafactual historical scenarios, critical moments in the past where princes with names other than Christian or Friedrich could have been serious claimants to the throne, had they lived to adulthood. If John's youngest son Franciscus (d.1511) had lived in 1523, he could have challenged his uncle Frederick I, and had any one of Christian II's three sons John (d.1532), Maximillan (d.1519) and Phillipp (d.1520) lived at the onset of the interregnum in 1533 they could have challenged Christian III. According to Hojer, all of these premature deaths were signs of God's particular favour of the kings, and through them, the kingdoms:

Aus diesen und andern Umständen mehr erhellet, wie die himmlische Vorsehung durch Verhängung so vieler Sterbfälle, ja selbst durch die Fristung des Lebens Christian des andern in seiner damaligen harten Gefangenschaft, und andre, von ihrer weisen Fügung allein abhängende, Schickungen Friedrich dem ersten und Christian den dritten den Weg zum Throne eröffnet, und also ihren Zweck erhalten habe, diese Nordische Reiche durch dero Allerdurchlauchtigste Thron-Erben mit unzähligen Wohltaten zu beglücken.<sup>1140</sup>

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<sup>1138</sup> Hojer 1749. This Andreas Hojer is not to be confused with his more well-known relative, the jurist, historian and royal official Andreas Hojer, who appeared in the previous chapter. The two knew each other, however: the latter died in the home of rector Hojer in Schleswig in 1739. Query «Andreas Hojer» in *Dansk Biografisk Lexikon*. <http://runeberg.org/dbl/7/0518.html>. Retrieved 21.08.2014.

<sup>1139</sup> Hojer 1749: 10.

<sup>1140</sup> Hojer 1749: 12.

Hojer listed several other instances where it had seemed as if the miraculous chain of Christians and Fredericks would be broken. Every time, however, divine providence had intervened to the benefit of the kingdoms.<sup>1141</sup>

Another influential phrase from Holberg's paragraph was the claim that Denmark seemed to have been ruled «by one and the same king» for 300 years, since the virtues of Christian I had been replicated by all his descendants. This formulation, which surfaced in some form or another in almost all of the sermons, served to accentuate the supposedly extraordinary stability of the royal dynasty. Marcus Frideric Bang, for instance, claimed that one single man had ruled the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway for three hundred years. The only thing that had changed in all these years was that he had alternated between the names Christian and Frederick. The passing of three hundred years has only made this man younger, better and wiser. The reason why all the twelve kings of the dynasty could be considered as the same man, was not only that they had followed each other without pause on the throne, but because: «the son, together with his father's kingdom, has also inherited his fathers mind and virtues, royal mildness, mercy, wisdom and justice, so that the same has always governed, although not under the same name.»<sup>1142</sup> In a slight but significant variation of this motive, a few clergymen stressed that the everlasting and undying virtues of the Oldenburg kings were *royal* virtues, rather than *natural* or *personal* virtues. The distinction resembles the political fiction of *the king's two bodies* described by Ernst Kantorowicz in a classical study. Simply put, the proponents of this idea claimed that the king united in his person a *body natural* and a *body politic*: while the former was natural and mortal, the latter was political and eternal. As soon the king's natural body died, the body politic was transferred to his successor. In this way, the king never died, although the mortal body of every individual monarch necessarily had to perish.<sup>1143</sup> Although the Danish and Norwegian ministers did not enter into any detailed theoretical discussion of this political fiction, they expressed a reminiscent conception in which the eternal perfection of the Oldenburg

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<sup>1141</sup> During the interregnum period, God had given the throne to Christian III rather than to his younger brother Hans, the favourite of the Catholic party. Next, when it seemed like the aging Frederick II would not have a male heir, God had given him crown prince Christian, who later became Christian IV. His son, crown prince Christian, died and the throne passed to his younger brother Frederick III. Frederick IV's eldest son Christian died in 1697, but God gave him another son called Christian, later to become Christian VI. The same had happened to the current Frederick V, who had lost his first son Christian, but who had recently been blessed with a new crown prince of the same name. Hojer 1749: 15-18.

<sup>1142</sup> «[...]men også fordi Søn med Faders Rige haver arvet Faders Sind og Dyder, Kongelige Mildhed, Naade, Viisdom og Retfærdighed, saa at den Samme alltiid haver regieret, skjønt ikke under samme Navn.» Bang 1749: 6; Peder Debes similarly claimed that after a king had died, «it has been as though he was not dead; because he has left his likeness in his son.» Debes 1749: [45].

<sup>1143</sup> Kantorowicz 1997.

monarchs was opposed to the human imperfection of the individual king. Jens Nimb, for instance, made a distinction between royal and natural abilities:

I am not speaking of their natural abilities; since in that respect they have, like other human beings, had several sufferings and movements of the mind, which David and Solomon also had. But in their abilities of government, they have been so alike, and all of them have resembled David so much, that it is difficult to discern them from one another in this regard.<sup>1144</sup>

Ole Tidemand, too, differentiated between the kings' «princely and royal qualities», on the one hand, and the «particular qualities» that had been manifested in each reign, due to every individual king's «personal character; the circumstances at the time of his rule and God's providence.»<sup>1145</sup> Although every king had made their particular contribution to the kingdoms (Christian VI had improved the church, Frederick III had introduced the current form of government, Christian V had improved the laws, and so on) they had all had «a collection of all princely and high royal qualities and virtues» which had made their reigns equally praiseworthy, merciful, just and Christian». Interestingly, Tidemand concluded his discussion of the kings' virtues with a short reflection on their faults:

And even though these great heads have been /:like all human beings :/ subject to human conditions and, to put it honestly, human faults, which may have expressed themselves in one incident or another; we must still think, yes only hope, that God's mercy's governance of them has not been in vain, just as it was not in vain with Solomon 2 Sam. 7. V. 14.15.<sup>1146</sup>

The cited bible verse was from the same chapter as the prescribed verse for the evening service (2.Sam 7, 17), which was the sermon that Tidemand delivered. It read: «I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.» Tidemand expressed, in other words, a hope that the human imperfections of the individual Oldenburg kings were negated by a promise similar to the one God had made to

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<sup>1144</sup> «Her tales ikke om deres naturlige Egenskaber; thi deri har de, som andre Mennesker, havt deres Sinds Lidelser og Bevægelser adskillige, som og David og Salomon havde. Men i deres Regierings Egenskaber har de været hverandre saa lige, og alle saa lignet David, at det deraf er vanskeligt at kjende dem fra hverandre.» Nimb 1751: 127.

<sup>1145</sup> «[...]thi lad være, at skjøndt een eller anden besynderlig Qualité har fornemmelig yttret sig ved hver Regiering, alt efter Enhvers personelle Character; hans Regierings Tids Leilighed og Guds Forsyn [...]». *Ole Tidemand: Prædiken for den Oldenborgske Stamme. 28. Oct. 1749* (GKS 2812 kvart): [94].

<sup>1146</sup> «Og lad skjøndt være, at disse stoere Hoveder have og været /: saavit de vare Mennisker :/ undergIVEN Menniskelige Vilkaar og reent ud sagt, Menniskelige Feyl, som i een eller anden Tilfælde maatte have yttret sig; Saa maa mand dog tænke, ja kund haabe, at Guds Naades Huusholdning med dem, som med Kong Salomon, haver ei været forgiæves. 2 Sam. 7 v. 14.15». *Ole Tidemand: Prædiken for den Oldenborgske Stamme. 28. Oct. 1749* (GKS 2812 kvart): [95].

David. He added a slightly enigmatic sentence: «We must also know this, that Shem's and Japhet's affection and carefulness should never be condemned whereas, on the other hand, Ham's immodest eyes and open, yes, impudent mouth drags curse after itself Gen: 9. v.22 and 29.»<sup>1147</sup> This is a reference to an episode where Noah gets drunk and falls asleep naked. Noah's son Ham sees his father naked and tells his two brothers Shem and Japhet, who goes into the tent and covers Noah with a garment without laying their eyes upon his naked body. When Noah wakes up, he curses Ham's son Canaan and blesses Shem and Japhet. In his biographical study of Ole Tidemand, Per Asbjørnsen claims that Tidemand with the latter sentence suggested that the Oldenburg kings' greatest fault had been that they had been too cautious, and that he exonerated them by contrasting them to the impudent Ham.<sup>1148</sup> I believe this interpretation is incorrect, that it makes more sense to interpret the paragraph as a reminder to the congregation of their duty not to spread rumours about the faults of their father (i.e. the king) and rather cover up his faults, as Japhet and Shem had done.<sup>1149</sup>

The unprecedented stability that had allegedly accompanied the ascendance of the Oldenburg dynasty was conceptualized in one final way. Most clergymen referred to the fact that there had always been a male heir to inherit the throne of Denmark-Norway. Holberg had referred to the biological fortunes of the dynasty with the claim that there had always been a «lasting and proper succession» in the kingdoms since Christian I. Many clergymen placed great emphasis on the blessing this had entailed, and the catastrophes that had been avoided. Whenever a kingdom lacked an heir, they argued, chaos, war and disorder ensued.<sup>1150</sup>

The essential importance of a rightful male heir in a hereditary monarchy must have been particularly present in the minds of the ministers and the members of their congregations in the year 1749. As many Danes and Norwegians would have been aware, the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) was concluded just the year before, with the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. This war had started when the Holy Roman emperor Charles VI died without an male heir. The emperor had

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<sup>1147</sup> «[...]ligesom mand derhos maa viide dette, at Sems og Japhets Ømhed og Forsigtighed er aldrig at laste, naar derimod Chams ublue Øyne og aaben, ja frekke Mund drager Forbandelse efter sig. Gen: 9. v. 22 og 29.» *Ole Tidemand: Prædiken for den Oldenborgske Stamme. 28. Oct. 1749* (GKS 2812 kvart): [95]

<sup>1148</sup> Asbjørnsen 2003: 59.

<sup>1149</sup> The minister Hans Thomesøn Trojel used the passage in the same way in his first jubilee sermon from the bicentenary in 1717, where he argued that subjects should always speak well of their king, and hide their human frailties with the «cloak of love». For Trojel, Shem and Japhet were the paradigmatic examples of loyal children: «Kings are fathers/subjects are children in the kingdom/but who wants to be the evil child Ham/ and lay bare his father's private parts («Blussel»)/and not rather be the good children Shem and Japhet, and hide their fathers private parts/when we consider that the evil child received the curse and the good children the blessing». Trojel 1718: 34.

<sup>1150</sup> See for instance Glatwedt 1750: 35.

attempted to secure Maria Theresia's succession in the hereditary lands of the House of Habsburg by receiving acceptance for the Pragmatic Sanction by the other courts of Europe. After Charles' death, the major European powers broke their promises, leading to the breakout of war over the disputed succession. One of the previous great wars of the century, the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) had also started because of a disputed succession in the house of Habsburg. There are few direct references to these events in the sermons, which is not surprising: Øystein Idsø Viken has pointed out that there were rarely explicit topical references to current affairs in eighteenth-century Norwegian sermons. Judging by their short and vague references to important current domestic and foreign events, preachers seems to have assumed that their congregations had already learnt of these events from other channels, such as rumour, private correspondence or in the newspapers.<sup>1151</sup> Although we do not find many explicit references, we find enough allusions to confirm that the foreign wars of succession was a relevant frame of reference for congregations in Denmark-Norway. Jens Aalborg, for example, wrote:

How great are the unfortunes that hover over lands and kingdoms when a royal house dies out, is proven clearly by the Holy Gospels, the old chronicles of our fatherland, and the destiny of several European states even in our times.<sup>1152</sup>

Peder Grove Beyer similarly pointed out that a land without an heir could expect internal and external unrest, bloodshed, destruction and scourges, «of which so many dismal examples have been seen in other places.»<sup>1153</sup> The most explicit reference to the recent foreign events was made by Hans Adolph Brorson, the bishop of Ribe. He wrote that «the memory of the the latest bloody foreign war, waged for that reason alone that there lacked one single prince» should make the congregation more eager in praying to God that he would protect the newborn crown prince and the royal

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<sup>1151</sup> Viken 2014: 251.

<sup>1152</sup> «Hvor stor U-lyksalighed der svever over Lande og Riger naar een Konge-Stamme gaaer ud, derom kand baade den Hellige Skrift, Fæderne Landets gamle Chroniker, og adskillige Europæiske Staters Skiæbne end og i vore Tüider bære klareste Vidnesbyrd.» Aalborg 1749: [24]; See also Sidelmann 1766a: 29.

<sup>1153</sup> «[...] men kan vente sig indvortes Uenighed, og udvortes Krig og Blodstyrtning, Ødeleggelse, Landeplager, hvorpaa ere givne saa mange bedrøvelige Exempler paa andre Steder.» Peder Grove Beyer, *Sions Glæde over Davids Regering Og Israels Tak til Gud for Guds bestandige Naade imod Kongen og Kongens Huus betragtet paa Jubel= og Taksigelses Festen Den 28de Octobr 1749 I Anledning af den allernaadigst anbefalede Text Ps:89:1...6 Og forestillet Guds Meenighed i Glumsøe og Bavelse Sogner*, [31]; See also Godsche From's sermon: «Andægtige Siæle, de der i disse vor Allernaadigste Konges, Kong Friderich den Femtes Riger og Lande ikkun faa Aar har levet, har vel hört og veed hvad Ængstelse, Forstyrrelse og Ødeleggelse, hvad Nöd og Död det kand forvalde, hvor der ei er en Printz, en Sön, som efter sin Höyst-Salige Hr. Faders Död Thronen kand beklæde, til Regjeringens optræde.» Godsche From, *Texten som paa Jubel Festen, d 28 Octobr. 1749 til Aftensang er anordnet findes antegnet II Sam: VI Iver: 18. [...] Er og for Guds Meenighed i St. Peders Kirke i Slagelse ved Guds Bistand forklaret saaledes, som den her i dybeste Underdanighed bliver fremlagt*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [12-13].

family.<sup>1154</sup> The rector in the town of Schleswig, Andreas Hojer, compared the glorious fortune of the Oldenburg dynasty with the unfortune of another, unspecified European royal house:

Endlich hat der Allerhöchste noch bey unserm Dencken ein anderes hohes Haus in Europa, das ebenfalls dreyhundert Jahr geblühet hat, zwar mit der Gebuhrt eines einzigen Printzen erfreuet, aber auch denselben in der zarten Kindheit wieder weggenommen, und also die männliche Linie desselben erlöschten lassen: hingegen aber des gloriwürdigsten Königlichen Hauses in Dännemarck männliche Linie, und zugleich die merckwürdige Abwechselung der hohen Nahmen Christian und Friederich in einem einzigen Printzen, unserm jetztregierenden Allernädigsten König/erhalten, un herrlich bestärcket.<sup>1155</sup>

This was most likely an oblique reference to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI of the House of Habsburg, whose only son Leopold John had died in infancy in 1716, a death that would indirectly lead to the War of the Austrian Succession years later. In contrast, God had always ensured that the house of Oldenburg had a son ready to replace his father on the throne.

This historical argument could be buttressed with a reference to a contemporary event that would have been known to all the subjects of Frederick V, namely that the kingdoms had been blessed with the birth of crown prince Christian in the first month of the jubilee year. In the comments about his own illumination in an anonymous account he wrote about the celebrations in Trondheim, Bishop Nannestad claimed that «the prescious prince» that would become Christian VII had been granted to the kingdoms by God in the jubilee year. He made a point of the fact that the crown prince who introduced a new three hundred years of Oldenburg rule had the same name as the king who had introduced the three hundred years of Oldenburg rule that had just passed. The observation was summed up in a short verse: «The great hope of the future is Christian: like before,/ when God opened the door of hope three hundred years ago.»<sup>1156</sup> The vicar Christian Lindemand described it as an extraordinary blessing («meere end almindelig Velgierning») from the Lord that the king was given a son to inherit his throne exactly in the jubilee year for the longevity of the royal house.<sup>1157</sup> Herman Dominicus Beckmann, vicar of Boeslunde parish in southwestern Zealand, went further. He interpreted the royal birth in light of the prescribed verse, Psalm 89, 1-6. Denmark had

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<sup>1154</sup> «Dend erindring om sidste blodige Krig udelands, af dend Aarsag aleene, fordie der fattedes een eeniste Prinds, kand gjøre Os desto ivrigere i at Anbefale J Herrens særdeeles milde Varetægt Dend DYREBARE PODE Vor NAADIGSTE KRONPRINDS [...]». Brorson 1956: 311.

<sup>1155</sup> Hojer 1749: 18.

<sup>1156</sup> «Fremtidens store Haab er Christian: Som før,/ Da for Tre Secula Gud oplod Haabets Dør.» Nannestad 1749b.

<sup>1157</sup> Christian Lindemand, *En Gudelig Erkiendtlighed For en velsignet Kongestammes Bestandighed Paa Jubel=Festen D. 28 Octobr: 1749 For den Kongelige Oldenborgiske Stammes velsignede Bestandighed udi 300de aar forklaret Af den Anordnede Text Psalm: 89. v:1-6 for Toxverg Meenighed og efter Kongelig Allernaadigste Befalning*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [10].

not been «prince-less» for 300 years, he wrote, but God had «let us feel that loss for almost 1 ½ years». God, however, had not forgotten «his Denmark», not forgotten his mercy, and he had not forgotten «the pact that he made with his Danish David, that there would never lack a son who could sit on the Danish throne. In place of the late prince [the infant crown prince Christian who had died in 1747], God had granted the kingdoms prince Christian in the beginning of the jubilee year. «And we place our hopes in God», wrote Beckmann, «that our text shall be fulfilled for our Danish David».<sup>1158</sup>

The royal government was of course well aware of the symbolical value of the birth of a crown prince in the jubilee year of the royal dynasty, and did its best to capitalize on this fortunate coincidence.<sup>1159</sup> Early in the year, around the same time as the jubilee medals were being produced, the Royal Academy discussed the designs for another medal to commemorate the birth of crown prince Christian. They chose Otto Thott's design for the reverse, which was an image of «God's providence giving his Royal Highness a long life». Providence was symbolized by a female figure wearing a cloak adorned with stars and bearing a crown and scepter. Providence handed the baby prince over to a female personification of Denmark that rested her foot on Hermes, the conductor of souls to the afterlife. The reverse bore the inscription «IN SPEM FVTVRI SECULUM-CHRISTIANVS PRIN. HÆRED. DAN. ET NOR. NATUS D. 29 IAN. 1749», or «With hopes for a new century- Christian, crown prince of Denmark and Norway, born on 29 January 1749.»<sup>1160</sup> In using the word «Seculum», the Royal Academy connected the birth of Christian directly to the upcoming jubilee. Only a few weeks before the tercentenary, the government had also publicized the

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<sup>1158</sup>«Men dend Gud som ikke endnu har glemt sit Dannemark, glemte ey heller sin Miskundhed, glemte ey heller sin Pagt, som hand hafde giort mod sin Danske David, at der ikke skulde fattes en Sön som kunde sidde paa dend Danske Trone, men i dend höysalige Princes Stød i Begyndelsen af dette Aars Jubilæo d 29 Januar skienkede os en Prince, vor nu levende Prince Christian, som en Landets Haab, og vil vi haabe til Gud at vor Text skal opfyldes vor Danske David [...]». Herman Dominicus Beckman, *Et Gud velbehageligt Jubel-Offet betragted over dend allernaadigst anbefalede Text af Psalmen d. 89: v.1-6. Paa dend allernaadigst forordnede Jubel-Fæst d. 28 Octob: 1749. I Anledning af Guds naadige Ombue og Beskiærmelse over sit Danske og Norske Israel, da dend naadige Gud nu i 300 Aar har vedligeholdt Regieringen i dend Oldenborgiske Stamme, i Boeslunde Kirke*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [41]; See also Jens Knudssön Thillerup, *Jubel- og Taksigelses-Prædiken Paa dend Hans Kongelig Mayestat, Vor Allernaadigste arve Konge og Herre, Kong FRIDERICH den Femte Allernaadigst Paabudne Jubel og Taksigelses Fæst, Den 28de Octobris 1749 Til Amindelse og Erindring om Guds Naade imod Disse Riger, som nu i 300de Aar har opholdt paa Thronen dend Kongelig Oldenborgiske Stamme fra Kong CHRISTIAN den Førstes Regierings Begyndelse*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [26-27].

<sup>1159</sup> For it was indeed a coincidence. Niels G. Bartholdy suggests that the decision to celebrate the jubilee in 1749 was caused by the birth of crown prince Christian on 29 January 1749, since the lack of a male heir would have made it less meaningful to celebrate it in 1748 to commemorate the year Christian I had actually become a king. As we have seen, however, discussions about the tercentenary began already in 1747, and Gram proposed from the outset that 1749 was the most appropriate year. The birth of a male heir was therefore only a bonus, rather than the motivation for the tercentenary. See Bartholdy 1975: 339.

<sup>1160</sup> The medal was not finished in time for the tercentenary, however, because of technical problems with its production. It was not completed before 1751. See Galster 1936: 271; Lomholt 1960: 23.

news that queen Louise was again pregnant with child (princess Louise). The news was broadcast from the pulpits in Copenhagen on 12 October 1749, and had at least reached most of the parishes in Zealand in time for the tercentenary.<sup>1161</sup> The minister of Glumsø and Bavelse, a village sixty kilometers southwest of Copenhagen, praised the blessed fertility of the queen and claimed that all faithful subjects should thank God for having placed

a David on the throne, and a Jedidiah, a Lord's beloved, who is an heir to the throne. Yes! God has now in this time pleased us with the news that our most merciful queen has again been blessed with the fruit of life[...].<sup>1162</sup>

Bishop Nannestad wrote that the news of the queen's pregnancy had reached the town in time for the celebrations in Trondheim, and had been proclaimed from the pulpits at the same time as the intimation for the jubilee.<sup>1163</sup> If this is correct, it is safe to assume that most parts of the kingdoms had heard the news.

## 29 years of peace

Denmark-Norway in the mid-eighteenth century was a society reaping the benefits of a prolonged period of peace. After the closing of the Great Northern War, the subjects of the Danish monarchs had been spared not only the traumas of war itself, but also to a large degree the burdens which followed in its wake, such as heavy wartime taxes, mass conscriptions and serious disturbances of trade. By the time of the jubilee in 1749, a realisation that the peace had now lasted for a long time, as well as appreciation of its benefits, seems to have become widespread. Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen claims that temporary ceremonial decorations during the entire reign of Frederick V (1746-65) reflected «the ideal of the perfect society: a vision of "*Felicitas temporum*».<sup>1164</sup> She sees «the happy state of the nation» as a constant theme throughout Frederick's years on the throne, but she also remarks that it was expressed as early in 1746: «This vision of the peaceful reign of Frederick V at such an

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<sup>1161</sup> DRA. DK. D21-117: p. 479.

<sup>1162</sup> «Det Gud gives os Aarsag at glæde os over, og takke Gud for, da vi baade have en David paa Thronen, og en Jedidia, en Herrens Elskelige, som er Arving til Thronen. Ja! Gud har nu i denne Tiid glædet os med denne Tidende, at vor allernaadigste Dronning igien er velsignet med Livets Frugt[...].» Peder Grove Beyer, *Sions Glæde over Davids Regering Og Israels Tak til Gud for Guds bestandige Naade imod Kongen og Kongens Huus betragtet paa Jubel= og Taksigelses Festen Den 28de Octobr 1749 I Anledning af den allernaadigst anbefalede Text Ps:89:1...6 Og forestillet Guds Meenighed i Glumsøe og Bavelse*, [32].

<sup>1163</sup> Nannestad 1749b.

<sup>1164</sup> Johannsen 1985: 121



early stage seems almost invocatory, it was also anticipated in 1746 through the decoration of his father's *castrum doloris* in the Chapel at Christiansborg.<sup>1165</sup> The rhetoric of peace was indeed a recurring feature already during in verse panegyrics and ceremonial decorations in connection with the death and funeral of Christian VI. As Bøggild-Johannesen points out, the images and inscriptions in Christiansborg Chapel in 1746 frequently referred to the deceased monarch as a *Rex Pacificus*.<sup>1166</sup> Similar sentiments abound in panegyric poetry about the dead monarch.<sup>1167</sup>

With the benefit of hindsight, we know that the end of the Great Northern War marked the start of nearly a century of peace, ending only with the British attack on Copenhagen in 1801, at the start of the Napoleonic wars.<sup>1168</sup> For Danes and Norwegians alive in 1749, however, a long and uninterrupted period of peace was a relatively recent phenomenon, a novel condition of life one could not take for granted. Adults over 35 years of age would have had personal memories of wartime and many families would have experienced hardship and loss. In Norway, the annual thanksgiving day celebrating the victory over the Swedes was a constant reminder of the last war. Denmark-Norway was, furthermore, still a profoundly martial society. It was one the most militarized states in Europe at the start of the eighteenth century, with a 70.000 man strong army, a ratio of approximately one soldier to every 25 subjects. At least half of the state expense budget went to military expenditures.<sup>1169</sup> After the Great Northern War, the size of the army stayed at the same high level as on the eve of the war, at approximately 60-70.000 soldiers.<sup>1170</sup> The question is how one should interpret vocal celebrations of peace in this setting. Did praise for peace possibly imply a criticism of war? Could people utter praise for the peaceful reigns of the current king, his father and his ancestors without implicitly criticizing their martial ancestors? Essentially, we are first of all asking how the positive valorisation of peace, either presented as a tangible reality or as an ideal condition, was adjusted rhetorically and conceptually to the everyday realities of a militarized society. A second

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<sup>1165</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1166</sup> See *En Accurat Beskrivelse over de INSCRIPTIONER og Sind-Billeder* 1746.

<sup>1167</sup> See Lunge 1746: 8.; Rothe 1746: 29; Selmer 1746: 37, 41-42; Høyberg 1746; 4, 6-7; Graae 1746: 91; Anchersen 1746: 122; Toft 1746: 148.

<sup>1168</sup> The kingdoms were, however, involved in some smaller armed conflicts in the period. Some of these skirmishes took place in the Danish overseas colonies, caused by disagreements with other European powers or local rulers. Throughout the eighteenth century, moreover, Denmark-Norway was in a perpetual state of war with the Corsair states in Northern Africa. Finally, Denmark-Norway was engaged in a short war against Sweden in 1788. This so-called «Theatre War» (in Sweden) or «Cowberry war» (Norway) was triggered by Denmark-Norway's commitment to assist Russia when it was attacked by Sweden. A Norwegian army of approximately 10.000 men invaded southern Sweden in September 1788, but Denmark-Norway withdrew from the war after pressure from Great Britain and Prussia. Although very few soldiers on either side died in battle, over a thousand Norwegian soldiers died of disease (primarily dysentery) exacerbated by poor hygiene and lack of food. For the wars in the long period of «peace», see Lind 2008: 379-397.

<sup>1169</sup> Jespersen 2008: 332.

<sup>1170</sup> Lind 2008: 374.

question is how ministers preaching the glory of peace dealt with a long history of royally initiated warfare.

### The Nordic Solomon and his son: the peaceful reigns of Christian VI and Frederick V

There are several examples of ministers who pointed out in their jubilee sermons that they and their parishioners were living in a uniquely peaceful era in Danish-Norwegian history, and that Denmark and Norway were uniquely peaceful kingdoms compared with the rest of Europe. According to Iochum Friderich Zarth, minister of Ølstykke parish in northern Zealand, the long peace was a divine blessing that people had become so used to they would soon forget to appreciate it. He claimed that love of peace was a general characteristic of the Oldenburg kings, most of whom had been peaceful and preferred to keep the peace as far as possible and if it had been up to them, but that it was particularly true of the last two monarchs. The kingdoms were now exceptional among the European states:

We have now in almost 30 years had lasting peace. I cannot think of one kingdom, one could say of many, who could claim the same; in the time when so many and just about every surrounding kingdoms have been at war against each other, and one has heard of war everywhere, we have lived in the midst in peace in quiet: must we not praise God [...] for such a blessing?<sup>1171</sup>

The minister of Gentofte and Kongens Lyngby parishes, Christian Siegfried Mangor, also contrasted the quiet conditions in Denmark-Norway with the turmoil in Europe during the recently concluded War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48). «When so many countries in Europe were entangled in a bloody war», he wrote, «we lived here in calm. When thousands of people lost their homes to hostile forces we lived here in peace in our houses.»<sup>1172</sup> He also referred to a few recent, more limited

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<sup>1171</sup> «Vi har nu snart i 30 Aar hafft bestandig Fred; Jeg veed ikke at nævne eet Rige, een kunde sige af mange, som ikke kunde sige os det efter; i dend Tid saa mange og meest alle omliggende Riger har været oprørte imod hin-anden, og mand har hørt om Krig allevegne, saa har vi midt iblant, boed i Fred og Roe: maatte vi da ikke love Gud ogsaa for saadan Velgierning?» Iochum Friderich Zarth, *Guds Velgierninger og Forsiun formedelst Den Kongelige Oldenborgiske Stammes Opholdelse forestillet paa Jubel=Festen Anno 1749: Den 28de Octobris udi Denne Prædiken, Saaledes holden for Ølstøche Meenighed*, [24].

<sup>1172</sup> «Da saa mange Lande udi Europa for faae Aar siden vare innviklede udi een blodig Kriig, levede vi her udi Roelighed. Da mange tusinde Mennisker bleve huusvilde ved fiendtlig Magt boede vi her i vore Huuse udi Fred.» C.S. Mangor, *Een Prædiken holden for Gentofte og Kongens Lyngbye Meenigheder paa dend Aldmindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses Fast d 28 Octobr. 1749*, [8]; See also Heiberg 1749:19; Ancher Borch, *Skiønsome Undersaatters pligtige Taksigelse til Gud for den besynderlig store Velgierning, at hand skienker dem prüssværdige Konger af een Stamme i een arvelig vedvarende Følge. Paa den allernaadigst anordnede Jubel-Fastes 1ste Dag d 28 Octobr. 1749 for Sønder Sogns eller Phanefjord-Meenighed paa [Vestøens] Land i en Prædiken over Psalm. LXXXIX v 1-6*, [34].

conflicts, «a terrible rebellion in England»<sup>1173</sup>, a «great confusion in Holland»<sup>1174</sup> and «an internal disturbance in Switzerland»<sup>1175</sup>. In Denmark, on the other hand, there had been neither external nor internal disturbances. He attributed this to God, and to the current monarch and his father: «It shall be written in the chronicles to the honour of the late and honourable king Christian the Sixth, that he lived and died in peace. It shall be imprinted on our hearts to the praise of our currently governing King Friderich the Fifth, that he makes such alliances that can assure us of peace in the future.»<sup>1176</sup> Others ministers made similar arguments about the long and exceptional peace in Denmark-Norway.<sup>1177</sup>

Mangor was not alone in describing the late Christian VI as a particularly peaceful monarch. When clergymen and other public speakers discussed the virtues of each king of the Oldenburg royal line, they very often associated Christian with a preference for peace and a quiet reign. Mogens Marqvard Marcussen, minister of Kousted and Råsted parishes on Jutland, pointed out that this king was «the only one of all his forefathers that had peace in his entire reign».<sup>1178</sup> Gerhard Winge of Sande parish in Norway likened Christian VI to the biblical king Solomon, the peaceful son of the

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<sup>1173</sup> The last Jacobite uprising took place in 1745-46, when Charles Edward Stuart tried to regain the British throne for the Stuart dynasty.

<sup>1174</sup> This is probably a reference to the Second Orangist Revolution (1747-1751) in the Netherlands. The revolution was triggered by a French invasion of States Flanders in April 1747. The weakness of the Dutch defenses led the citizenry in various Dutch towns to demand the restoration of the statholderate. By May of 1747, the States in all the provinces had proclaimed William IV as Stadholder. The restoration of the statholderate was rapidly followed by popular calls for political reforms and reduced corruption, and by anti-Catholic rioting. In the summer of 1748, tax farmers also became the target of popular riots. The immediate consequence of the revolution, which was driven by an alliance between the common populace and the Orangist party, was a centralization of power in the hands of the Stadholder. Israel 1998: 1067 ff.

<sup>1175</sup> This is possibly a reference to the so-called Henzi conspiracy in Bern, which took place in June 1749. A group of petit bourgeois led by Samuel Henzi attempted to overthrow the patrician government of Bern. The conspiracy was discovered and its leader executed. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the «conspiracy aroused attention throughout Europe.» Query: "Samuel Henzi." in *Encyclopaedia Britannica. Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1357123/Samuel-Henzi>. Retrieved 03.08.2014.

<sup>1176</sup> «Det skal skrives udi Krønikerne til salig og høylovlig Ihukommelse Kong Christian dend Siettes Ære, at hand regierede, levede og døde udi Fred. Det skal staae præntet udi vore Hierter til vores nu regierende naadige Kong Friderich dend Femtes Priis, at hand opretter saadanne Forbunde, der kunde forvise os om Fred og Roelighed udi dend tilkommende Tiid.» C.S. Mangor, *Een Prædiken holden for Gentofte og Kongens Lyngbye Meenigheder paa dend Aldmindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses Fæst d 28 Octobr. 1749*, [8-9].

<sup>1177</sup> Bagger 1750: 36-37; Holmboe 1750: 86; Bang 1749: 6; Scheen 1749: 26; Heiberg 1749: 75; J. Arctander, *Guds Miskundhed og Sandhed Mod den Kongelige Davids Stamme, Kiendt I den Kongelige Oldenborgske Stamme; og paa Jubel=Festen d: 28 Oct: 1749 forestillet af Psalm: 89.1-6 til Højmesse for Egeberg Meenighed*, [10]; Christian Coldevin, *Concio jubil: habita [opé] Summi Numinis in Templi Sorup 28 ju Octobr: anni 1749*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bisperembede. D1-67: [64-65]; Helmic Lax, *Jubel-Prædiken holden Efter Kongl: Allernaadigste Anordning for med Tak og Glæde, at erindre den Velgierning, som Gud har beviist disse Riger og Lande, at Hand nu i 300de Aar, ved Velsignede, Viise og Naadige Konger, alle af den høystpræiselige Oldenborgske Stame, har ladet og endnu lader den Regiere. den 28de Octover 1749*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bisperembede. D1-67: [15].

<sup>1178</sup> «[...]han var den eneste af alle sine Forfædre, som havde Fred i al sin Regierings Tid [...]». Marcussen 1766: 39; See also Treschow 1749: 63; Bildsøe 1750: 56, 68; Glatwedt 1750: 38; Nimb 1751: 184-185; J. Arctander, *Guds Miskundhed og Sandhed Mod den Kongelige Davids Stamme, Kiendt I den Kongelige Oldenborgske Stamme; og paa Jubel=Festen d: 28 Oct: 1749 forestillet af Psalm: 89.1-6 til Højmesse for Egeberg Meenighed*, [18].

warrior king David, and underlined the historical uniqueness of the uninterrupted peace during his reign:

This priceless king must readily be called the Nordic Solomon: up to this point no king had sat on the Danish throne without having had to wage war. But under this blessed king's government the kingdoms had a perpetual peace, which he always tried to conserve: if his history for this reason is not so extensive as the previous kings, it is just as worthy of praise; because to conserve peace is just as praiseworthy, yes it costs just as much toil, as acquiring many conquest.<sup>1179</sup>

Winge claimed that the subjects should be grateful for the years of peace under Christian, but his comment about the king's history not being as «extensive as the previous kings» and his positive emphasis that peace is as worthy of praise reveals the lingering cultural importance attributed to the figure of the warrior-king. The matter most commonly recorded in the annals of history, the minister seems to imply, was war and conquest.

In eighteenth century Europe, the battlefield was still one of the most important arenas for monarchs to achieve glory, international renown and an immortal memory. War was considered «the sport of kings» and the presence of the monarch in or near battles was still politically and strategically important.<sup>1180</sup> As military historian Frank Tallett puts it: «Rulers of course proclaimed their love for peace, but they showed little compunction in declaring war, since it remained the chief means of obtaining enduring glory.»<sup>1181</sup> The military exploits of warrior kings such as Charles XII of Sweden and Frederick II of Prussia were widely broadcast all across Europe. The martial feats of individual kings and dynasties were, furthermore, a major part of the iconography and historical art in the palaces and royal courts of Europe.<sup>1182</sup> In Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, the monarchs were surrounded by artistic representations of the military victories of their forefathers.<sup>1183</sup> Armstrong Starkey points out that warfare and martial monarchs continued to fascinate and exert an

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<sup>1179</sup> «Denne uskatterlige Konge maa med Billighed kaldes den Nordiske Salomon: hidindtil havde ingen Konge siddet paa den Danske Throne, at han jo havde været nødsaget at føre Kriig. Men under denne Høj Salige Konges Regjering havde Rigerne en bestandig Fred, hvilken han al sin Tid søgte at vedlige holde: er derfor icke hans Historie, saa vitløftig, som de andre Kongers, saa er den dog ligesaa berømmelig; thi at conservere Fred er ligesaa Præsværdigt, ja koster ligesaa meget Møje, som at erholde mange Sejervindinger.» Winge 1749: 33; For another minister who compared Christian VI to Solomon, see Holmboe 1749: 93.

<sup>1180</sup> Starkey 2003: 105-106.

<sup>1181</sup> Tallett 1992: 242-243.

<sup>1182</sup> Tandefelt 2008: 234.

<sup>1183</sup> For instance, the paintings of Christian V's victories in the Scanian War (1675-1679) in the audience chamber in Frederiksborg castle, and the tapestries of Christian V's military victories in Rosenborg castle. Johannsen & Johannsen 1993: 180-181, 185.

attraction in the eighteenth century, even for enlightened intellectuals that were principally opposed to war and saw it as destructive and irrational.<sup>1184</sup>

While military glory thus continued to be a viable and attractive option for a ruler seeking greatness and an international reputation, it was increasingly challenged by other means of representing rulers. In France, for example, royal monuments gradually changed character in the course of the eighteenth century. Louis XIV and his predecessors had almost without exception been cast as victorious conquerors in Roman garb. Frederick V's contemporary Louis XV, on the other hand, was increasingly presented as a loving father securing the happiness of his subjects, alongside the more conventional images of the warrior-king.<sup>1185</sup> In Britain, the traditional ideal of the «Protestant soldier king», according to which the British kings were seen as champions of domestic and international Protestantism against Catholicism, continued to live on in the Hannoverian period, and was even fuelled by the massacre and expulsion of Protestant minorities in Catholic countries. By mid-century, however, the aging monarch George II was more often described as a «patriot king» and «father to his people», rather than as a Protestant warrior. In the very same period, the «Protestant soldier-king» Frederick II of Prussia was at the height of his popularity in Great Britain. This leads historian Hanna Smith to conclude that «[t]here were several rhetorics of kingship in circulation and militant Protestantism was still important, even in the 1760's.»<sup>1186</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that high-ranking civilian members of the Danish government purposely sought to cultivate the image of Frederick V as an enlightened peacemaker and loving father to his subjects, rather than as a military leader. In the first year of Frederick's reign, the Lord Chamberlain Adam Gottlob Moltke, the king's friend, mentor and personal advisor, wrote a document where he gave the king advice on domestic and foreign policy. Regarding the latter, Moltke advised that the king should seek to maintain friendly and peaceful relationships with his neighbours and ensure the security, well-being and reputation of his kingdoms by making advantageous alliances. He went on to make a «moral remark» on the subject of the reputation of kings. According to Moltke, a bellicose prince did not deserve to be called neither great nor wise:

Ein Landesherr ist in meinen Augen weder gross noch weise zu nennen, wenn er nur mit lauter kriegerischen Gedanken umgeht, und seinen Namen durch vieles Blutvergieszen nicht aber durch

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<sup>1184</sup> Starkey 2003: 4.

<sup>1185</sup> Merrick 2007: 49 ff; See also Stephen Rombouts' study of Edme Bouchardon's equestrian statue of Louis XV (1763) in Rombouts 1993-1994.

<sup>1186</sup> Smith 2004: 118.

Güte, Gnade und unermüdete Sorgfalt dasjenige Volk, welches Gott ihm anvertrauet hat, glücklich zu machen zu verewigen trachtet.<sup>1187</sup>

Moltke couched his argument in Christian terminology: on the final Day of Judgment, when all our actions and deeds shall be carefully measured, he asked, would the question be why a king had not destroyed and conquered any lands? According to Moltke, the king would rather be held accountable for not having spent all his strength on ensuring the temporal and spiritual welfare of his subjects.<sup>1188</sup> The warrior-king was one traditional ideal of kingship, but Moltke tried to steer his king in the direction of another ideal, namely the king as the enlightened and benevolent father of his people. As Jeffrey Merrick has pointed out, the traditional analogy in early modern political discourse that likened the king to a father and his subjects to children could signify both authority and affection, both «patriarchalism» and «sentimental paternalism».<sup>1189</sup>

In Moltke's precepts to and descriptions of the king, he emphasized the latter aspect, namely the image of the loving father that avoids war and rather does everything to ensure the happiness of his subjects. He sought to promote an image of the king as an enlightened protector of useful activities such as trade, arts and sciences.<sup>1190</sup> The physical monument to this policy was the bronze equestrian statue of Frederick V in the centre of the newest quarter of Copenhagen, Frederikstaden, the development of which commenced during the dynastic jubilee in 1749. The statue depicts Frederick in Roman garb on horseback, holding a baton in his right hand, while the inscriptions on the base praise Frederick as a merciful and peaceful protector of the arts, sciences, poor relief, trade and agriculture.<sup>1191</sup> The statue's harmonious image of a benign peacemaker and promoter of welfare was how Moltke wanted his king to be remembered by posterity. When Moltke later in life, after Frederick's death, reviewed the degree to which the king had followed the precepts he had set out for him, he concluded by stating that Frederick had done everything one could hope and expect

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<sup>1187</sup> Hille 1873-74: 56.

<sup>1188</sup> Hille 1873-74: 56-57.

<sup>1189</sup> Merrick 2007: 111.

<sup>1190</sup> Feldbæk 1994; Engberg 2005: 40 ff.

<sup>1191</sup> Saly, in his own description of the statue, discussed the challenges of reconciling the traditional conventions of equestrian statues with the representation of a peaceful monarch. Reflecting on the question of whether the king should hold a baton, traditionally the symbol of a general, Saly wrote that «I would have liked to dispense with the baton, since I on the one hand believed that it was appropriate only to generals, and not kings, and on the other, I would not have my hero command, so that he should not deviate from his distinguishing characteristic [mildness and benevolence];» Saly decided that he would let the king's hand rest upon the baton: «When I applied this, I found that the authority of the Danish kings was quite adequately signified by the baton, and that Friderich V, by holding it in the way mentioned, showed that power over his subjects was not so dear to him as his love for them.» Saly & Butty 1999: 87-88; See also Feldbæk 1994: 26; Engberg 2005: 100-103; Raabyemagle 2010: 250-265.

from such a fatherly ruler». <sup>1192</sup> Likewise, he concluded a short history of Frederick's reign with describing the late monarch as, among other things, an «untiring father and promoter of the happiness of his people» and a «Christian and benevolent friend of humanity.» <sup>1193</sup>

The image of the king as a loving father interested in promoting the happiness of his subjects was indeed evoked in jubilee texts by clergymen and other writers and public speakers, many of whom used an affective and sentimental terminology to explain both the present king and his father's aversion to war and bloodshed. <sup>1194</sup> In a speech to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, for instance, Count Otto Manderup of Rantzau discussed the virtues of each individual Oldenburg king. Christian VI he described as «a king that would rather follow the example of an Augustus than a Cæsar, a king who considered a drop of his subjects' blood as precious as a pearl in his crown [...]». <sup>1195</sup> It was, in other words, the late king's great love of his subjects that prevented him from going to war.

### 300 years of peaceful kings?

The vicar Jens Nimb discussed the idea of the peaceloving and merciful king in his jubilee sermon. Nimb was chaplain in Bremerholm church in Copenhagen, which served the workers, officers and officials of the naval shipyards and their families. <sup>1196</sup> The special character of his congregation might be the reason why the topic of war received such a lengthy treatment: Nimb devoted a considerable part of his sermon, approximately twenty pages, to a general discussion of a king's military duties and the nature of war. One of the minister's main arguments was that God gives the king a merciful heart so that he defends the country without bleeding it dry and destroying it. <sup>1197</sup> Nimb claimed that while an adequate army is the sinews that must be used to defend a kingdom, money is the juice or spirit that sets the sinews in motion and gives them force. An army needs to be provided for in order to function, and the greater the army and the lengthier the war, the more it the welfare of the subjects is reduced. To prevent this from happening, the king can try to maintain the peace, but this is often impossible since enemies might attack the most peaceful king against his will and without any reason.

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<sup>1192</sup> Wegener 1870-72: 141.

<sup>1193</sup> Wegener 1870-72: 230.

<sup>1194</sup> See for instance Bildsøe 1750: 56

<sup>1195</sup> «[...] en Konge, der heller vilde efterfølge en Augustum end en Cæsarem, en Konge der ansaae en Draabe af sine Undersaatters Blod saa dyrebart som en Perle udi sin Krone.» Manderup 1753: 49.

<sup>1196</sup> Bobé 1920: 12-16.

<sup>1197</sup> The other two main arguments were that God gives the king fortune in his efforts to defend the country and wisdom to make the necessary preparations to defend it. Nimb 1751: 23.

It is therefore unavoidable and necessary that everyone must contribute according to their ability. The subjects can only desire that God «gives the king a merciful heart, so that he evens the burdens more or less equally on everyone, and as bearable for everyone as is possible, and to make peace on the best possible conditions when his subjects can no longer bear the burden of war.»<sup>1198</sup> After expounding in detail the subjects' duty as Christians to give the king what he considered necessary for the defence of the kingdom, Nimb spoke of the mercy of the good king who ends a war when it became unbearable for the subjects. Here Nimb entered into a discussion of the false glory of military conquest:

Seldom does a war win so much advantage as there is damage done, and the spot of ground that is conquered, the victorious reputation the king thereby acquires, is bought too dearly when the majority of subjects in the kingdoms are exhausted and turned into beggars.<sup>1199</sup>

Nonetheless, wrote Nimb, both ancient and modern times had seen countless examples of kings who had forgotten all mercy just to satisfy their desire for an immortal reputation, for vengeance against their neighbours, or for the wealth of the conquered kingdoms. Many kings had stubbornly persisted in reaching their military goals and closed their eyes to the misery of their subjects, and only made peace when their own persons were in danger. It was therefore, claimed Nimb, a great blessing when God gave a kingdom a merciful king who will defend the crown God has given him and avert the enemies' attacks from his subjects but who, once he sees that divine providence turns the luck of war against him, makes peace in a way that secures his reputation, the territorial integrity of his kingdoms and the lives of his subjects.<sup>1200</sup> Although this lengthy discussion was conducted in general terms, Nimb clearly intended it as a description of the Oldenburg kings. Later on in his sermon, when he embarked on a historical description of each individual king, Nimb started with describing the military history of dynasty in a way that made it clear that they fulfilled his ideal of merciful kings:

Which kings have, with greater vigilance than these, ensured that the kingdoms could be defended with an adequate military force on land and at sea without being burdened? Does not other kingdoms, not greater than these, have far greater military forces; how must not the subjects there, in

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<sup>1198</sup> «[...]at Gud giver Kongen et naadigt Hierte, til at jevne Byrden nogenledes lige paa alle, og saa taalelig, som mueligt er for enhver, og til at slutte Fred med de mueligste Vilkor, naar hans Underdanere ikke længere kand udstaae Krigens Byrde.» Nimb 1751: 25.

<sup>1199</sup> «Der vindes sielden saa megen Fordeel ved en Krig, som der tages Skade, og den plet Jord, som erobres, det seyerrige Navn, som Kongen derved forhverver, kiøbes alt for dyrt, naar Rigets fleste Underdanere udmattes og bringes til Bettel-Staven.» Nimb 1751: 28-29.

<sup>1200</sup> Nimb 1751: 29-30.



the midst of peace, bear the burdens of war and sigh under such demands that are unknown to us? Which kings have used more wisdom and caution in their relations with other powers, to maintain peace and prosperity in their kingdoms, than these? Which kings have been braver in war, more willing to make peace to ease the burdens on the country, when their honour and the general welfare of the kingdom should not suffer from it, than these?<sup>1201</sup>

Interestingly, Nimb's claim about the peace-loving Oldenburg kings did not just extend to the peaceful Christian VI, but to the entire royal dynasty, including kings such as Frederick II and Christian IV who had in fact waged long and costly wars in their reigns. When discussing each of these monarchs, Nimb did not attempt to conceal the fact that they had been involved in conflict, but he presented the wars in a way that made the kings correspond to his description of the ideal monarch as a cautious and responsible military leader. In the case of Frederick II and the Northern Seven Years War (1553-70), for instance, he claimed that the king's «wisdom in waging war to defend, not corrupt his kingdoms» could be seen from his peace settlement. The king had not wanted to make peace before he had made Sweden return the land they had conquered from him, returned the ships they had taken, and paid war damages. When the Swedes had accepted this, the king was ready to make peace, and «to never again try the fortunes of war, but let his kingdoms reap the fruits of such an honourable peace.»<sup>1202</sup> When discussing Christian IV, Nimb never mentioned that the king had personally chosen to enter the Thirty Years War against the wishes of the nobility, a decision that had almost ended in disaster.<sup>1203</sup> Instead he spoke at length about the king's personal bravery and skills as military commander, his construction of fortifications and his creation of an efficient navy. Nimb presented the war itself as an unfortunate difficulty that the king had overcome, thanks to his personal qualities.<sup>1204</sup>

Nimb was not the only one who attributed a royal preference for peace to all the Oldenburg kings and claimed that the entire royal line had essentially been pacifist.<sup>1205</sup> The chaplain Marcus

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<sup>1201</sup> «Hvad Konger har med større Omhyggelighed, end disse, sørget for, at Landerne ved en tilstrækkelig Krigs-Magt, til Lands og til Vands kunde forsvares uden at bebyrdes? Har andre ikke større Riger end disse, langt større Krigs-Magt, hvor maa ikke Underdanere der, midt i Fred, bære Krigens Byrder, og sukke under saadanne Pålæg, som vi vide intet af? Hvad Konger har brugt mer Viisdom og Forsigtighed i Forbindelse med andre Magter, for at vedligeholde Fred og Velstand i deres Riger, end disse? Hvad Konger har vært modigere til at føre Krig, villigere til at slutte Fred til Landets Lettelse, naar deres Ære og Rigets almindelige Velfærdt ikke skulde lide noget Skaar derved, end disse?» Nimb 1751: 127.

<sup>1202</sup> «[T]hi som han ikke vilde slutte Fred, førend han havde bragt Sverrig saavidt, at det maatte give tilbage de Lande, som havde hørt hans Riger til, samt alle i Krigen borttagne Skiber med Canoner, og til Krigs-Omkostning betale halvanden Tønde Guld, saa var han færdig, saasnart Sverrig indgik det, at slutte Fred, og aldrig mere at prøve Krigens Lykke, men lade sine Riger høste Frugter af saa berømmelig en Fred.» Nimb 1751: 154.

<sup>1203</sup> Rian 1997: 232-239.

<sup>1204</sup> Nimb 1751: 157-165.

<sup>1205</sup> See also C.S. Mangor and Gregers Weile's sermons, in which both claim that the kings had preferred peace, but had shown great personal bravery when they were forced by the circumstances to go to war. C.S. Mangor, *Een Prædiken holden*

Frideric Bang asserted that God had introduced peace to the kingdoms when he put the Oldenburg dynasty on the royal throne. He claimed that wars of conquest was alien to these kings, «who much rather preferred peace in smaller lands, and rather made the spear into a ploughshare than forging the ploughshare into a spear, and acquire territory at the cost of human life.»<sup>1206</sup> Bang conceded that the Oldenburg monarchs had been tried in hard and long wars, but all of these wars had been waged either in self-defence, or «to acquire greater happiness for the kingdoms by achieving a more lasting and constant peace.»<sup>1207</sup> Johan Henrich Becker, medical doctor at the silver mine in Kongsberg in Norway, praised the fatherly love of the Oldenburg kings in his jubilee speech. According to Becker, there had never been a tyrant on the Danish and Norwegian thrones. Instead, «all of our kings have considered one single drop of their subjects' blood as too precious to sacrifice for the passion of one regent who wants to be called a great conqueror.»<sup>1208</sup> Becker, too, conceded that the kings had been involved in wars, but these had started against the will of the kings and had always been waged just long enough to secure what was best for the subjects. As soon as the kings saw that the subjects could expect calm, quiet and peace, they had stopped warring, even when they were in the midst of acquiring a great victory.<sup>1209</sup>

The idea of the Oldenburg kings as benevolent peacemakers was also promoted by a foreign writer without any apparent connection to the Danish regime. The lawyer Christian Friedrich Hempel from Colditz in Saxony wrote a short book as a contribution to the Oldenburg tercentenary. In the preface, he discussed the jubilee itself and praised the kings of the Danish royal dynasty. He claimed that even «German patriots» had reason to rejoice over the good fortune of the dynasty. Not only did the kings have German origins, they were also members of the Holy Roman Empire and

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*for Gentoftte og Kongens Lyngbye Meenigheder paa dend Aldmindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses Fæst d 28 Octobr. 1749, [34]; Gregers Weile, Davids Inderlig Taksigelse for Guds store og rigtige Velgierninger imod sig Paa Jubel= og Taksigelse=Festen d: 28 Octobr. 1749 over de 6 første Vers af den 89. Psalme. Efter Kongl: Majts allernaadigste Befaling Til Erindring om Guds Velsignelse og Naade for den Oldenborgske Stammes lykosalige Bestandighed i 300 Aar ved Regiering over disse Nordiske Riger, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [40].*

<sup>1206</sup> «[...] som langt hellere ville have Fred i mindre Lande, derudi heller gjøre Spydet til Plov-Jern, end omsmidde Plov-Jernet til Spyd, og med Tab af Menneskers Liv vinde flere Stæder;» Bang 1749: 18

<sup>1207</sup> «[...] for at skaffe Rigerne en større Lyksalighed, ved at erholde en bestandigere og langvarigere Fred». Bang 1749:18; See also M, Bircherod, *Arve-Herligheden Som dend Dyrebareste Juvel i Kongens Krone: Forestillet Paa dend glædelige og Velsignede, Allernaadigst anbefalede Jubel og TaksigelsesFest Aar 1749 dend 28de Octobris I en Prædiken holden Over dend anordnede Høymesse-Text Psalm: 89 v.1....6 af M Bircherod, Proust i Ramsøe Herred, og Sognepræst til Højelse og Lellinge Meenigheder, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [7].*

<sup>1208</sup> «[...] alle vore Konger har holdt een eeneste Draabe af Deres Undersaatters Blod alt for kostbar til at opoffre for een Regentes *passion*, som paastaar at vilde kaldes en stor *Conquerant*.» Becker 1752: 26

<sup>1209</sup> Becker 1752: 26; Jacob Bagger similarly claimed that the kings had never waged for «for love of war», and had always ended the war as soon as possible when they were forced into war. Bagger 1750: 36. Jacob Langebek claimed that the ancestor of the dynasty, Christian I, was the most peaceloving king in his time, and that he would never have waged war if he had not been forced by the Swedes. Langebek 1749: 72-73.

had bravely fought for the freedom of the dear fatherland in its darkest times. They had also been self-less and eager protectors of the Lutheran faith in Germany. According to Hempel, the Oldenburg kings had acquired much greater glory from these deeds than if they had merely spilt streams of human blood through «Alexandrian conquests».<sup>1210</sup>

Although they generally praised peace as desirable and war as destructive and undesirable, the Danish and Norwegian writers, like most eighteenth century Europeans, did not view all wars as unnecessary or prefer peace at any cost. Since Augustine, Christian Europeans had operated with a notion of just and unjust war. In this tradition, war itself was considered an unavoidable evil, but some acts of war could be righteous, depending on the motives of the belligerents. War was forbidden as a means to acquire wealth, power or glory, but permissible if the purpose was defence of the realm, re-conquest of illegitimately acquired territories or punishment of an aggressor. War was only a permissible if all other attempts at rectification had failed, and only if the wrong suffered exceeded the terrors of war. The purpose of war should always be to achieve a just peace.<sup>1211</sup> This tradition was accepted, more or less unchanged in principle, by Martin Luther and other Protestant theologians.<sup>1212</sup> During the Thirty Years War, the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius formalized the principles of just war in his *De iure belli ac pacis* (1625). His theory on just war was similar in many respects to those developed by the earlier theologians, although it was grounded in a framework of secular natural law theory rather than derived from Holy Scripture. For Grotius, war could be permissible, but both the reasons for going to war and the actual conduct of war to be closely regulated by principles derived from natural law. Like Augustine, Grotius claimed that war could only be waged in self-defense, to reclaim lost territories and to punish aggressors.<sup>1213</sup> None of these theories of just war, whether couched in jurisprudential or theological terms, were fundamentally opposed to war in itself, but rather saw it as a necessary evil that could be waged legitimately in order to correct wrongs and re-establish a just peace. Although they attempted to limit and regulate war, they were not actually pacifistic. In the early modern period, pacifistic ideas were generally tarnished by association with religious fanaticism, or considered as unrealistic and utopian.<sup>1214</sup> It was not until

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<sup>1210</sup> «Ich glaube, dieß sind allerdings Grosthaten der Allerdurchlauchtigsten Könige von Dännemarck sc. wodurch Sie Sich eine weit dauerhafte Gloire erworben, als wann Dieselben nur durch Vergiessung gantzer Ströme Menschen-Bluts mehr, als Alexandrinische Eroberungen, gemacht, und wegen einer schnöden Habsucht die Welt in Schrecken und Elend gesetzt , hätten». Hempel 1749: 4-5.

<sup>1211</sup> Gustafsson 1956: 62-66.

<sup>1212</sup> Gustafsson 1956: 64.

<sup>1213</sup> Gustafsson 1956: 69.

<sup>1214</sup> Gustafsson 1956: 74

the late eighteenth century that proposals to end war and establish a perpetual peace began to attract serious attention among European intellectuals, and even then many considered them utopian.<sup>1215</sup>

Eighteenth century views on the nature and legitimacy of war were, furthermore, closely intertwined with conceptions about the duties and prerogatives of the monarch. In early modern monarchies, the king was the supreme military leader of his kingdoms, and the armed protection of the kingdoms against aggressors was one of his primary functions. At the same time, he was responsible for maintaining the physical and spiritual welfare and material security of his subjects.<sup>1216</sup> In the fifth paragraph of the Royal Law, the king's role as military executive and his concomitant right to levy taxes were presented as a self-evident fact, since «everyone well knows that kingdoms and lands cannot be safely possessed without armed force, and military forces cannot be supported without provisions, and provisions not be acquired without taxes.»<sup>1217</sup>

None of the ministers in Denmark-Norway denied that many or indeed most of the kings of the Oldenburg dynasty had been involved in wars during their reigns, but they all asserted that the kings had been forced to go to war by their enemies and had done all they could to end the war as soon as possible to spare the lives of their subjects. This line of argument, although historically inaccurate, legitimized the wars of the dynasty by portraying them all as essentially defensive in nature. It was always the enemy that was wrong, never the Danish kings. Neither did any of the writers argue against the need for a strong and expensive military. On the contrary, they all emphasized the importance of having a brave king with a strong military at his disposal that could protect the kingdoms against foreign enemies. Underlying these discussions was the assumption that war was an unavoidable part of life in a sinful and dangerous world. Even if the ruler was peaceful and humane, he could never trust his neighbours to be the same.

One could, furthermore, never know God's plans for the kingdom. Peace was preferable to war, and a peaceful king more beneficial than a warmonger, but in reality, it was not up to the king to decide whether or not the kingdoms should enter into war. Protestant theologians interpreted war, plague and other calamities as «scourges of God», that is, as divine punishments against sinful and degenerate Christians. The only way to avert God's wrath and be saved, according to this view, was to do collective penance. The theological basis for this view was found in the Old Testament, which contained numerous examples of how God had sent enemies from neighbouring kingdoms to

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<sup>1215</sup> Starkey 2003: 10-15

<sup>1216</sup> Forssberg 2005: 20

<sup>1217</sup> «[...]efftersom een huer vel veed, at Riger og Lande icke tryggeligen kand besiddes uden væbnet Magt, og KriigsMagt kand icke holdes uden besolding, og besolding icke bringes till Veye uden Skatt.» Tamm & Jørgensen 2012: 156.

chastise the fallen people of Israel.<sup>1218</sup> As Gunner Lind points out, the interpretation led to a particular view of war: «People were encouraged to do penance rather than fight. The goal was peace rather than victory. The enemy was not evil, but God's instrument. And war in itself was [...] not sinful, but an expression of divine will.»<sup>1219</sup> In her doctoral thesis, Anna Maria Forssberg studies how the same interpretation was employed in Swedish war propaganda during the second half of the seventeenth century. According to Forssberg, describing war as a scourge against a sinful people had the practical efficacy of being able to explain all wars without regards to its concrete circumstances and was, writes Forssberg, a way of depoliticizing war. In contrast to Lind, however, Forssberg claims that the enemy was rather one-dimensionally described as purely and unchangeably evil and driven by an urge to destroy the kingdom. War was, moreover, presented as a constant threat that could break out at any moment.<sup>1220</sup> Forssberg also examines how this religious frame of interpretation was used to interpret and explain peace. Although war was indeed a recurrent phenomenon in this period of Swedish expansion, peace was sometimes made with the enemy. The challenge for the political leadership was then to explain how the enemy, usually portrayed as irrationally and unconditionally evil, had been persuaded to lay down their weapons. According to Forssberg, the solution was to explain peace as a benevolent gift from God. In the relatively long period of peace after the death of Charles X Gustavus in 1660, peace was «never presented as self-evident, but rather as a particularly great mercy from God.»<sup>1221</sup> The theological framework of interpretation, then, explained both war and peace as manifestations of God's will, and the presence or absence of war was presented as dependent on the moral purity of the people. It follows from this that such an interpretation not only explained why wars existed in the world, in spite of God's benevolence, but also how the subjects should conduct themselves in times of war and peace: only sincere penance could end war, only a righteous and moral life could prevent it from returning. Finally, the interpretation contributed to removing the responsibility for military losses or the terrors of war from the political leadership, on to the subjects themselves.

The existence of war in the world was thus an unavoidable consequence of human sin. The only thing the subjects could do was to pray, repent and obediently put their trust in their god-

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<sup>1218</sup> Lind 2008a: 340-341.

<sup>1219</sup> «Der blev opfordret til bod og bøn, ikke til kamp. Målet var fred, ikke sejr. Fjenden var ikke ond, men Guds redskab. Og krigen i sig selv var, som sagt, ikke syndig, men et udtryk for Guds vilje.» Lind 2008a: 341.

<sup>1220</sup> Forssberg 2005: 109-110.

<sup>1221</sup> «[...] fremställdes aldrig freden som självklar, utan istället som en synnerligen stor Guds nåd.» Forssberg 2005: 214.

fearing kings. When Jens Nimb wrote about the future prospects of the current king's greatness, he expressed this conception of war:

Kings can become great, both by the success of their weapons in war and by the wise arrangement and government of the state in peace, the former makes them great in the eyes of the enemy, for whom they become a terror, the latter makes them great in the eyes of God whose honour they thereby have the best chance to promote, and in the eyes of their people, whose welfare is secured, the latter is therefore more useful for the king and the people than the first; but when divine providence will allow the king to enter into war, it must be considered a great blessing from God that the war has the sort of outcome in which the name of the king becomes great, and so I shall conclude, the heavens will make our merciful king great.<sup>1222</sup>

We also see this interpretation at work in discussions of the most recent war, the Great Northern War. Almost none of the ministers who discussed Frederick IV failed to mention the hardships of war during his reign. The most common way of treating the disasters and war in his reign was to portray Frederick IV as a heroic and virtuous king who had overcome many difficult challenges, thanks to his trust in God. Gerhard Winge, minister of the Norwegian parish of Sande, described the outcome of the Great Northern War as a honourable peace, in which Denmark had kept the entire duchy of Schleswig and forced the Swedes to pay customs in the Sound. In the portrayal of Frederick IV, he emphasized how the king had shown his personal virtues in the face of danger: «He showed profound reason and resolution when times were good, but particularly when they were bad; since the kingdoms in his time were underthrown all sorts of scourges, namely: War, hunger, plague and the fire in the capital, all of which he overcame due to his virtues, reason and resolution, in addition to help from God.»<sup>1223</sup> Finally, we also find a «penitential» interpretation in some of the sermons,

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<sup>1222</sup> «Konger kand blive store, som ved deres Vaabens Lykke i Krig, saa ved Stadens kloge Indretning og Bestyrelse i Fred, det første gjør dem store i deres Fienders Øyne, hvilke de bliver en Skrek, det sidste store i Guds Øyne, hvis Ære de derved har best Leylighed at fremme og i deres Folks Øyne, hvis Velstand derved befordres, det sidste er derfor nyttigere for Kongen og Folket, end det første; men naar Himmelens Forsyn vil tillade at en Konge skal komme i Krig, maa det og agtes for en Velgierning af GUD, at Krigen faaer saadant Udfald, hvorved Kongens Navn bliver stort, og saa sluttet jeg, Himmelen og vil gjøre vor Allernaadigste Konge stor.» Nimb 1751: 188; For similar arguments, see Bildsøe 1750: 56; Holmboe 1749: 44; Ancher Borch, *Skionsome Undersaatters pligtige Taksigelse til Gud for den besynderlig store Velgierning, at hand skienker dem priisværdige Konger af een Stamme i een arvelig vedvarende Følge. Paa den allernaadigst anordnede Jubel-Fæstes 1ste Dag d 28 Octobr. 1749 for Sönder Sogns eller Phænefiord-Meenighed paa [Vestöens] Land i en Prædiken over Psalm. LXXXIX v 1-6*, [32-33].

<sup>1223</sup> «Dyb Forstand og Standhaftighed viiste han i Medgang, men i Særdeleshed i Modgang; da Rigerne i hans Tid vare underkastede alle slags Lande Plager, nemlig: Krig, Hunger, Pest, og Hoved-Stadens Ildebrand, hvilke han dog ved bemelte sine Dyder, nest GUDS Bistand, ved sin Forstand og Standhaftighed overvant.» Winge 1749: 32; See also Storm 1749:18; Johannes Friedenreich, *Jubel=Glæde og Taksigelse for Den Oldenborgske Stammes Vedligeholdelse, og Regjæring i Danmark og Norge udi 300 Aar, forestillet udi en Prædiken, som paa Jubel-Fæstens første Dag er holdet udi Steege Meenighed paa Møen, Aar 1749 den 28 Octobr over Davids Ord i Psalmen 89 v 1-16*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [58].

expressed as a warning to the their congregation against abusing the blessings of peace to commit sin.<sup>1224</sup>

### Danish-Norwegian exceptionalism

We have thus seen that many ministers and other public speakers claimed that the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway were an oasis of peace in a Europe plagued by war and destruction. While this was fundamentally seen as a gift from God, it was also attributed to the exceptionally peaceful nature of the Oldenburg kings. Where other kings risked the lives of their subjects and wealth of their lands on destructive wars in order to pursue false glory and empty greatness, the good kings of Denmark-Norway had realized that true honour was acquired through the peaceful improvement of their kingdoms. While peacefulness was described as a particular characteristic of the current king and his father, it was also claimed to be true of the entire royal line. Many of these assertions, it is true, can be read as obligatory praise of the royal house, only to be expected on an official festive occasion such as a this. However, the undeniable absence of war in almost thirty years adds an air of credibility to some of the claims. Christian VI and Frederick V could, without stretching the credulity of the audience too far, be described as peaceful kings. The widespread praise of the peaceful Oldenburg monarchs in 1749 reflects, I would argue, a growing awareness among Danes and Norwegians that the kingdoms were fortunate, compared with other European nations, in having avoided war.

The Danish historian Michael Bregnsbo writes about an important tradition in the history of Danish identity and self-conceptions that he calls «the Danish way». The tradition consists of three interrelated ideas: that political and social conflicts in Denmark are solved peacefully and through consensus, that the state is conducive to the common good and mediates between different groups in society and, finally, that «the small state Denmark is best served by keeping to itself in matters of foreign policy, and abstain from engagements on the international political scene [...]».<sup>1225</sup> According to this tradition, as Bregnsbo describes it, important political events in Danish history such as the abolition of the «Stavnsbånd» in 1788 and the abolition of the absolute monarchy in 1848 have happened peacefully, without bloodshed and in agreement between king and people. These

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<sup>1224</sup> See Bang 1749: 19; Hwiid 1749: 52; Holmboe 1749: 42-43.

<sup>1225</sup> «[...]småstaten Danmark er bedst tjent ved udenrigspolitisk at passe sig selv og afholde sig fra engagementer på den internasjonale politiske scene [...]». Bregnsbo 1996: 312; See also Bregnsbo 1997a: 264-268.

conditions were often contrasted with the more violent and dramatic political revolutions in France. Bregnsbo claims that the government had won the allegiance of the growing middle class by a string of popular legislation in the second half of the eighteenth century that had limited the strong political influence of foreigners, particularly Germans, and the great landowners. The long period of peace in the eighteenth century was also popular among the middle classes since it led to an increase of wealth for merchants trading under the Danish flag. As Bregnsbo describes it, the alliance between the monarchy and the burgher class led to the hegemony of the idea of «Danish way» from the latter half of the eighteenth century: «In the schools and from the pulpit, the norms and values [...] shared by the absolute monarchy's new supporting group, the burghers, was transmitted to the entire population—and not without success: the ideas of the rulers became the ruling ideas.»<sup>1226</sup>

Although Bregnsbo is surely right in claiming that «the Danish way» was a powerful and influential interpretation of Danish society and its history in the latter half of the eighteenth century and onwards, it is clear that the tradition has a much longer history. It has been shown in previous chapter that both bishop Christen Worm (in 1717) and Andreas Hojer (in 1736) claimed that the Reformation had been introduced in an extraordinarily peaceful manner in Denmark-Norway, compared with other European states. The next chapter will show that the same was claimed about the introduction of absolutism in 1660, which was widely presented as a peaceful and consensual agreement between king and the subjects. Here, however, our interest is mainly in the third component of the tradition, the idea that the kings of Denmark-Norway preferred to avoid war and let their kingdoms prosper in peaceful conditions. This idea was, as we have now seen, prominent already in 1749, and probably originated during or shortly after the peaceful reign of Christian VI. We can follow it throughout the eighteenth century, expressed at various occasions, with more force each time as the number of years since the last war grew. It surfaced, for instance, in sermons delivered on the thanksgiving day services to celebrate the end of the Seven Years War in 1763. Again, Denmark-Norway had managed to stay out of a destructive European conflict (although war was much more narrowly avoided this time), and preachers again praised their peaceful monarch Frederick V for not seeking the false glory of the battlefield, instead letting his subjects live in blessed peace. Even the belligerents of this war, it is true, celebrated the peace in 1763, but the tone was bound to be different in a state that had not seen war for 43 long years: «If other peoples around us appreciate the peace that has been granted to them after a long war, should not we, who have always

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<sup>1226</sup> «Via almueskole og prædikestol blev de normer og værdiforestillinger [...] som deltes af enevældens nye støttegruppe, borgerskabet, formidlet videre til den øvrige befolkning—og ikke uden held: de herskendes tanker blev de herskende tanker.» Bregnsbo 1996: 325-326.



been spared war and been blessed with peace, should we not appreciate it and rejoice even more?»<sup>1227</sup> Frederick V's allegedly rare love of peace was, again, praised in funeral sermons after the death of the king in 1766, and was highlighted as one of the most important characteristics of his reign.<sup>1228</sup> Peace had now lasted so exceptionally long that one minister pointed out that only a small portion of his congregation could really appreciate the late king's peaceful heart, since only a few of them had ever experienced war.<sup>1229</sup> When the artist Nicolay Abildgaard painted the «Apotheosis of Frederick V» (1787) as part of the decoration of the Knight's Hall in Christiansborg, the complete absence of war in the king's reign was illustrated with an image of the war god Mars falling asleep at his feet.<sup>1230</sup> Finally, in 1801, on the brink of Denmark-Norway's entrance into a large European conflict, preachers looked back on almost a century of peace and thanked God for having kept the kingdoms out of war for so long: «The flames of war did indeed rage among us in the start of the previous century, our nation did indeed feel all the woe and misery that is part of war. But soon the terrors of war were transformed into a honourable peace. Through a period of eighty years the olive branch of peace has blossomed for us [...] Our happiness is without parallel.»<sup>1231</sup> As Bregnsbo suggests, a long domestic peace in a century marked by many destructive wars was probably one of the factors that contributed to maintaining the popularity of the monarchy among the Danish and Norwegian middle classes in the late eighteenth century, a period of dramatic political revolutions.<sup>1232</sup> Apologists for the Oldenburg absolute monarch could point to almost a century of peace and argue, with some weight behind their claims, that the kings of Denmark-Norway had chosen the path of peace instead of war, and let their beloved subjects prosper instead of dying on the bloody battlefields of Europe.

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<sup>1227</sup>«Skionne andre Folk omkring os paa den Fred, som er bleven dem forundt efter en langvarig Kriiig, og glæde sig derved, skulle vi da ikke, som stedse ere blevne forskaanede for Kriig, og velsignede med Fred, meget meere skionne herpaa og glæde os herved?» Bildsøe 1763:10; See also Bruun 1763: 47-48.

<sup>1228</sup> For instance by Peter Föns: «Er wolte durch Friede insonderheit groß werden, und warum? weil er seine Unterthanen liebete. Er verabscheuete den Ruhm, der durch das Blut der Unterthanen solte erkaufet werden, und suchte diejenigen, den die durch Friede beglückte Menschen ihm nicht versagen können.» Föns 1766: 37-38; Wivet 1766:21; Witth 1766:22-23; Kreyberg 1766: 43; Brorson 1766: 31.

<sup>1229</sup> Arentz 1767: 78.

<sup>1230</sup> Kragelund 1999: 238, 256.

<sup>1231</sup> «Vel følede vor Nation da al den Jammer og Elendighed, som med Krigens Ødelæggelser ere forenede. Men snart forvandlede Krigens Redsler til en ærefuld og varig Fred. Igiennem en Række af firesindstyve Aar har Fredens Oliegreen blomstret for os.[...] Mageløs er vor Lyksalighed».Wille 1801: 27. See also Sørensen 1801: 10.

<sup>1232</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a: 268.

## When the past offers resistance: problematic histories and public commemoration

While there were many elements in the history of the royal dynasty that could be utilized in the construction of a positive narrative, others were more challenging to reconcile with the idea of divinely protected and faultless monarchs. Not all wars had been won, not all royal policies had been crowned with success, and not all kings had been examples of virtue. The question is how the clergy and other writers and public speakers dealt with potentially sensitive matters.

In general terms, the official narrative of the tercentenary did allow a degree of differentiation between the twelve Oldenburg kings. Bishop Herslebs' prayer text stated that the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway had reached a pinnacle of happiness with the reign of Frederick V. Inherent in this claim was an idea of progressive improvement under the rule of the Oldenburg dynasty. As we have already seen in the discussion of Hersleb's jubilee prayer, the bishop offered two slightly different ways to conceptualize the positive development of the kingdoms under the rule of the Oldenburg kings. On the one hand, Hersleb suggested a gradual and cumulative improvement of the spiritual and material welfare of the kingdoms. On the other hand, he told a story of successive ruptures, according to which specific moments in the past had ushered in significant and lasting changes in the political structure and religious beliefs in the kingdoms. The first principle of interpretation emphasized the virtue of the entire dynasty, while the second emphasized the importance of the Lutheran confession and royal absolutism. Although not mutually exclusive, the former perspective lent itself to a more inclusive and positive rendering of the history of all the Oldenburg kings, while the latter suggested a history of distinct periods of different value.

In the exordium to his own sermon, bishop Hersleb portrayed the history of the dynasty as one of three distinct periods, each of which represented an important improvement compared with the previous. He borrowed his principle of periodization from the prophet Daniel's interpretation of king Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the Book of Daniel in the Old Testament (Daniel 2). In his dream, the king of Babylon saw an image with a head made of gold, a breast of silver, belly and thighs made of brass, legs of iron, and feet made of part iron and part clay. The king also saw that «a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them into pieces». The wind carried away the pieces of gold, silver, iron, brass and clay, while the stone grew to become a great mountain that filled the earth (Daniel 2, 34-35). The prophet Daniel interpreted this as a divine prophecy of things to come: the golden head represented Nebuchadnezzar's own kingdom, while the other three parts of the image's body represented the

kingdoms that would follow. In the era of the fourth kingdom, God would set up his own kingdoms that would «break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2, 44). After briefly explaining the traditional Protestant interpretation of the Four Monarchies, Hersleb moved on to the actual reason why he had chosen to open his sermon with a description of Nebuchadnezzar's vision. Ever since discussions had started about celebrating a dynastic jubilee, claimed Hersleb, this vision had been in his mind. As he had envisioned the past three centuries and the twelve Oldenburg kings as one body and considered all the changes and revolutions («Omvelxinger») that had taken place, the image appeared lifelike before his eyes. Whereas the image originally referred to the fate of successive kingdoms in times to come, wrote Hersleb, he would instead use it to interpret the *past* of one single kingdom. And instead of beginning the interpretation with the head and moving down to the feet, like Daniel, Hersleb would rather start with the feet and end with the head.

According to Hersleb, the first century of Oldenburg rule from the accession of Christian I to the Reformation had been like the feet in Nebuchadnezzar's vision. In this period, the kingdom of Denmark was strong and weak at the same time. The first four Oldenburg kings had all all been manly, heroic and brave, and had ruled a heroic and manly people. Even though Denmark was in some ways an «iron kingdom» in those days, however, the kingdom was still weak. The reason was that the iron was mixed with clay: the kings had to share their power and income with the tyrannic and superstitious Catholic Church. After Frederick I and Christian III had introduced the glorious Reformation, the second century began. This corresponded to the main body of the image, the breast of silver and the belly of brass. In this period, the government became stronger, purer and more lustrous, but there was still a «secret disease». There was now only one government, but it was not always in agreement with itself. There was a mixture between silver and brass, between the king's right and the Council's power. The belly took so much for itself that the head and the other members of the body were weakened. The three great and capable kings of the second century of Oldenburg rule would have achieved much more if the silver had not been mixed with brass. Only with the beginning of the third century, «the golden century of the Oldenburg dynasty» did the crown receive its natural lustre and dignity.<sup>1233</sup>

In Hersleb's sermon there is, in other words, a clear acknowledgement of the weakness of the Danish monarchy in the first centuries of Oldenburg rule. The first century was blemished by the

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<sup>1233</sup> Hersleb 1749: 3-17; The vicar Niels Glatwedt divided the history of the Oldenburg kings into periods that were strongly reminiscent of the periodization in Hersleb's exordium. Glatwedt's sermon was not published before 1750, so it is quite possible that he borrowed the general idea from the bishop's sermon. See Glatwedt 1750: 36.

power of the clergy, the second century by the power of the Council of the Realm, and only the last hundred years of absolute monarchy deserved to be described as a «golden century». A similar sense of the superiority of the third and latest century of Oldenburg rule was expressed in the illuminations that adorned the private home of Johan Ludvig von Holstein. The illumination was divided according to the three centuries of Oldenburg rule. The first two centuries were represented in the form of «human-sized images of virtue», each holding a shield bearing the name of an Oldenburg king. The third century of Oldenburg rule, however, was «both higher and wider than the others», and the royal names bore «sovereign crowns», i.e. enclosed crowns. According to the printed description of the illumination «[t]he presentation of this century was distinguished with various depressions with niches, vaults and such, and decorated above with lamps of diverse shapes among golden festoons [...]».<sup>1234</sup> To further elaborate the point, the illumination was topped by two angels, one holding an ordinary crown and the other a sovereign crown. The former crown bore the inscription «In this the majesty has its splendour» («IN HAC MAJESTAS SPLENDIDA»), while the latter bore the inscription «In this the majesty has greater splendour» (IN HAC MAJESTAS SPLENDIDOR).<sup>1235</sup>

In both of these cases, then, the third century of Oldenburg rule was represented as more splendid and glorious than the two preceding centuries. Hersleb and von Holstein's praise of the entire royal dynasty was nuanced by their emphasis on royal absolutism as a necessary condition for Denmark's happiness. Judging by the historical interpretations promoted by these two authoritative figures, it would seem that it would have been quite possible for ordinary clergymen to speak positively of the pre-Lutheran and pre-absolutist monarchs, while at the same time acknowledging that they had unfortunately been limited by the circumstances of their times. One can imagine, however, that it would not always have been easy for them to find the right balance between praise for the Oldenburg kings and candour about problematic aspects of their reigns.

Here I shall focus on two historical topics that seem to have been among the more problematic areas to deal with. The first question is how writers discussed the third Oldenburg king. Christian II is one of the most controversial monarchs in Scandinavian history, and is often remembered for his role in the infamous Stockholm bloodbath in 1520, when he executed 94 people, many of them noblemen, on the town square in Stockholm. This action provoked the Swedish estates to rebel against him, thus leading to the permanent secession of the Swedish realm from the

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<sup>1234</sup> «Dette Seculi Præsentation var ved adskillige Fordybninger med Nicher, Hvelvinger og deslige distingveret, og oven paa med Løgter af diverse Façons iblandt Guld=Festons udziiret [...]». Berling 1749: 20.

<sup>1235</sup> Berling 1749: 20-21.

Scandinavian union. Christian was also the only Oldenburg king who was deposed from the throne, after a civil war against his uncle, Frederik I. The second question to consider is how they presented the first three Oldenburg monarchs, who were all Catholic.<sup>1236</sup> This was probably a somewhat less controversial issue to deal with, but it is nonetheless of some interest to examine whether and how Lutheran clergy and others managed to reconcile anti-papist rhetoric with panegyric commentaries on these Catholic kings. Could Catholic monarchs be regarded as good kings in the same sense as later champions of the pure faith, such as «the Danish Josiah» Christian III?

### **Nordic Nero or tragic hero? The problematic legacy of Christian II**

Before examining how Christian II was presented in sermons and speeches, it is necessary to first give a brief sketch of the development of Christian's historical legacy in the aftermath of his reign. Although Christian II was deposed, imprisoned and superseded by his uncle, and although his branch of the Oldenburg dynasty was kept from power in Denmark-Norway, he was never forgotten in the Scandinavian kingdoms. Different interpretations of Christian were passed on in the cultural memory, and in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the history of Christian became increasingly mythologized and charged with symbolic meaning. Shifting cultural values and political conditions, of which the introduction of absolutism in 1660 and the growing importance of the burgher estate in public life were among the most important, affected the development of the views of the king's reign. By the time of the tercentenary in 1749, the public image of Christian had crystallised into two contrasting poles. On the one hand, the king was perceived as an evil and bloodthirsty tyrant. This perception was the oldest, harking back to the propaganda of his adversaries when he was still a major political figure in Scandinavia. His royal adversary in Sweden, Gustav Vasa, used the printing press to spread propaganda hostile to the deposed monarch across Europe. From a Swedish perspective, the Stockholm Bloodbath was particularly incriminating, and Gustav Vasa's court portrayed Christian as the sole instigator and perpetrator of this deed.<sup>1237</sup> The image of the king as a tyrant remained dominant in Swedish historiography as late as the eighteenth century, and there is evidence to suggest that it retained an impact in Swedish cultural memory. The Dane Matthias

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<sup>1236</sup> The first two kings were indubitably Catholics. Christian II ruled during a transitional period in the history of the Danish church, and had an ambivalent attitude towards Protestantism. It has been a matter of debate among Danish scholars whether or not his religious policies can be classified as Lutheran, to what degree he became personally convinced by Luther's teachings, and when this happened. The conventional interpretation is that his religious attitudes were not influenced by Luther before his exile, after 1523. This has been challenged by Torben Svendrup, who claims that his religious policies as king of Denmark shows clear signs of Lutheranism. See Svendrup 1995; Lausten 1995.

<sup>1237</sup> Johannesson 2005: 63-64.

Paulsen was part of the retinue of a Danish nobleman partaking in Charles XII coronation in 1699. In Stockholm, Paulsen was amazed by the commoners' active commemoration of the Stockholm Bloodbath:

It is indescribable, the hate that the Swedes imprint in their children against the Danes, [they] still conserve the room and the window on the Great Market Square where king Christian II stood and watched so many people and young and innocent being executed. In the same room hangs his portrait with a relation underneath describing his cruel tyranny, and on the holidays when the weather is good the common man takes their children to the room and explain with great care what took place, a story which they continue [to write] in their almanacs, so that it should constantly stay fresh in memory, and so that the commoners gets an impression that increases their hate.<sup>1238</sup>

In the aftermath of the Count's War in Denmark, the victorious Christian III and his successors had their own political reasons for demonizing the deposed king, and Danish historians contributed to cementing the image of Christian II as a tyrant.<sup>1239</sup> The sixteenth century Danish historian Hans Svaning, for instance, presented the history of Christian II as «an example of God's wrath against the arrogant tyrant», who in the end is humbled by God and repents his sins.<sup>1240</sup>

On the other hand, Christian was increasingly remembered in Denmark-Norway for, among other things, his strengthening of the burgher estate, his contributions to the development of trade and commerce, his weakening of the power of the Hanseatic League, and his personal support of the Reformation. This positive valorisation of Christian's legacy was more recent, but it did resonate with older perceptions of Christian II prevalent among his supporters during his lifetime. As we shall see, the introduction of absolutism probably had some effect in strengthening the position of this interpretation.

For a long time, however, Christian was primarily interpreted as a dark and negative figure in Danish history. This interpretation owed a lot to one of the most influential Danish historical works

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<sup>1238</sup> «Det er ej at beskrive, hvad Had de Svenske indprente deres Børn mod de Danske og conserverer endnu det Kammer og det Vindue paa stor Torvet hvor udi Kong Christian 2en stod og saa paa at saa mange Mennesker og umyndige uskyldige bleve aflifede. I samme Stue er hans Portrait med en Relation neden til om hans grumme Tyrannie, og om helligdagene gaaer gemeen Mand, ved got veirligt med deres Børn paa Kammeret da de forklare de unge omstændelig, hvorledes tilgik, hvilken Historie de vanligen continuere, i deres Almanakker, paa det den stædse skal være i frisk minde, og de gemeene ved slig Impression kand fatte desto større had.» Quoted in Rasmussen 2002: 149-150; Christian II was still described as a tyrant in Sweden as late as in 1721, in rector Petrus Schyllberg's invitation to the centennial celebrations in Uppsala and rector Carolus Schultén's invitation to the celebration in Lund. See Aurelius 1994: 84-85.

<sup>1239</sup> Wolke 2006: 204-207.

<sup>1240</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2002: 100, 318: Hans Gram, himself a historian with close ties to the political regime of his day, poignantly observed the political context in which Svaning wrote: «Svaningius wrote after orders, and the master by whom he was commanded and who he served, namely king Frederick II [...] did not tolerate that milder words were spoken about a king whose children and grandchildren his Majesty considered in the same way that the royal Protestant rulers of Great Britain still consider the Stuarts.» Gram 1747: 4.

in the early modern period, the aristocratic politician and historian Arild Huitfeldt's chronicle of Denmark. In the foreword to the volume dedicated to Christian II's reign, produced in 1596, Huitfeldt summarized his view on this controversial monarch. The description was introduced with a contrast between Christian III and Christian II.<sup>1241</sup> Whereas the former was described as a God-fearing, pious, mild and virtuous king, Huitfeldt portrayed the latter as his exact opposite. He had been a prince «without the fear of God, evil, unchaste, tyrannical, bloodthirsty and intolerable in his government[...]»<sup>1242</sup> In Huitfeldt's view, Christian II deserved the commonly used nickname «king Christian the evil».<sup>1243</sup> He insisted he did not write negative things about Christian II to discredit Christian IV's royal descent, but claimed that «truth and history» demanded it. Even if he should have tried to spare the king of these unpleasant facts, they were known to the whole world, and one should not «hide at home, what others and strangers know».<sup>1244</sup> While writers had not published the uncomfortable facts about Christian's reign while he was still alive, in fear of retribution or losing favour, the truth was now due: «Because what is hidden underneath the snow becomes revealed by the thaw. No one can bind the tongues of men/ Truth can be hidden, but not destroyed. Everything has its time/when fear and danger has passed.»<sup>1245</sup>

Huitfeldt described Christian as an evil tyrant without any respect for the lives and property of his subjects, and his reign as a catalogue of evil deeds. He gave special attention to the Stockholm bloodbath, which he compared to the St. Bartholomew's Day's massacre in Paris with regards to its cruelty and tyranny. Not only had Christian disregarded the general amnesty awarded to his political opponents, he had also murdered innocents without trial and sentence, refused them the right to confession, and burnt their bodies in piles.<sup>1246</sup> His private life had been equally immoral. He had ignored and dishonoured his queen, instead preferring the «harlot» Dyveke, who had been prostituted by her mother Sigbrit, a woman infamous for her witchcraft. He had also followed this woman's advice, disregarding the advice of his Council and the nobility.<sup>1247</sup> Huitfeldt even discredited Christian's religious faith. He claimed that Christian's hard treatment of the bishops in Denmark,

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<sup>1241</sup> Huitfeldt had already compared the two monarchs in the first volume of his chronicles, the history of Christian III. In the foreword to this work, the historian made the commonplace argument that the royal name Christian matched the virtues and God-fearing life of Christian III. Christian II, however, did not deserve this name, according to Huitfeldt, which was why he was called «Christiernum» instead. See Hørby 1984: 71-72.

<sup>1242</sup> «uden all Guds Fryct/ Ond/ Ukysk/ Tyransk/ Blodgærig/ Wlidelig udi sit Regimente[...]» Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 1.

<sup>1243</sup> «[...] kong Christiern den Onde» Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 2.

<sup>1244</sup> «At det gielder intet at døllie hiemme/ hvad andre oc Fremmede vide.» Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 3.

<sup>1245</sup> «Thi huad som udi Snee bliffuer skiult/ det bliffuer obenbare udi Tøe. Ingen kand binde faar Menniskens Tunge/ Sandhed kand trengis/ men icke ødeleggis. Altingist haver sin Tid/naar den Fryct og Fare er forbi.» Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 5.

<sup>1246</sup> Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 6-7.

<sup>1247</sup> Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 9.

Norway and Sweden had led many to believe that he had Protestant sympathies. According to Huitfeldt, however, Christian's religious policies before he was deposed clearly showed that he was a Catholic monarch, although he probably became a Protestant in exile.<sup>1248</sup>

Huitfeldt's overwhelmingly negative judgement of Christian II was influenced by his aristocratic background. Whereas other observers, both in Christian's own lifetime and later, had a more positive or nuanced view of him due to his anti-aristocratic politics and alliance with the burgher and peasant classes, this only made him more worthy of criticism in Huitfeldt's opinion.<sup>1249</sup> He expressed a staunchly aristocratic position in his defence of the three Councils of the Realms who, in his opinion, «had enough reason to oppose king Christian's violence, power and tyranny, since he had not governed by law, but as a tyrant and violent offender [...]»<sup>1250</sup> He legitimized the deposition by referring to the article in Christian's charter that stated that the subjects could legally depose him if he did not respect their privileges and freedoms. He also pointed out that tyrannical kings had been overthrown in other European nations, earlier in Danish history, as well as in the Jewish Kingdoms described in the Old Testament.<sup>1251</sup> Huitfeldt himself raised the potential objection that all subjects are bound by God to be obedient to their authorities, no matter if they are good or evil. He conceded that this was true, but that God himself will intervene and remove the tyrant when he feels that it is appropriate.<sup>1252</sup> Christian's dethronement had clearly been an act of God, or else it would never have succeeded.<sup>1253</sup> In his concluding remarks on Christian, Huitfeldt pointed out that other princes could learn many lessons from Christian's history. His life was a cautionary tale that showed the dangers of ignoring the rights of the subjects and ruling like a tyrant: «Each prince mirrors himself in king Christian's example and the vacillations of fortune/that he had fallen so fast from being the master and king of three kingdoms [...] / and then having to die in prison and in great misery».<sup>1254</sup> In Denmark, Christian's historical legacy in the seventeenth century was thus strongly influenced by the writings of a highly critical nobleman who found no mitigating circumstances whatsoever in his life and deeds.

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<sup>1248</sup> Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 20.

<sup>1249</sup> Wolke 2006: 208; Tvarnø 1989: 229, 232.

<sup>1250</sup> Huitfeldt 2006: 272. According to Harald Ilsøe, the theoretical framework in the passages where Huitfeldt justifies the deposition of the king is inspired by «the Reformed political theorists that goes by the name of the monarchomachs [...]» See Ilsøe 1967: 43.

<sup>1251</sup> Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 273.

<sup>1252</sup> Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 273-274.

<sup>1253</sup> Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 277.

<sup>1254</sup> «Hver Første spegle sig nu udi Kong Christens Exempel oc Lyckens Wstadighed/At hand aff en veldig Herre oc Konge offuer try Kongeriger[...] saa snart er falden/ Oc paa det sidste maatte dø udi Fengsel oc stor Elendighed.» Huitfeldt 1976 [1596]: 278.



The image of Christian as an evil tyrant was to undergo a major revision in the popular historical works of Ludvig Holberg.<sup>1255</sup> Whereas Huitfeldt's history had been coloured by his noble background, leading him to defend his predecessors' right to overthrow a tyrannical and unjust king, Holberg's version of Christian's life was affected by his own bourgeois background and anti-aristocratic political values.<sup>1256</sup> But that is not the only important difference between them: the two historians produced their respective works on each side of one of the most significant political events in Danish-Norwegian history, the introduction of absolutism in 1660. Unlike Huitfeldt, Holberg was subject to government censorship and had to avoid controversial subjects in order to be published.<sup>1257</sup> One of the questions that Holberg and his contemporaries had to handle with care was how they presented the kings of the Oldenburg dynasty. After 1660, the dignity of the royal office had been elevated to hitherto unprecedented levels, and political discourse was characterized by humble subservience to the king and the royal family. The absolute monarchs demanded respect not only for themselves, however, but also for their royal predecessors. In a study of how the regime's historical censorship worked in practice during the early years of absolute rule, Harald Ilsøe shows how government-appointed censors zealously searched through manuscripts for comments unfavourable to the monarchs, giving remarkably detailed critical comments on how the authors presented the politics and personal lives of previous kings.<sup>1258</sup>

Ludvig Holberg expressed an ambivalent attitude to the conflict between truthfulness and political tact involved in writing histories in an absolute monarchy. On the one hand, he asserted in his «Consideration on Histories» that «courage» was among the necessary virtues needed to produce good histories, and claimed that he himself had strived to write the truth.<sup>1259</sup> Later, in one of his epistles, he claimed that his history of Denmark was more unbiased and sincere than any other Nordic work of history.<sup>1260</sup> On the other hand, Holberg did not conceal that he had made concessions to political expediency. He admitted that his writing had been free and unbiased, but still not so daring that he had followed «the duty of the historian and not of the citizen.»<sup>1261</sup> He claimed that he had written about the Oldenburg monarchs in a respectful manner, not because they

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<sup>1255</sup> His *Dannemarks Riges Historie* (1732-35) sold so well that it was printed in a second edition in 1753. Bull 1913: 100; Paludan-Müller 1883: 39; According to Harald Ilsøe, Holberg's *Danmarks Riges Historie* replaced Huitfeldt's *Chronicles* as «national history». See Ilsøe 1967: 24.

<sup>1256</sup> Wolke 2006: 210.

<sup>1257</sup> Rian 2004: 48.

<sup>1258</sup> Ilsøe 1973.

<sup>1259</sup> Holberg 1735: 2, 15.

<sup>1260</sup> Holberg 1749: 99.

<sup>1261</sup> Holberg 1735: 16; For an informative discussion of Holberg's views on truthful and unbiased histories, and to what degree he himself practiced these ideals, see Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 120-122.

belonged to a more recent era, but because they had all «copied the virtues of their ancestor Christian I.» Holberg nonetheless claimed to write about their errors as well as their virtues, only with decency.<sup>1262</sup> In the case of Christian II, he followed his own precepts insofar as he presented a critical, but balanced, portrait of the monarch. He wrote apologetically, but without avoiding altogether some of the most controversial issues in the Christian's reign.

Holberg's discussion of the character of Christian II takes place in the introduction to the second volume of *Dannemarks Riges Historie*.<sup>1263</sup> The portrait revolves around a paradox in the life of Christian II. According to Holberg, Christian was a capable prince with many personal qualities and extensive military and administrative experience when he succeeded to the throne. However, although one would have expected him to become a successful king, his reign ended with disaster, dissolution of the Nordic union, exile and imprisonment. In Holberg's account, the catastrophic reign was a direct result of Christian's high self-regard:

[...] since he considered himself to be mightier and smarter than his ancestors, he held himself above treading in their path, and used violent remedies to conquer the difficulties his ancestors had tried to solve with meekness and persuasion.<sup>1264</sup>

Instead of following the peaceful example of his predecessors, Christian had used his military abilities and support from the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V to try to establish «sovereign power» in the kingdoms. Holberg's initial explanation of why this had failed was purely religious. He compared Christian II with Frederik III, the first absolute monarch, to illustrate how pride had been the downfall of the former. Christian had failed to consider

(...) that it is often with the smallest means God establishes and overthrows governments, of which there are many examples, but none more noteworthy than in Danish history; for the unfettered throne that such a powerful, joyous and victorious king failed to establish, God later established under a king that was meek, temperate and unfortunate in war. The former becomes an exiled prince when everything seems to contribute to the majesty of the royal house, and the latter becomes an absolute monarch when everything seems to conspire to overthrow the royal house. It is a clear evidence of Gods omnipotency and will, that he can create great things from nothing, and that he alone wants the glory.<sup>1265</sup>

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<sup>1262</sup> Holberg 1735: 15.

<sup>1263</sup> Holberg 1733.

<sup>1264</sup> Holberg 1733: 2.

<sup>1265</sup> Holberg 1733: 2.

In addition to his religious explanation, however, Holberg added a more temporal interpretation based on the relationship between Christian's personality and the political conditions during his reign. Holberg claimed that Christian was a man out of step with his times: his father's reign had softened the subjects and made them less inclined to tolerate authoritative and strict government, and the nobility had become so powerful that they did not tolerate being bypassed. In Holberg's analysis, «Christian's misfortune was promoted by both the conjuncture of the times [Tidernes Conjuncturer] and his hard rule, and he would have been a less evil king if he had succeeded a less gentle regent.»<sup>1266</sup> Instead of judging Christian for his uncompromising and harsh measures, Holberg thus tried to relativize them by outlining the historical context in which they took place. In this way, Christian's personality and actions were not bad in themselves, so much as out of touch with their surroundings.

Holberg's sympathetic attitude also extended to the single most condemned event in the monarch's reign, the *Stockholm bloodbath* in 1520. Holberg acknowledged that this action was the main reason Christian had acquired a reputation as an evil tyrant. Without trying to excuse Christian or denying his role in the massacre, Holberg made an attempt to revise the most condemning verdicts on Christian. His main argument was that the political situation in the Nordic countries, notably the numerous Swedish insurgencies and attempts at independence, made it necessary to use harsher measures than had previously been used. Holberg explained this with a medical metaphor:

I therefore say that in the same way that a doctor can not be blamed if he, after a prolonged moderate cure that has no effect, attacks the disease with slightly more force, we could not have blamed the king if he went further than before and gave the sick kingdom a double dose.<sup>1267</sup>

Holberg agreed that the king had gone too far when he murdered children, the elderly and innocents, but he refused to accept the epithet «The Nordic Nero» given to Christian by his Swedish critics and their Danish counterparts. The king had not been driven by blood thirst, but solely by political considerations. His strategy turned out to be a miscalculation, and he had suffered for it, but this did not mean that he was evil.<sup>1268</sup> In Holberg's account, Christian was reinterpreted as a tragic hero that, under different circumstances, could have been a great king. This reorientation away from Huitfeldt's view of Christian as a tyrant did not mean that Holberg concealed Christian's most infamous action, but was based solely on a reinterpretation of existing sources.

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<sup>1266</sup> Holberg 1733: 11.

<sup>1267</sup> Holberg 1733: 77.

<sup>1268</sup> Ibid.

A year after Holberg published the second volume of his Danish history in which he treated the reign of Christian II, another Danish writer published a short history of the Danish Reformation. The clergyman Erik Pontoppidan's *Kurzgefaßte Reformations–Historie* was published in Lübeck in 1734. The text was written in German and therefore probably primarily intended for a public in the German states and the Duchies, although it would have reached a readership in Denmark as well.<sup>1269</sup> In the second chapter of this work Pontoppidan gave a short description of the three kings under which the Reformation had «started, continued and been brought to a happy conclusion.»<sup>1270</sup> In the section concerning Christian II, who had allegedly «started» the Reformation, Pontoppidan engaged directly with his controversial legacy. He wrote that a Danish historian had called Christian «the cruel» and «the evil». Pontoppidan countered this claim by quoting Isaiah 5, 20: «Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!» According to Pontoppidan, too many historians wrote excessively positively or negatively about historical matters to please their readers. This had negative consequences, however, since it hindered and obscured the true purpose of the useful study of history, which was to teach important moral lessons. In the case of Christian II, the Swedes had done him great injustice in their writings, but not so much as the king's apologists had claimed.<sup>1271</sup> It could not be denied that Christian had done evil things during his reign, before God had chastised him: «Daß nicht Christianus II. viel böses, saures und finsteres [...] an sich gehabt, zumahl in seinem Flor und Wohlstand, solches mag mit keinem Bestand der Wahrheit geläugnet werden.»<sup>1272</sup> After thus constructing an ethos as a just and unbiased historian, Pontoppidan went on to discuss whether Christian could be excused for his cruel actions as king. The crux of the discussion was the infamous Stockholm Bloodbath, since this was the main reason for the king's negative international reputation. Pontoppidan mentioned two important extenuating circumstances. First, the Swedes had for many years rebelled against the king and his forefathers, although they were rightful subjects of the Danish king. Second, Christian himself had not been the judge, but merely the executor of the Pope's death sentence («Blut-Urtheils») over the Swedish rebels. This was confirmed by the papal legate Johannes

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<sup>1269</sup> Jørgensen 1964: 196.

<sup>1270</sup> The first part of the title of the chapter was «Anthaltend die kurze Abbildung derer dreyen Könige Christiani II. Friderici I. und Christiani III. unter welchen die Reformation angefangen, fortgesetzt und glücklich zum Stande gebracht worden.(...)» Pontoppidan 1734:33; Pontoppidan repeated the discussion of Christian II almost verbatim ten years later, in the second volume of *Annales Ecclesiae Danicæ* in 1744. See Pontoppidan 1744: 372-376.

<sup>1271</sup> Here Pontoppidan referred specifically to two apologists: Cornelius Duplicius Scepperus, and a certain anonymous writer in the learned journal *Anmerkungen über allerhand wichtige Materien* (Leipzig 1705). Pontoppidan 1734: 41. The former was a Dutch diplomat in Christian's service, who published a defense of the exiled king in 1524. See Lausten 1995: 83.

<sup>1272</sup> Pontoppidan 1734: 41.

de Potentia who, after investigating the matter, had pronounced that the king «hätte nichts gethan, als war ein gehorsamer Sohn zur Vollstreckung des väterlichen Willens». <sup>1273</sup> According to Pontoppidan, these circumstances extenuated the king's guilt considerably, although not completely, since the papal ban and the subsequent death sentence over the Swedish rebel was ill founded. However, one had to take into consideration that the king had no right of pardon «according to the blindness of the times» («nach damahliger Blindheit») and that papal authority was highly respected at the time.

Pontoppidan then pointed out that the king was not without merit. He had good knowledge in commercial matters, promoted trade and threatened the privileges of the German Hansa in Denmark. He had invited and protected the first Lutheran preacher in Denmark, prohibited the University professors from condemning Luther and his teachings, and was responsible for the first translation of the New Testament into the Danish language. All the king's good qualities meant that he could not be described as completely evil, as had been done recently by the French author Voltaire in his recent book about the Swedish king Charles XII (1731):

Gewiß ist es, das dieser Herr nebst dem Bösen auch viel Lößliches an sich hatte, und es würde dem Herrn de Voltaire schwer fallen, seine Worte zu justificiren, wenn er in seiner neulich edirten Histoire de Charles XII, Roy de Svede, von ihm schreibet, er sey gewesen, un monster composé de vices, sans aucunes vertus. <sup>1274</sup>

Pontoppidan concluded his discussion of Christian's character and morals with stating that the Danes had no right, neither according to human nor divine law, to terminate their sworn allegiance to the king. <sup>1275</sup> Pontoppidan's verdict on Christian is similar to Holberg's, but it also has some peculiar aspects. Both authors present their own verdicts on the king as unbiased and balanced. They both mention Christian's personal qualities as well as his weaknesses, and they both blame the Swedes for being unruly and rebellious against their righteous king. However, the two differ in the way they interpret the king's motives for executing the Swedish rebels. Holberg gave a purely political and secular explanation, while Pontoppidan referred to the king's respect for the Pope, an argument that is in many ways unexpected, coming as it does from a Lutheran clergyman who was generally extremely critical of Catholicism. Although their conclusions were basically the same, that

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<sup>1273</sup> Pontoppidan 1734: 43.

<sup>1274</sup> Pontoppidan 1734: 45.

<sup>1275</sup> Pontoppidan writes more about the history of Christian II in the subsequent pages of the book, but the moral discussion ends at this point. Pontoppidan 1734: 46.

Christian was neither all good nor all bad, it seems that Holberg generally had more positive and apologetic view of the king.

I have presented the three authors' respective discussions of Christian II in some detail in order to outline three alternative interpretations of the king that might have been familiar to clergymen and those among their parishioners with some knowledge of Danish history. Arild Huitfeldt and Ludvig Holberg were both among the most widely read historians of their age, and it is reasonable to assume that their accounts were influential in shaping popular perceptions of Christian II among the literate public. It is more difficult to assess the influence in Denmark-Norway of Pontoppidan's Reformation history, since it is a less known work that has not been studied as thoroughly as the two others. I have included it here since it shows how a Danish clergyman engaged with the on-going international debate about Christian II. One cannot, in any case, assume that the clergymen had read one, two or all three historians, but their accounts are examples of possible interpretations available to the ministers in 1749.

With this in mind, I shall now turn to the question of how Christian II was represented in the jubilee sermons in 1749, and more specifically, how the clergymen dealt with the tainted legacy of the third Oldenburg king during a jubilee dedicated to exalting the entire dynasty. The official prayer issued to the bishops, written by the bishop of Zealand Peder Hersleb, did not specifically address Christian II. On the contrary, it gave thanks to God for having given the kingdoms

twelve kings in succession, all of one branch, one root, one sprig after the other in a straight line, of which one has surpassed the other in royal mildness and fatherly care, and therefore the government has increased in glory, and the kingdoms in joy.<sup>1276</sup>

What the paragraph does not mention is that Christian II was succeeded by his uncle, which means that the succession did not, in fact, follow a «straight line». Neither does it address in any way Christian II's reputation as a harsh and brutal king. These omissions could mean either that its author did not give any particular thought to Christian at all, or that he consciously ignored the problematic aspects of his reign. In his own jubilee sermon, Hersleb refers multiple times to problematic aspects of Christian's reign, so he was clearly aware of these matters and not wary of addressing them.<sup>1277</sup> It is possible that the official prayer was simply not the right place to go into detail. In any case, the prayer text did not give any clear, officially sanctioned indication of how the government wanted individual clergymen to treat the topic.

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<sup>1276</sup> *Texter og Bønen* 1749: 3v.

<sup>1277</sup> Hersleb 1749: 22.

Although they overlap to some degree, a review of the sermons shows that the clergy chose four different approaches to dealing with Christian's legacy.<sup>1278</sup> One approach was to avoid speaking of Christian II directly. Peder Kinck of Enebakk parish in Norway, for instance, bypassed Christian when he discussed the virtues and accomplishments of all the kings of the Oldenburg dynasty. He wrote of Christian II's grandfather Christian I: «This honourable king had two sons, king Hans and king Friderich I, both renowned men, who carried on the royal line to king Christian III [...]».<sup>1279</sup> Kinck's brief genealogy skipped over Christian II, making it appear as if Hersleb's assertion in the church prayers about the straight royal line was correct. David Plesmer of Jyderup and Holmstrup parishes addressed the question about the change in the royal line more directly, but without mentioning Christian II by name. He also downplayed its significance: «The change, when the sceptre went from king Hans' to king Frederick the First's line», wrote Plesmer, «cannot be considered a change.» It was God's Providence that had «turned the blessing from the oldest to the younger brother» for the good of the kingdoms. This glorious branch was still flourishing, while the other one had become extinct in the third generation on the male side.<sup>1280</sup>

A second approach was to speak of Christian II in positive terms and to excuse the controversial aspects of his reign or blame them on other parties. Many clergymen included him in their lengthy enumerations of the good deeds of the Oldenburg kings. Bishop Hersleb focused on Christian's positive contributions to trade in the kingdoms, that the king had made Copenhagen a staple city and promoted Danish trade at the expense of the German Hansa. According to Hersleb, this was «truly a king one should say more good things about, and if not enemies and partial people had written about him, more good thing would have been said.» Had the king taken less care of trade and manufactures, and had he not defended burghers and peasants, wrote Hersleb, he would have been less hated.<sup>1281</sup> Hersleb's verdict on Christian II echoed Ludvig Holberg's pithy comment on the divisive legacy of this monarch in his *History of the kingdom of Denmark*, as he commented on the king's

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<sup>1278</sup> In addition, some ministers did not discuss any of the monarchs at all in their sermons: Giese 1763; Kongsberg 1749; Leigh 1749; Stockflet 1749; Nyrop 1749; Aalborg 1749; Leganger 1749; Scheen 1749; Debes 1749; Mossin 1750.

<sup>1279</sup> Kinck 1749: 18; See also Herman Dominicus Beckman, *Et Gud velbehageligt Jubel-Offet betragtet over dend allernaadigst anbefalede Text af Psalmen d. 89: v.1-6. Paa dend allernaadigst forordnede Jubel-Fast d. 28 Octobr: 1749. I Anledning af Guds naadige Ombue og Beskiermelse over sit Danske og Norske Israel, da dend naadige Gud nu i 300 Aar har vedligeholdt Regieringen i dend Oldenborgiske Stamme, i Boeslunde Kirke*, [35].

<sup>1280</sup> «Den Forandring, da Sceptret gik fra Kong Hansis til Kong Friderich den Førstes Linie, kand ikke regnes som Forandring. Det var saa Guds Forsyn og Raad, som os til beste, vendte Velsignelsen fra den ældste til den yngre Broder, hvis herlige Stamme blomstrer indtil denne Dag, da derimod den anden strax i Tredie Leed paa Mand-Linien udgik.» David Plesmer, *J.N.J. Concio Jubilæa Hab: d. 28. Oct: 1749 Text Psal: 89. v.1-6.*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-67: [2].

<sup>1281</sup> «Sandeligen en Konge, der burde siges meere got om; og dersom ikke deels Fiender, deels Partiske havde skrevet om ham, havde meere got været sagt; [...]» Hersleb 1749: 65.

favorisation of the city of Copenhagen: «[...] if a burgher of Copenhagen had written his history, it would have been quite different than Huitfeldt's.»<sup>1282</sup>

The bishop of Trondheim, Friderich Nannestad, claimed that Christian had done his best to reform religion, but that «troubled times» or «the clerics of the Roman church and their followers» had prevented it from bearing fruit.<sup>1283</sup> Gerhard Winge discussed the Swedish uprising and the Stockholm Bloodbath in some detail, and placed all responsibility firmly with the Swedes. He claimed that Christian had «cleared aside» the leaders of the last uprising in order to ensure peace and secure the unity of the three kingdoms. Winge saw this as a reasonable measure, although it had eventually failed:

Even though such a principle of state has often been carried out with good results, and has had the intended result of promoting peace and concord, [...] it gave rise to an uprising in Sweden: Denmark and Norway, who were already exhausted from the previous war and could see that Sweden would not be brought back to obedience without force and a long war, were forced to abandon the king.<sup>1284</sup>

Winge's interpretation of the Bloodbath was similar to Holberg's, with the difference that the clergyman went even further in exonerating Christian. As we have seen, Holberg discussed the moral complexities of the deed and condemned the murdering of innocents. Winge, on the other hand, saw no problem with the act, except that it had not pacified the Swedes as it was meant to have done. He was not the only clergyman that held such views: Otho Holmboe did claim that the Stockholm Bloodbath was a deed that «did not match the great mercy and grace of the other Oldenburg kings», but he explained that it was a result of a long and bloody history of Swedish uprisings:

[...] even though they had had the most merciful kings in the past, they had often been rebellious against their rightful masters, so Christian therefore thought that he would clear away all those who could incite rebellion among the common man in his absence.<sup>1285</sup>

Christian had failed to deal with the uprising, not because of any lack of ability, but because the Danish estates were dissatisfied with his government after he had sought to curtail the power of the nobility and the Church.<sup>1286</sup> Christian's policy had failed, in other words, but it was not fundamentally wrong in a moral sense. Jens Nimb asserted that the king had full right to punish the Swedish rebels,

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<sup>1282</sup> «[...]om en Kiøbenhavns Borgere havde skrevet hans Historie, havde den bleven langt anderledes end Huitfeldts.» Holberg 1733: 35.

<sup>1283</sup> Storm 1749: 17; Nannestad 1749: 49; See also Bagger 1750: 29; Bildsøe 1750: 49-61.

<sup>1284</sup> Winge 1749: 23.

<sup>1285</sup> Holmboe 1749: 46.

<sup>1286</sup> Holmboe 1749: 47.



only that he had gone too far. Nonetheless, Nimb relativized the king's moral responsibility by comparing him to the deeds of monarchs in «the later and more refined times», who had massacred many more rebellious subjects than Christian had done. He reiterated the point one more time when he criticized the historians that called Christian II «evil», «bloodthirsty» and «Nero»:

Shall he be called evil because he executed rebellious subjects that were excommunicated by the church and therefore outlaws according to the teachings of the times, how can then kings in more enlightened times receive the name Great or other honourable epithets, because they have, in a crueller, more disgraceful and insidious way, murdered thousands that have only sought freedom of conscience and have otherwise been peaceful and obedient subjects?<sup>1287</sup>

The reference to the epithet «Great» and to religious persecution indicates that Nimb was alluding to the French king Louis XIV («Louis le Grand») and the persecution of Huguenots in the wake of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. By invoking the example of one of the most famous monarchs of recent times who did not have as unequivocally negative a legacy as Christian II, Nimb implied that the criticism of the Danish monarch was hypocritical and morally inconsistent. He concluded his account with a strongly apologetic verdict of Christian, in the form of an epitaph that he emphasized with bold letters. The essence of the comment was that Christian was a tragic hero:

**Here rests a royal hero that shared with all heroes the desire to defend his honour and eagerly exterminate violent men and defend the oppressed; but because the nobility and bishops could not do what they wanted to during his reign [...] they took his kingdoms and freedom away from him.**<sup>1288</sup>

The third approach was to use Christian II as a religious *exemplum*, a reminder that even kings were subject to God's will and bound by his commandments. In this version of the story, which also has some similarities to Holberg's discussion, Christian II was made to appear as a king that had unfortunately strayed from the right path. His life, however, could teach both kings and subjects important lessons. Mathias Hwiid, parish minister in the Naval church at Bremerholm in Copenhagen, expounded one of the phrases in the official prayer, that the virtues of each successive

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<sup>1287</sup> «Skal han kaldes ond fordi han lod henrette oprøreske Undersaattere, der vare under Kirkens Band og altsaa efter de Tidens Lærdom Fred=løse, hvor kand da Konger i de meer oplyste Tider faa Navn af Store ja andre Ære-Navne, fordi de paa en mer haard, skændig og lumsk Maade har dræbt nogle tusende, der har allene søgt Samvittigheds Frihed og i det øvrige været roelige og lydige Undersaattere?» Nimb 1751: 141.

<sup>1288</sup> «Her hviler en Kongelig Heldt, som havde det tilfælles med alle Heldte, at forfægte sin Ære, og være ivrig til at udrydde Volds-Mænd, og forsvare de undertrykkede; men fordi Adel og Bisper under hans Regiering maatte ikke gjøre hvad de vilde [...] skildte de ham ved Riger og Frihed.» Nimb 1751: 144.

king exceeded those of his predecessors. Hwiid acknowledged that some would object that Christian did not fit this pattern. He chose, however, to answer as «a patriot and a teacher whose lips shall preserve the truth».<sup>1289</sup> His answer was that even though the rebellious Swedes had provoked the Lord, who had then made Christian a «scourge of his wrath», it was unfortunate that Christian had not shown pity. But Christian's wrath had an important didactic function:

(...) the dark brushstrokes with which his life is painted, serve the same purpose in Danish history as the dark colours in a painting: they place the rest of the painting in even more light and clarity. In this king we see how the others could have become, and we have even more reason to thank God that the others have no likeness to him except for his good sides.<sup>1290</sup>

As we have seen, this is precisely how Ludvig Holberg used Christian's story: as a comparison with the meek and God-fearing Frederick III.<sup>1291</sup> Drawing moral lessons from the life of Christian II in this manner was a way of neutralizing its troublesome and potentially destabilizing aspects. By casting Christian as a sole exception to the benign rule of the Oldenburg kings, and explaining his fate as a direct result of divine intervention, his life acquired a positive meaning that it would perhaps not otherwise have had. Further evidence in support of this conjecture is found in Gerhard Treschow's sermon. According to Treschow, Christian had many great vices, and his hardness could not be excused. He had also been punished a lot harder than any of the other kings had ever been: he had lost his throne, his sons died before him, he was imprisoned for 27 years and had to see his uncle succeed him as king. For Treschow this was a clear example of divine justice, but in the final reckoning it was not really a tragic story. God had degraded Christian in life, but he had not abandoned him for eternity:

No! God's mercy led him to repentance, God gave him time and opportunity to regret his sins, change his mind, and improve his ways, so that he, as a true servant of Christ, has died from the world, and since he is out of hardship, and has washed his robe in the blood of the lamb, he now stands together with the other kings of this dynasty in front of Gods throne and serves him every day and night in his temple, Rev.7.<sup>1292</sup>

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<sup>1289</sup> Hwiid 1749: 46.

<sup>1290</sup>«I hvor om end alting er, saa kand de mørke Stræger, hvor med hans Levnet afpensles, tiene til det samme i de Danske Kongers Historie, som de mørke Farver i et Skilderie: De gjøre, at det øvrige i Skilderiet sættes i desto større Lys og Klarhed. Af denne Konge see vi, hvordanne de andre kunde blevet, og at vi saa meget meere ere beføede at takke Gud, at de øvrige ey have lignet ham uden i det Gode.» Hwiid 1749: 47.

<sup>1291</sup> One of the ministers, Povel Mathias Bildsøe, actually quoted this passage in Holberg verbatim, but in another context. He used it to show how the introduction of absolutism was a product of divine intervention. See Bildsøe 1750: 46.

<sup>1292</sup>«Ney! Guds Naade ledte ham til Omvendelse, Gud gav ham Tiid og Leylighed til at angre sine Synder, og forandre sit Sind, og at forbedre sine Veye, saa at han, som en sand Christi Tiener, er død af Verden, og da han er kommen ud af

Christian's story was therefore not just a dark lesson for posterity about how pride and vice can topple even a mighty monarch, it was also a comforting example of piety and sincere repentance. The emphasis on the penitence of Christian II as a mitigating circumstance had in fact also been expressed by Holberg, who in his summarizing remarks on the king's character described Christian's tribulations as a divine punishment. If the king had been evil, claimed Holberg, he had expiated his sins during a seven-year [sic!] long imprisonment and God had shown him the mercy of letting him regret his sins for such a long time. Even if the king had ruled as Christian the Evil, wrote Holberg, he had died as Christian the Good.<sup>1293</sup>

The fourth approach to Christian II was outright criticism or condemnation. I have found only a few jubilee sermon that did not ignore or excuse Christian's actions. Niels Glatwedt, minister in Stubbekøbing and Maglebrænde, made an argument for the divine right of the kings, and claimed that God had chosen to protect the entire Oldenburg dynasty. But the divine mercy did not extend to Christian II:

[...] when God perhaps saw that there was something with this king that did not conform to his will, about which there is no need to talk further at this time and place, he was removed from the throne, God cut the line, but he did not throw away the branch [...]. A man can often make wrong choices, *quid pro quo*, *larvam pro junone*, the shadow for the body, the shell for the core, but never God, he never errs in his choices, he picks the right, the best, the most able for the preservation of the church, the care of the country, the defense of the realm.<sup>1294</sup>

Peder Lorenz Hersleb, the minister of Brønshøj and Rødovre, compared every Oldenburg monarch with a corresponding Jewish king from the Old Testament.<sup>1295</sup> In the case of the government of Christian II, the best comparison Hersleb could think of was David's years of misery and exile. Whereas Hersleb dedicated at least one page to the other Oldenburg kings, moreover, Christian's

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Trængsel, og haver toet sin Kiortel hviid i Lammets Blod, saa staaer han nu, lige saa vel, som de andre Konger af denne Stamme, for Guds Stoel og Throne, og tiener ham Dag og Nat i hans Tempel, Apoc.7.» Treschow 1749: 59-60.

<sup>1293</sup> Holberg 1733: 130.

<sup>1294</sup> «[...] da Gud maaskee saae, at der var noget ved denne Konge, som ikke var saa efter GUds Villie, hvorom ey paa denne Tiid og Sted behøves at tale videre, saa kom han igien fra Thronen, Gud afskar Linien, men ey bortkastede Stammen [...] Et Menneske kan ofte i sit Val tage Feyl, Quid pro Quo, Larvam pro Junone, Skyggen for Legemet, Skallen for Kiernen, men Gud aldrig, han tager aldrig Feyl i sit Vall, han tager den Rette, den Beste, den Dueligste til Kirkens Opfostrelse, Landets Omsorg, Rigets Forsvar.» Niels Glatwedt 1750: 33.

<sup>1295</sup> Peder Lorenz Hersleb was an ordinary vicar, not to be confused with his more famous relative and namesake, the bishop Peder Hersleb.

reign received just a short paragraph. The reason was simply that it would ruin «the jubilee joy» to speak more of him.<sup>1296</sup>

Another minister criticized Christian by resorting to a comparison with the Jewish monarch Rehoboam. This king was the son of Solomon and the legitimate heir of David's throne. In his reign, the United Monarchy was divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah.<sup>1297</sup> Jeroboam, Solomon's servant and superintendent of the public works, led the people in their demand that Rehoboam lighten the heavy yoke that Solomon had placed upon them. Rehoboam's elder councillors advised him to be a servant of the people and speak good words to them, but the king chose to listen to «the young men that were grown up with him» who counselled him to be severe. Rehoboam followed their advice and gave the following answer to the people: «My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions» (1 Kings 12:14). The usurper Jeroboam then led an uprising against Rehoboam that led to the division of the United Monarchy. Jeroboam became king of Israel, while Rehoboam was left with the smaller kingdom of Judah. The story of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, with its references to tyranny, usurpation, rebellion and civil war, could speak directly to early modern political concerns. Kevin Killeen shows how both critics and supporters of the English Crown in the seventeenth century discovered meaningful parallels to contemporary events in the story: «Jeroboam was the consummate rebel, though troublingly, a rebel with God's mandate, while Rehoboam, Solomon's son and presumably the rightful heir by any patrilineal notion, was taken as the epitome of oppressors and tyrants.»<sup>1298</sup> During the Civil War and the Commonwealth, Charles I was likened to king Rehoboam: both had forsaken their old councillors and both had laid a heavier yoke upon their subjects than their fathers.<sup>1299</sup> Rehoboam's harsh answer to the people of Israel and Judah was later used in Britain in the eighteenth century to paint «a Jacobite Dystopia» of what the British Isles would become if the Jacobites succeeded: «If James II had been bad, James III would be worse.»<sup>1300</sup>

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<sup>1296</sup> «Vor Jubel-Glæde tillader os ey, at tale videre herom, man kand alleneste sige derom: at en sort Plæt i et smukt Ansigt, lader ikke ilde, naar den sidder paa det rette Sted». Hersleb 1750: 13.

<sup>1297</sup> The division of the kingdoms was decreed already during Solomon's reign, due to his worship of other gods. Since Solomon had not observed the covenant, God would «surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.» For the sake of David, however, this would not happen in Solomon's reign but God would «rend it out of the hand of thy son.» (1 Kings 11:11-12).

<sup>1298</sup> Killeen 2010: 498.

<sup>1299</sup> John Milton, for instance, wrote in *Eikonoklastes* (1650) that Charles I «acted in good earnest what *Reboam* did but threat'n, to make his little finger heavier then his Fathers loynes, and to whip us with his two twisted Scorpions both temporal and spiritual Tyranny, all his Kingdoms have felt.» Quoted from Killeen 2010: 502.

<sup>1300</sup> Caudle 2014: 255.

In the case of Christian II, there were several striking similarities to Rehoboam. Both were the grandsons and the third successors of the founders of royal dynasties. Both had received advice from unpopular councillors: young and rash courtiers in the case of Rehoboam, a foreign, female burgher (Mother Sigbrit) in the case of Christian. Both had faced usurpers and rebel leaders (Jeroboam and Gustav Vasa) and both had lost a significant portion of their kingdoms (Israel and Sweden). The minister Gabriel Heiberg claimed that, unlike in David's royal line, there had been no ungodly and idolatrous Oldenburg monarch. However, if one should see clearly into the matter, one could say that there had been a Rehoboam among the Danish kings. Like Rehoboam, the third Oldenburg king, «by following evil counsellors and selecting the harshest advise in order to establish his government, has given cause to the kingdom's dissension and division». According to Heiberg, this had without a doubt happened more because of an «imagined necessity of state», than because of «the inclinations of his own disposition.»<sup>1301</sup> Although Heiberg thus excused the king himself by laying the principal blame on his evil councillors, there is no doubt that he considered the monarch's policies to be unsound and detrimental to the interests of the kingdoms.

As the only bad egg in a basket of twelve, Christian II could also trigger associations with Judas the Apostle. No ministers actually made this parallel in their sermons, but there is some evidence to suggest that contemporaries were well aware of the likeness. Matthias Hwiid, minister of Holmen church, printed his sermon in Danish shortly after the tercentenary and later also in German, a much more unusual occurrence.<sup>1302</sup> The rumour that Hwiid intended to present his sermon to a foreign audience prompted one of his readers to write a manuscript that criticized it. The critic presented himself as Jens Sanddrue, which is almost certainly a pseudonym.<sup>1303</sup> Sanddrue's critique was itself criticized by the so-called Magnus Halling, most likely also a pseudonym, who defended Hwiid's sermon. Neither of the texts were ever published, but both seem to have circulated in manuscript form: the Royal Library in Copenhagen has four copies, one copy of Sanddrue's text alone and three where Sanddrue's text is annotated by Halling's text.<sup>1304</sup> The Gunnerus Library in

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<sup>1301</sup> «[...]ved at lyde onde Raadgivere og udvelge de haardeste Raad til sin Regierings Stadfæstelse, har givet Aarsag til Rigernes Splid og Sønderrivelse, og det uden Tvivl, meer af een slags indbildet Staats-Nødvendighed, end af egen Gemyttes Tilbøyelighed.» Heiberg 1749:72.; For other ministers who compared Christian II with Rehoboam, see Nimb 1751: 126; Holmboe 1749: 45.

<sup>1302</sup> Hwiid 1750.

<sup>1303</sup> «Sanddrue» is registered as a pseudonym in Edvard Collin's list of pseudonyms andonyms in Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic literature. Apart from being a real surname, «Sanddrue» also means «truthful» in Danish. Collin 1869: 148.

<sup>1304</sup> Both texts: *Nogle Annotationer til Provst Hwiids Jubel-Prædiken* (Ny Kgl. Saml. 1095, 8); *Bemærkninger til Jens Sandrues Anmærkninger til Provst Hwiids Jubelprædiken* (Additamenta No. 633 kvart); *M. Hwiid, Jubelprædiken 1749, trykt med skrevne Annotationer* (Thott 1690 kvart); For Sanddrue's text alone, see *Om Kirkerne i Viborg Stift* (Kall 499 kvart).

Trondheim has one copy with Sanddrue's critique and Halling's response.<sup>1305</sup> In one of his many critical comments to Hwiid's sermon, Sanddrue reacted to Hwiid's comparison between the Oldenburg dynasty and the twelve Apostles. In the sermon, Hwiid had written that the Danish royal house was as proud of its twelve kings as God's house in the New Testament was of its twelve Apostles.<sup>1306</sup> According to Sanddrue, Hwiid's comparison seemed to have been made just because of the similarity of the number twelve. More seriously, the comparison was also inconsiderate, since none of the twelve Oldenburg kings could in any way be compared with Judas.<sup>1307</sup> Interestingly, Halling defended Hwiid's comparison while at the same time acknowledging that there was in fact a certain similarity between Christian II and Judas. It could be truthfully said, wrote Halling, that one of the kings differed from the eleven others like Judas had differed from the eleven Apostles. But dean Hwiid had not compared them in this respect, and he had not touched upon the faults of either the kings or the Apostles. All impartial readers would therefore agree that the comment could not be called inconsiderate.<sup>1308</sup>

Christian II was also represented on several illuminations during the jubilee. We recognize similar approaches to the king as those found in the jubilee sermons. Some of the inventions did not address the most problematical aspects of Christian's reign at all. The *Honour Temple* created by the magistrate of Copenhagen focused exclusively on two harmless events with special relevance for the history of the city, namely the king's granting of staple rights to Copenhagen and his invitation of Dutch peasants to Amager.<sup>1309</sup> The illumination on the façade of Johann Ludvig von Holstein's private home simply emphasized Christian's religious zeal (The shield bearing Christian's name was held by the virtue «Zelus»), while the president of the magistrate Jacob von Bazon and the noblewoman Fransisca Felicitas von Stöcken's illuminations highlighted the king's bravery and martial prowess.<sup>1310</sup> Only one of the illuminations in Copenhagen hinted at the monarch's unhappy

<sup>1305</sup> *Annotationer til Provst Hviids Jubelprædiken* (GUNNERUS, XA, Qv. 219).

<sup>1306</sup> «Saa bekiendt Guds Huus i det Nye Testamente er af de 12 Apostle, saa bekiendt er dette Danske Kongelige Huus af sine 12 Konger.» Hwiid 1749: 19.

<sup>1307</sup> «Pag.19. Föres de tolv Apostler /: som det synes for Tallets Skyld :/ paa dette Sted ganske ubetænksom an; thi der har dog ingen Konge været, som i nogen Maade kunde sættes i Parallele med Judas.» *Bemærkninger til Jens Sandrues Anmærkninger til Provst Hviids Jubelprædiken* (Additamenta 633 kvart).

<sup>1308</sup> «Endskiönt det kunde siges med Sandhed at som een af de tolv Apostler bleve de elleve paa sin Maade ulig, saa blev og een af de tolv Konger de andre ulig paa sin Maade; saa dog sættes ikke i Provstens Prædiken Kongerne i den Henseende i Parallele med Apostlerne, men i den Henseende aleene, at NB saa bekiendt Guds Huus er i det Nye Testamente deraf, at der haver været Tolv Apostler /: Judas var jo för sit Fald en Apostel :/ saa bekiendt og navnkundig er det Kongelige Danske Huus af at have haft tolv Konger, uden at röre enten ved nogen af Apostlernes eller Kongernes Feil: Alle upartiske döme da, om det kand kaldes ubetænksom!» *Bemærkninger til Jens Sandrues Anmærkninger til Provst Hviids Jubelprædiken* (Additamenta 633 kvart).

<sup>1309</sup> Berling 1749: 13-14.

<sup>1310</sup> Berling 1749: 21, 25, 39-40.

fate, but it did not condemn or criticize the king: the peculiar judge («Birkedommer») Matthias Stouager had decorated the windows of his house in Christianshavn with the name of each Oldenburg king as well as a short Danish poem in 4 stanzas that summed up their reign. The verse about Christian II described his frustrated intention to introduce the Lutheran faith in Denmark, his short reign and his long and unhappy life.<sup>1311</sup> In other words, the interpretation of Christian was similar to those clergymen who saw the monarch as well intentioned but unfortunate. In Bergen in Norway, there were several more explicit references to the troubles in the king's reign. With one exception, however, they either excused the king or presented his unfortunes without any moral judgement. The president of the magistrate Henrich Willemsen's illumination state that the king's aggressive policies against the nobility had led to them to take away his freedom.<sup>1312</sup> The clergyman Matthias Albert Haberdorph described Christian's reign as «troublesome» and blamed the Swedes for «stirring» the king's mood and mind.<sup>1313</sup> The town judge Albert Christian Dass simply described the king's reign as unhappy.<sup>1314</sup> The only illumination with a downright critical tone adorned the house of the clergyman Christen Selmer, resident chaplain of the Cathedral church in Bergen and vicar of Askøy. He described each of the Oldenburg kings with a Latin inscription, an allegorical image, a Danish poem in two stanzas and a verse from the Bible. Christian's reign was symbolised by a

great ship, sailing towards a rock or cliff in the sea; One the one side, a symbol of a fortress, and on the other side a compass in a high place, underneath it Jer. 8, 9. and at the very bottom: impatient man takes the wrong course/when he does not sail according to a compass.<sup>1315</sup>

The image and poem suggested that the king's policies had been erroneous, but the selected bible verse went even further, suggesting that Christian II had lacked divine support: «The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them»?

How should one interpret the representations of Christian II? Previously I described the problematic legacy of this monarch as a sensitive topic in the context of public commemoration. The

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<sup>1311</sup> «Hans Øyemed var, her Lutherum at oplukke, /Men hans Regierings-Tid kuns Ti Aar varede,/Haldfierdsindstiuge og Syv og Et halv Aars Sukke/ Ham dertil intet hialp, det Døden Ham lod see.» Berling 1749: 47.

<sup>1312</sup> «Han lodnet Lykken til tre store Konge Riger, /Men Skjebnen voldte at han alle tre undviger/ han hastig var og streng, dog meest mod Adelen/ hans Frihed Adelen berøved ham igien.» Kothert 1749: 8.

<sup>1313</sup> «Besværlig ti Aars Tid Jeg Nordens Scepter førde,/ Men Naboe=Folket mit Humeur og Sind oprørde.» Kothert 1749: 13.

<sup>1314</sup> «INFELIX MAGNAMINUS». Kothert 1749: 23.

<sup>1315</sup> «[...]et stort Skib, seyende mod et Skiær eller Klippe i Havet; Paa den eene Side, et Var-Tegn paa en Festning, og paa den anden Side et Compass paa et høyt Sted, derunder Jer. 8,9. og allernederst: Hastig Mand sin Cours forfeiler,/ Naar man ved Compass ey seyler.» Kothert 1749: 17.

sermons discussed here support this hypothesis. Few ministers presented Christian in a neutral manner, or more precisely, they did not speak of him in a panegyric manner as they did with the other monarchs. Some seem to have avoided the topic altogether, while others used Christian as an argument in anti-Swedish polemics, or as a moral example to remind both king and subjects to be humble and god-fearing. Unlike the other Oldenburg kings, who were always presented as paragons of virtue, Christian II was a more complicated and ambiguous figure that seems to have demanded an extra interpretative effort in order to establish his proper place in the history of the dynasty. An outright condemnation of Christian, following the tradition of Arild Huitfeldt, was out of the question in this context. It was clearly not perceived as inappropriate, however, to acknowledge his shortcomings as long as it was done in a respectful, discreet and balanced manner. In fact, Christian's history could in fact offer moral and political lessons for his successors and their subjects. Christian II was an enigmatic figure in Danish-Norwegian history, fascinating and disturbing in equal measure. Although he was obviously not an example to imitate directly, his history could still serve a function as a cautionary tale and a warning against vices such as pride, arrogance and vengefulness. In the controlled setting of the jubilee, the meaning of Christian and his reign was stabilized and secured.

There is an interesting postscript to the ambivalent commemoration of Christian II in 1749, which demonstrates clearly that Christian II continued to have an unclarified position among the virtuous kings of the Oldenburg dynasty. In the 1778, the artist Nicolai Abildgaard was given the task of decorating the great *Knight's Hall* (Riddersalen) in the king's residential castle Christiansborg with a series of paintings of the Danish kings from the mythical king Dan to Christian VII. According to the instructions, the pictorial programme should include a large painting in the ceiling of the heathen kings, paintings of the medieval Christian kings in the gallery and, on the walls at ground level, scenes from the reigns of the Oldenburg kings. Due to the structure of the hall, however, there were only ten spaces available for the thirteen kings of the Oldenburg dynasty. The solution adopted by Abildgaard was to bypass king Christian II completely, and to include king John and Frederick I in the painting dedicated to their father, Christian I.<sup>1316</sup>

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<sup>1316</sup> Due to a lack of conclusive evidence, it is not possible to establish with absolute certainty who was responsible for designing the pictorial programme. However, Kragelund convincingly argues that Abildgaard himself was responsible for the general plan. Kragelund 1999: 231 ff.



## Protestant history versus dynastic history: The memory of Catholic monarchs

Another historical topic that had the potential to create some difficulty for those attempting to panegyricize the dynasty, was the question of how one should refer to the religious beliefs and church policies of the first four Oldenburg kings, Christian I (r.1448-1481) Hans/John I (r. 1481-1513), Christian II (r. 1513-1523) and Frederick I (r. 1523-1533), who all ruled before the Danish Reformation. This was, one would expect, a less problematic issue to deal with than Christian II's personal character and reign. After all, the first two kings could not have been anything other than Catholics since the Reformation had not come to existence during their lifetime. However, the anti-papist polemics that frequently surfaced during the jubilee presented a potential inconsistency and discrepancy in many historical accounts. On the one hand, the Oldenburg kings were praised in general for all the good they had done for the kingdoms. On the other hand, the Reformation was presented as a pivotal moment in the history of Denmark-Norway. The official prayer text, for instance, stated that the Oldenburg dynasty had freed the Lord's church from the «delusions of the papacy» and protected it from «external persecutors and internal seducers.»<sup>1317</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter on the Reformation jubilee in 1736, the introduction of evangelical Christianity was widely ascribed to Christian III and his religious policies in the aftermath of the Counts War. If this was correct, what was then the role of the first four monarchs in the history of the liberation of the church from the papacy?

It was a common feature of royal iconography, art and propaganda in the early modern period to make references to ancestors and predecessors on the throne. Past monarchs served as a symbolic resource that could be mobilized for the purposes of legitimation of authority and validation of policies. When new dynasties acceded to the throne, the memory of previous monarchs was often invoked to create an impression of continuity and tradition. Living kings were compared with long deceased forefathers, and the virtues and exploits of the former were enhanced by emphasizing their likeness to the latter. The harnessing of memory for political purposes could, however, be a two-edged sword. In spite of the efforts of rulers to appropriate the image of their predecessors to their own ends, memories of past kings could often be a constraint and a challenge as well as a resource. Historian Kevin Sharpe emphasizes both the dialogic nature of the representation of authority, and its sensitivity to historical change: rulers had to take into account «the expectations, fears and desires» of their subjects when choosing how to relate to the memories

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<sup>1317</sup> *Texter og Bønen* 1749: 5v.

of their predecessors.<sup>1318</sup> In addition, interpretations of historical monarchs also changed as circumstances altered. Political events and cultural processes such as dynastic change, revolution or religious reformation led to constant re-evaluations of earlier monarchs that were bound to affect their potential worth as models and ideals for living kings.

The Protestant Reformation posed such a challenge for monarchs attempting to establish connections with the memory of their royal predecessors. For those European kingdoms that underwent confessional change in the course of the sixteenth century, the Reformation represented a major historical rupture. In Protestant countries, the pre-Reformation period was perceived as time of gross superstition in matters of faith, and national politics were tainted by the ambitions and interferences of the popes. For Protestant monarchs in search of a usable past, the medieval period inevitably lost currency. Sweden is a case in point. According to Henrik Ågren, Gustav Vasa and his immediate successors treated the medieval kings as positive ideals in their political propaganda since, as a new dynasty, it needed to stress continuity with the past. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, however, allusions to the pre-Reformation monarchs gradually came to be replaced by a focus on the Vasa dynasty itself. The lack of references to the medieval monarchy in the seventeenth century leads Ågren to conclude that this period had become of «lower symbolic worth».<sup>1319</sup>

An alternative way of dealing with medieval history was to comb through the annals in search of instances where monarchs had displayed independence or outright resistance in their relationship with the Holy See. An illustrative example of this tendency is found in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, where the Protestant establishment tried to find precursors in the medieval period of the Royal Supremacy established by Henry VIII. According to Julian Lock, the national English monarchy «needed its own native precedents, both to show the crown exercising authority over the church and the ‘Man of Sin’ opposing it.»<sup>1320</sup> This led Protestant writers to «search for royal heroes» in the past that had opposed the pope and tried to take control over English church matters. They saw some potential in King John, who «became the outstanding English candidate for a royal antipapal champion and precursor of the Reformation.»<sup>1321</sup> However, he turned out to be too ambiguous a figure, and his relationship to the papacy not sufficiently antithetical to cast him as a proto-Protestant hero battling against the Anti-Christ. Late Elizabethan English Protestants therefore turned to Richard II, and tried to portray his reign as «a case in which the popish clergy had

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<sup>1318</sup> Sharpe 2000: 384.

<sup>1319</sup> Ågren 2011: 91-92.

<sup>1320</sup> Lock 1996: 154.

<sup>1321</sup> Lock 1996: 155.

actually consummated a royal deposition in England [...]».<sup>1322</sup> When this attempt failed to catch on as well, some Jacobean authors returned to John, but they had to resort to propaganda and myth making in order to make his complicated reign come together as Protestant history.<sup>1323</sup> The monarchs, as heads of the Church of England, needed to show that the monarchy had played an important role in the struggle of Antichrist. Locke argues that these attempts at finding medieval precursors to the Royal supremacy would have been «a powerful argument against separatist Protestant tendencies» had they been successful: «That medieval kings had been precursors of the Reformation was not, however, an argument that it proved possible to formulate convincingly—merely one more decayed rope which failed to bind together Protestant England.»<sup>1324</sup>

Karen Skovgaard-Petersen describes a similar challenge facing the Danish humanist and historian Anders Sørensen Vedel in the 1570s, when he translated Saxo Grammaticus' History of Denmark to Danish (1575) and edited a Latin edition Adam of Bremen's history of the Bishops of Hamborg-Bremen (1579). At that point in time, Denmark had only been Lutheran for forty years, and Catholicism was perceived as a very real threat towards the Danish church. Skovgaard-Petersen argues that Vedel's editions of the two medieval manuscripts reflect a tension between a simultaneous desire to praise Denmark's national past and to stress Denmark's status as a Lutheran kingdom. The tension is manifested in Vedel's forewords to the texts, where he «makes great efforts to present the two great medieval historians in a Protestant light [...]».<sup>1325</sup> In the foreword to Saxo, Vedel gave a short sketch of the history of Christianity in Denmark, from the period of Christianization described by Saxo, via the moral decline in the church in the Middle Ages, down to the Reformation. The narrative structure in the foreword closely paralleled the structure of the influential universal history *Carion's Chronicle*, edited by Phillip Melanchthon and Caspar Peucer. According to Skovgaard-Petersen, the purpose of the foreword was to integrate Saxo's history of Denmark into a Protestant frame of historical interpretation.<sup>1326</sup> Vedel's presentation of Adam of Bremen also drew upon Carion's chronicle, specifically Melanchthon's concept of «the true church», the idea that a small group of true believers had endured through the Catholic Middle Ages, protected by God against persecutors. According to Vedel, Adam of Bremen belonged to this group, despite the fact that he was a Catholic clergyman writing a history of Catholic bishops:

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<sup>1322</sup> Lock 1996: 169.

<sup>1323</sup> Lock 1996: 172.

<sup>1324</sup> Lock 1996: 173.

<sup>1325</sup> «Her gor Vedel sig store anstrengelser for at præsentere de to store middelalderlige historikere i et protestantisk lys [...]» Skovgaard-Petersen 2004: 58.

<sup>1326</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2004: 60.

It is Adam's criticism of the bishops of his time and their desire for power and splendour that gives him access to this group. In other words, Vedel places Adam into this great Protestant construction of world history that was given its authorized shape by Melanchthon [...] Adam belongs to the small group of true believers that has always existed, the true church, those who are almost Protestants *avant la lettre*.<sup>1327</sup>

Skovgaard-Petersen interprets Vedel's efforts to establish Adam's Protestant credentials in the context of censorship regulations. Vedel's dilemma was that he wished to publicize important sources to Danish national history, but knew that both Saxo and Adam of Bremen could be criticized for their Catholicism. He therefore anticipated possible criticism against the two works' suspect religious content by placing them into a more acceptable context of Protestant world history.<sup>1328</sup>

As we shall see, the English and Danish sixteenth-century scholars' search for «proto-Protestants» in medieval history bears some resemblance to the dilemma facing clergymen and other panegyrists in Denmark-Norway during the 1749 jubilee, although the stakes were clearly higher in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries when religious matters had not yet been settled and the Counter-Reformation posed a substantial threat. In 1749, the question was how to incorporate the pre-Reformation kings into the chronological framework defined by the regime as the glorious reign of the Oldenburg kings (1449-1749).

Some writers simply discussed the Reformation in vague and unspecific terms. They did not mention any particular kings, but rather portrayed the entire royal line as beneficial to the spread of the evangelical religion in Denmark-Norway. The chaplain Marcus Frideric Bang for instance, claimed that the Oldenburg kings had proven numerous times that they protected the Church, «from the oldest to this younger king, from the first to this day», and that «every king, the one more than the other» had contributed in laying the ground for the practice of true Christianity and banishing false teachings and ungodliness.<sup>1329</sup> For those that went into more detail when discussing individual monarchs, the Reformation was an obvious topic to include in a list of their achievements. The question was then how to date the establishment of the Protestant faith in the kingdoms. To which

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<sup>1327</sup> «Det er Adams kritikk af sin tids biskopper og deres magt- og pragtglæde, der giver ham adkomst til denne gruppe. Vedel sætter med andre ord Adam ind i denne store protestantiske konstruktion af verdenshistorien som havde fået sin autoriserede skikkelse af Melanchthon [...] Adam hører til blandt den lille gruppe sande troende der altid har eksisteret, den sande kirke, dem der næsten er protestanter *avant la lettre*.» Skovgaard-Petersen 2004: 72.

<sup>1328</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 2004: 75.

<sup>1329</sup> Bang 1749: 29. For similar statements, see Debes 1749: [13], Dorph 1749: [13].

king, or kings, should one ascribe the honour of being the progenitor of Protestantism in Denmark-Norway?

Most writers seem to have considered the Reformation as a gradual process that culminated when Christian III assumed control over the Danish church and made the final break with Rome in 1536. There are, however, considerable variations when it comes to defining the actual starting point of this process. Broadly speaking, the accounts can be placed in one of two categories. The first consists of those that claimed that the Reformation began no earlier than in the second decade of the sixteenth century. In other words, they subscribed to a conventional view that the existence of and knowledge about the teachings of Martin Luther was a prerequisite of true, evangelical Christianity. Some of these writers dated the start of the Reformation in the reign of Frederick I, whose church policies were the first that they perceived as being recognisably Protestant. The minister Matthias Hwiid, for instance, claimed that the Reformation «began in earnest under king Frederick the First and was completed under king Christian the Third».<sup>1330</sup> His reasons were that Frederick I had allowed Lutherans freedom of religion at the Estates General in Odense in 1527, while Christian III dismissed the Catholic bishops, created a new ordinance for the Church, ordained evangelical bishops and priests, and published the first complete Bible in folio. In a footnote to this paragraph, however, Hwiid mentioned that the Reformation had already started to appear under Christian II, who had allowed a preacher from Wittenberg to preach in Nicolai Church in Copenhagen, and forbidden the University to dismiss Luther's works.<sup>1331</sup>

Hwiid was not alone in giving Christian II Protestant credentials. Some writers perceived his reign as the true start of the Reformation. Povel Matthias Bildsøe, for instance, claimed that the «very first seed of the true evangelical teachings that Luther brought to light with a venerable Reformation, was spread in this kingdom during the reign of Christian II and by his care».<sup>1332</sup> He mentioned the same reasons as Hwiid, but added that Christian had arranged for the translation and publishing of the New Testament in Danish, which was the first version to appear in that language. Bildsøe, and others with him, saw Christian II as the first monarch to embrace the Protestant faith and try to introduce it to the kingdoms. Although his successors had been more successful, his efforts were praised as valuable contributions to the Protestant cause. Jacob Bagger used the metaphor of a

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<sup>1330</sup> Hwiid 1749: 21. See also Nyrop 1749: 30; Winge 1749: 25; Kinck 1749: 30.

<sup>1331</sup> Hwiid 1749: 21; See also Johan Neuchs' jubilee poem: «De første Konger vel i Pavedommet døde,/ Dog saa de ogsåå først den klare Morgen-Røde,/ Ved anden CHRISTIAN og første FRIDERICH/Først Evangelium her nogen Indgang fik.» Neuchs 1760: 5.

<sup>1332</sup> Bildsøe 1750: 57; See also Marcussen 1766: 35.

building to explain the relationship between the first three Protestant kings: Christian II built the foundations of the faith, Frederick I built on these foundations and Christian III completed the building.<sup>1333</sup>

The second category of historical accounts shares the view of the Reformation as a cumulative process in which Christian III's wholesale implementation of evangelical Christianity was the culmination of a process initiated by his predecessors. There is, however, a significant difference between the two categories. Whereas the aforementioned texts place the Danish Reformation after Luther's Reformation in the chronology, the accounts in the second category gave the Danish kings from the pre-Reformation era a role in the struggle against the papacy and the development of true Christianity in the kingdoms. At the very least, they claimed that the late medieval monarchs were personally enlightened in religious matters compared to their contemporaries. Such claims did often not require any substantial distortion of the available evidence, but were rather based on biased readings of the historical facts that enhanced the «proto-Protestant» characteristics of the late medieval Oldenburg monarchs and reduced the significance of their adherence to the Catholic Church.

There was in fact some precedence for apologizing or downplaying the first Oldenburg king's reverence for the Pope. In the second volume of his *Annales Ecclesiae Danicae*, Erik Pontoppidan described Christian I as godly and pious, «according to the knowledge of the times» («nachdem Erkenntnis der Zeit»). He also discussed the king's pilgrimage to Rome in 1474, claiming that he had doubtlessly made the journey out of great devotion and good intentions, and wrote that Christian had himself confessed that he had perceived the city as holier from a distance than what he actually had discovered it to be up close.<sup>1334</sup> In a similar vein, Ludvig Holberg discredited a rumour that king Christian had ceded rank to the cardinals and carried the Pope's wash basin to demonstrate his pious devotion. These things, wrote Holberg, were not mentioned by any Danish historians and could therefore be an invention or bragging from the Catholic clergy. Cardinal de Pavia, who had been present, claimed that this was an example to follow of the reverence one should show for the clergy. According to Holberg, however, it was rather an example of their arrogance.<sup>1335</sup>

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<sup>1333</sup> Bagger 1750: 29; See also Gladtwedt 1749: 22-23.

<sup>1334</sup> «Eben dieses erhellet auch aus seiner ohne Zweifel in grosser Devotion und guter Meinung anno 1474 unternommenen Wallfahrt oder Andachts-Reise nach Rom, welche Stadt er, seinem eignen Geständniß nach, in der Ferne für heiliger angesehen, als er sie gegenwärtig befunden.» Pontoppidan 1744: 364.

<sup>1335</sup> «At han haver cederet Rangten til Cardinalerne, og holdet Vandbekkenet for Paven, som nogle foregive, derom tale vore Historie Skrivere intet, og kand derfor maaskee være en Digt eller en Geistlig Rodomontade af Cardinal de Pavia som da var nærværende.» Holberg 1732: 721.

During the tercentenary in 1749, however, the tendency to downplay the Catholic faith of the first Oldenburg monarchs went much further: not only was Christian I not so devoted to the Pope, he had even wanted to reform the church. The desire to find signs of Protestantism in reign of the first Oldenburg monarchs is particularly evident in a speech written for the dynastic jubilee in 1749 by the royal archivist and historian Jakob Langebek. It was held at Charlottenborg Castle in Copenhagen for the Royal Danish Society for the Improvement of Nordic Language and History (*det Kongl. Danske Selskab til det Nordiske Sprogs og Historiens Forbedring*). The entire speech was dedicated to the history of Christian I, the ancestor of the Oldenburg dynasty. In the first half, Langebek discussed Christian's religious faith and his relationship to the Holy See. He started out by asserting that Christian was considered one of the most pious monarchs of his time. He had, among other things, founded churches, monasteries and hospitals for the poor, honoured and defended the clergy, and made pilgrimages to holy sites. Langebek emphasized that, judging by his external works, the king was as pious as he could possibly have been in the prevailing conditions of religious ignorance.<sup>1336</sup> Turning to the king's personal attitude, he portrayed Christian as an early critic of the papacy and claimed that he «had greater knowledge of the truth of the Gospels, and deeper insight into the blindness of Christianity than one could expect from those darkened times.»<sup>1337</sup> In support of this argument, he quoted a text by «a learned man that has lived shortly after his [Christian I] time, written to one of his grandsons»:

Your grandfather [...] did not lack a good will towards the Christian religion, for I have heard that he, even in Rome itself, with the greatest seriousness, has complained of the miserable condition of the Church, criticized the tyranny of the popes and wanted a Reformation in God's church.<sup>1338</sup>

The quoted passage is from a Latin text published in Wittenberg in 1539, written by Johannes Saxonius, a humanist philosopher from Schleswig who studied in Wittenberg in the 1530s and later became rector there.<sup>1339</sup> It is a secondary source based on hearsay, a fact Saxonius himself drew attention to by mentioning that he had heard of the monarch's attitudes to the Church. Langebek, however, treated it as a testimony («Vitnesbyrd») and the reference to Saxonius' learning and his proximity in time to Christian I can be interpreted as a means of strengthening the authority of the

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<sup>1336</sup> Langebek 1749: 9.

<sup>1337</sup> Langebek 1749: 10.

<sup>1338</sup> «Eders Farfader [...] fattedes ikke paa en god Villie mod den christelige Religion, thi jeg har hørt, at han endogsaa i Rom selv med største Alvorlighed haver beklaget Kirkens elændige Tilstand, lastet Pavernes Tyrannie, og ønsket en Reformation i Guds Kirke.» Langebek 1749: 10. The grandson Saxonius addresses is Duke John of Holstein, half-brother of king Christian III of Denmark-Norway.

<sup>1339</sup> Query: «Johannes Saxonius» in *Dansk biografisk leksikon*. <http://runeberg.org/dbl/14/0626.html>. Retrieved 12.02.2013.

source.<sup>1340</sup> This is, furthermore, the only source Langebek referred to in order to corroborate his strong claim about Christian's faith. In the following passage, he wrote:

If it was necessary, I would prove this with the king's own words in his various letters to the pope and the cardinals, as well as to the emperor and other contemporary princes and gentlemen. I will only say that nothing was lacking except that a Luther should appear in his time.<sup>1341</sup>

In the remainder of the text, Langebek used several original sources from the fifteenth century, but none of them unambiguously verified his initial claims about Christian's attitudes to the papacy. Instead, he gave various examples of statements and government acts that *could* be interpreted as reformist or proto-Lutheran. Langebek claimed, for instance, that the king had reformed the monasteries and replaced «dissolute and obstinate» monks and nuns with those who would live a «proper and godly life».<sup>1342</sup> He also claimed that the king had written to the king of France, asking for a copy of the Pragmatic Sanction that, according to Langebek, king Charles VII had decreed in order to limit the authority of the popes. In reality, claimed Langebek, Christian «had introduced the same Pragmatic Sanction as a rule in his own kingdoms».<sup>1343</sup> Thus, by selecting pertinent aspects of Christian's reign and placing them in a certain light, Langebek created an image of a king who was ahead of his time in religious matters and who did all that was in his power to reform the church in his kingdoms. Christian was represented as a solitary light in dark and superstitious times.<sup>1344</sup>

We also find clergymen that put forth similar arguments in their sermons. A recurrent topic in this context was the fact that Christian I had founded the university in Copenhagen in 1479. In the clergy's historical accounts this was portrayed as an important part of the prehistory of the Reformation. Jens Nimb, who had read Jakob Langebek's speech and incorporated some of its points in his sermon, wrote that Christian I had had «a deeper insight in the truths of the Gospels than one could expect in those dark times». Since he had realised that «no Reformation could be

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<sup>1340</sup> Saxoniuss' text was written in 1539, which was 58 years after the death of Christian I.

<sup>1341</sup> «Var det fornødent, vilde jeg stadfæste dette af Kongens egne Ord i adskillige Hans Majestets Breve, saavel til Paven og Cardinalerne, som til Keiseren og andre da levende Førster og Herrer. Jeg vil ikkun sige, at der intet andet fattedes, end at en Lutherus skulde indfaldet til hans Tid.» Langebek 1749: 11.

<sup>1342</sup> Langebek 1749: 13.

<sup>1343</sup> Langebek 1749: 14.

<sup>1344</sup> In the jubilee speech he delivered at Sorø Academy, the Norwegian mathematician and philosopher Jens Kraft proposed a similar argument about the king's religious attitudes. He claimed that Christian I had been one of the most intelligent monarchs in Europe at the time, to whom most European sovereigns happily turned for advice. The greatest proof of the king's sharp mind was that he «recognized the ruling errors of his time, although they easily blind the sharpest eyes.» Kraft 1749: 8.



carried out in the church», he had wisely acquired the right to found a Danish university.<sup>1345</sup> Gabriel Heiberg, parish priest in Gloppen, used the metaphor of the church as a house to explain how the history of the Danish royal house was connected to sacred history. His narrative started with the birth of Christ: David's house faced extinction on earth, but Christ ensured its continuation as a spiritual and holy kingdom. When the earthly kingdom of Jerusalem was ruined with the destruction of temple of Jerusalem, the pact lived on in Christ. However, the persecution of the Christians in the Roman Empire seemed to threaten this spiritual kingdom. The saviour was emperor Constantine, who built faithfully on the church and David's spiritual house. This was then challenged by the internal decay caused by the «seductive teachings» of Anti-Christ, but the pact stood firm thanks to the Reformation.<sup>1346</sup> At this point, the Oldenburg kings entered the scene, in the role of master builders working to build Gods house in their kingdom. The role of Christian I in this scheme was to provide the materials by inviting learned men and founding the University, «a strong wall for the evangelical church against the Anti-Christ and other enemies of the Church of Christ».<sup>1347</sup> His successors then continued to build on these foundations.

It seems, at first sight, a striking assertion that the establishment of a university in Copenhagen in the second half of the fifteenth century should play a significant role as a precursor to the Reformation. The king had requested papal dispensation to found the university, and the bishop of Zealand was its chancellor until the Reformation. In the letter where he issued privileges to the university, the king himself stressed that a university would be beneficial for the strengthening of the Catholic faith.<sup>1348</sup> The university was, in other words, firmly placed within the orbit of the universal Catholic Church. Part of the explanation for this apparent paradox in the clergy's view of the university is the strong association between Catholicism and ignorance in a Protestant culture such as Denmark-Norway. In that context, the establishment of a national centre of learning could only be an improvement of existing conditions, as education facilitated the youth's ability to discern truth from falsehood. The minister Johannes Schive of Merløse Herred,

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<sup>1345</sup> Nimb's was the last sermon to be published from the jubilee in 1749. The sermon does not have a publication year on the title page. In the search engines for the Norwegian libraries for research and higher education (BIBSYS) and the search engine for the Danish Royal Library (REX) the sermon is listed with the publication year 1749. This is incorrect. In the dedication to the king, Nimb mentions the fact that the sermon is published very late, due to his «weary and exhausted mind» and his busy office. The sermon was reviewed in *Kjøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om lærde og curieuse Sager* on 28 January 1751, where the reviewer mentioned that it «has recently been printed». I have therefore set the publication year as 1751. although it might also have been published in the final months of 1750. In any case, Nimb had had good time to read Langebek's sermon, which he described as the «eloquent jubilee speech that has been delivered in memory of his king.» Nimb 1751: 130-132.

<sup>1346</sup> Heiberg 1749: 61-63.

<sup>1347</sup> Heiberg 1749: 64.

<sup>1348</sup> Lausten 1991: 37, 44.

for instance, stated that the effect of Christian's establishment of the university was that «people were taught and guided to know and judge between right and wrong, between true and false in all things, but particularly those things that had to do with religion and Christianity, yes to be brought to more easily recognize the papist delusions.»<sup>1349</sup>

The historical causality was, furthermore, often perceived as indirect and a product of divine providence rather than direct and rooted in human intentions. Heiberg compared the role of Christian I with that of David: «With the erection of this tabernacle, this royal ancestor anticipated, in the same manner as David, the true erection of the temple in its time.»<sup>1350</sup> This alludes to 2 Samuel 7, where David wishes to erect a permanent temple for the Lord to replace the tabernacle, and God tells him that this task shall fall to one of his successors.<sup>1351</sup> The task was realised by David's son and successor Solomon (2 Chronicles 3). In Heiberg's text, the parallel is clear: «Here in this university, his son Friderich 1., as our Danish Solomon, found a chamber of materials where he and his successors could find appropriate means and tools for the construction of the Church.»<sup>1352</sup> Even though Christian I was not necessarily aware of it at the time, the founding of the university thus fulfilled an important function in the divine plan. Otho Holmboe drew the same parallel between David and Christian, using a different passage from the Bible:

(...) in the same manner as when David in his time started collecting gold, silver and iron that came to use in the temple that was built after his time, 2 Sam 8,11, the founding of this academy led to the collection of knowledge, wisdom and insight in God's word, that later came to good use when God's temple, the Christian church was to be built in these kingdoms and put in a clean and evangelical condition by the blessed Reformation.<sup>1353</sup>

The university was to play an important role after the Reformation, but the continuity with the original institution founded by Christian I in 1479 is rather weak. Available sources indicate that the

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<sup>1349</sup> «[...]hvorved Mennersker her bleve lærte og ledte til at kiende og dømme mellem ret og uret, mellem sandt og falskt som i andre Ting saa og i sær i de Ting, der angik Religion og Christendom, ja derved bringes til lettere at indsee de Papistiske Vildfarelser;» Johannes Schive, *Jubel=Prædikenen holden i Tostrup og Uggerløse Kirker i Mierløse Herred d 28 oct: 1749*, [17].

<sup>1350</sup> Heiberg 1749: 64.

<sup>1351</sup> «And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.» (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

<sup>1352</sup> Heiberg 1749: 64-65.

<sup>1353</sup> «[...] ligesom David i sin Tiid begyndte at sanke et og andet af Guld, Sølv, Kobber og Jern, som kom til Templets Tieneste, som blev bygt efter hans Tiid, 2 Sam: 8,11 saa blev ogsaa ved dette Academiets Stiftelse samlet een og anden Lærdom, Viisdom og Indsigt i Guds Ord, som siden herligen kom til Nytte, da Guds Tempel, den Christne Kirke, her i Landene ret skulle bygges, og sættes i en reen og Evangelisk Tilstand ved det salige Reformations Værk.» Holmboe 1749: 40; See also Treschow 1749: 57; Sillemann 1750: 29; Nannestad 1749a: 48; Storm 1749: 16.

university was not a particularly important institution in late medieval Danish society.<sup>1354</sup> Christian II attempted to revitalize the university in the 1520s by a series of reforms, and in the same decade humanism gained entry into Denmark, but by 1531 the university had ceased to exist.<sup>1355</sup> This does not mean that Jakob Langebek and the clergy were completely wrong, however, when they claimed that the university was part of the historical process that led towards the Reformation. Many of those that later became reformers had studied in the university's first period, under teachers such as the humanist and Catholic reformer Poul Helgesen.<sup>1356</sup>

What is important here, however, is not really to establish whether the eighteenth century commentators were right or wrong in their claims about the Catholic monarchs. The question is rather what their historical accounts reveal about the difficulties of navigating the tides of history when ideological and confessional imperatives plotted the coordinates in advance. In 1749, the clergymen had to handle three hundred years of history, which, in addition to many victories, included defeats, mistakes and lost causes. Included in this time span were historical ruptures (notably the Reformation and the introduction of absolutism) that divided the past in a negative «before» and a positive «after». These competing master narratives created challenges for panegyrists. In this context, the search for «proto-Protestantism» in the histories of Christian I and John was a way of salvaging these Catholic monarchs and including them in the pantheon of good Oldenburg kings.

## Concluding remarks

The dynastic tercentenary in 1749 represents yet another novel development in the history of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway. All earlier centennial commemorations in Denmark had either been celebrated in memory of the Protestant Reformation in general (1617, 1717, 1730), or the Danish Reformation in particular (1736). With the jubilee in 1749 the kingdoms commemorated a political event in the history of the kingdoms: the coronation of the first Oldenburg monarch in 1449. To modern eyes, the centennial celebration of a Danish royal coronation resembles an intensified political instrumentalization of what had originally been a form of religious commemoration, the centenaries in memory of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. The concept of a secular or worldly political event is anachronistic, however, and

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<sup>1354</sup> Lausten 1991: 64.

<sup>1355</sup> Lausten 1991: 66-76.

<sup>1356</sup> Lausten 1991: 77.

would certainly have been quite alien to the Lutheran clergymen in the kingdoms. They saw the clear signs of divine providence at work in the life of the first Oldenburg king and spoke of the Danish estates' election of Christian in 1448 as if it was a Danish re-enactment of God's election of David through the prophet Samuel. Besides, the semi-sacral nature attributed to the monarch in Denmark-Norway, as well as their role as the protectors of the Lutheran church meant that events in the history of the monarchy were just as worthy of public thanksgiving in the churches as the Protestant Reformation. Contemporaries could therefore see continuity where we are more inclined to see innovation.

This does not mean, however, that we are not justified to speak of a political instrumentalization of the centenary. The dynastic tercentenary was preceded by a discussion of how the complications and contentions of a late medieval royal accession could be transformed into a narrative that was appropriate for a modern absolute monarchy. The two historians Gram and Langebek reached different conclusions, but their respective arguments show that they both agreed on the need to highlight the aspects of Christian's accession to the throne that were the most compatible with the way a royal succession took place under the absolute monarchy. This involved downplaying the fact that Christian I was an elected monarch with limited powers, as well as ignoring the Norwegian estates' resistance against Christian's election.

Although the date that was eventually selected for the celebration of the jubilee, 28 October 1749, marked the tercentenary of the coronation of Christian I as king of Denmark (and, ostensibly, Norway) the memory of this event was not the sole or even the primary object of commemoration. The tercentenary rather marked the beginning of the glorious era of the Oldenburg dynasty that had lasted for 300 years. The jubilee saw a massive veneration of the twelve kings of the royal dynasty, who were represented and reproduced on medals and illuminations, in sermons and in poems. The most powerful and lasting tribute to the virtues of the twelve kings, if it had been completed, was the impressive Frederik's church, the plans for which was presented to the public on the third day of the jubilee. The main propositions that was communicated to the subjects during the tercentenary can be summed up as follows: before the Oldenburg dynasty acceded to the Danish throne, the kingdoms had lacked male heirs for a long period and had consequently been in a state of confusion. Since the golden year 1449, however, the kingdoms had had always had good, virtuous and pious monarchs. Thanks to their strong faith and their protection of God's true church, the Lord had protected them against serious threats and dangers in the course of history. Because of the Oldenburg kings' constancy and fidelity, God had crowned their reigns with success and allowed each son to sit on his

fathers throne in an unbroken line [sic] for 300 years. For the last 100 years, the kingdoms had been truly blessed after the Lord had given the Oldenburg monarchs absolute power. In the last thirty years, the kingdoms had become even more blessed with a long and beneficial peace in the midst of a continent embroiled in deadly and destructive wars. Finally, the kingdoms had reached a temporary peak of perfection under the present monarch, the mild, pious, peaceful and just Frederick V.

Not all historical events and persons fit unproblematically and seamlessly into the postulated 300 years of Oldenburg perfection. A controversial king like Christian II, who had fled the kingdoms, was deposed and eventually died in captivity, could not simply be described as a good and virtuous king. With him, the allegedly unbroken line of Oldenburg kings had in fact been broken, as he was succeeded by his uncle Frederick I. The first two Oldenburg monarchs were Catholics, a factor that fit uneasily with a Protestant interpretation of history according to which the entire Middle Ages were defined as a Babylonian captivity and a period of spiritual darkness. In long periods of Danish history, moreover, the kings had shared power with the noble Council of the Realm. Finally, the kingdom of Norway had had a partially independent political history under the union of Kalmar: in the reign of the first Oldenburg king, this independence had been manifested in a pro-Swedish party among the Norwegian estates. Such aspects of the history of the kingdoms demanded a degree of ingenious selection and discreet concealment in order to make the master narrative of the tercentenary come together as a convincing story.

In this chapter, I have focused in particular on two aspects of the dynasty's history that represented challenges in the context of public commemoration: the history of Christian II and of the Catholic Oldenburg kings. I have shown how clergymen and other public speakers found subtle ways of speaking and writing of these histories that aimed to realign them with the imperatives of dynasty (in the case of Christian II) and confession (Christian I and John). The history of Christian II had already been subject to careful revision by Danish historians in the eighteenth century, and was no longer described as the tyrant from Arild Huitfeldt's chronicles or the monster from Voltaire's *Histoire de Charles XII, roi de Suède*. In Holberg's *Dannemarks Riges Historie* in particular, condemnation had been replaced by a moderate reappraisal and an attempt to understand and explain the most controversial aspects of the reign in light of the conditions of the times. Christian II was still, however, the darkest figure in the Oldenburg dynasty, and the lingering associations with blood, rebellion and division is reflected in the ways he was represented in sermons, speeches and illuminations from the tercentenary. He was apparently the only king that one could not merely *praise* unconditionally, but who had to be *excused* or *rehabilitated*. In the case of the Catholic Oldenburg

monarchs, the challenge was clearly less pressing. The fact that many still *did* try to include the kings in a Protestant reading of the past, however, indicate that this chronological dilemma was not a mere trifle. Not only the Lutheran clergy, but also the historian Jacob Langebek constructed elaborate arguments to make it appear as if Christian I had been ahead of his times in religious matters and prepared the way for the Protestant Reformation, either deliberately and consciously, or unconsciously through the workings of divine providence.

The celebration of the dynastic tercentenary in 1749 was also coloured by more recent events at home and abroad. Although it is challenging to reconstruct the preoccupations of people that lived more than 350 years ago, there are still enough references to contemporary events in the existing sources to allow us to say something about what concerned people in Denmark-Norway in 1749. As it happens, the absolute monarchy had the fortune of good timing. One of the central propositions of the centenary, that the fertility of the Oldenburg dynasty had secured the succession and hence the political stability in the kingdoms for 300 years, was assisted by propitious circumstances in the kingdoms at the time of the jubilee. The birth of a crown prince in the first month of the year promised the continuation of the agnatic succession in the House of Oldenburg, while the public announcement of a new royal pregnancy just a few weeks before the centenary was further proof of the blessed fertility of the royal dynasty. The contrast was great to recent events in Europe. Only the year before the jubilee, the War of the Austrian Succession had come to an end. Although the war had more complex causes than the disputed succession in the Habsburg dynasty, its dynastic component did serve as a dramatic reminder of the evils that followed the lack of a male heir. The fact that the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, in contrast to the neighbour Sweden, had stayed out of the war was also something that must have been received with gratitude in the population. For the first time in a long time, a generation had grown up and reached maturity without experiencing war at home. As we have seen, the long peace made itself felt during the tercentenary, with praise being lavished on the peaceful monarch Frederick V and his peace-loving father.

## Chapter 7: Defending a royal revolution: the centenary of the introduction of absolutism in 1760

On the first of October 1760, the Swiss scholar Elie-Salomon-Francois Reverdil started in his new position as personal tutor to the 11-year old Danish crown prince Christian. In his memoirs about the years he had spent at the Danish court, Reverdil later remembered the first task he was given as a fresh teacher. His arrival at the court coincided with the celebration of the centenary of the introduction of absolutism. Without considering that Reverdil was a foreigner and «the citizen of a free state», the nobleman Ditlev Reventlow, who had primary responsibility for the education of the crown prince, instructed the Swiss teacher to make this historical event the first topic on the curriculum. According to Reverdil himself, his task was to show the prince:

how his ancestors and himself had been liberated from the guardianship of a nobility that was unfit to rule; how the people had sought the civil liberty the nobility wanted to take from them, under the wings of the royal power, and that he was therefore obligated to protect them from all oppression, but that on the other hand, the nobility, which had lost its greatest privilege, the right to rule, should at least keep the rest of the goods that it originally had possessed.<sup>1357</sup>

To Reverdil's great surprise and consternation, his young pupil was unattentive and completely uninterested: «[...] neither his rights nor his duties, neither the historical events nor my general observations were sufficient to captivate him.»<sup>1358</sup> For Reverdil, this initial experience turned out to be representative of Christian's lack of the knowledge required of a future absolute monarch. He discerned a systematic negligence in the way Christian was treated by the noble government ministers and courtiers that surrounded him, who ceaselessly attempted to break down his abilities and withhold important information about the governance of the realm.<sup>1359</sup> As Christian VII's biographer points out, Reverdil perhaps demanded too much when he expected an 11-year old boy to attentively follow a lecture on history and political science. The Swiss teacher's critical observations of the

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<sup>1357</sup> «Det var min Opgave at vise ham, hvorledes hans Forfædre og han selv var bleven frigjorte for at staa under Formynderskab af en Adel, der ikke var egnet til at styre; hvorledes Folket havde søgt den borgerlige Frihed, Adelen hadde villet røve den, under Kongemagtens Vinger, og at han derfor var forpligtet til at skærme det mod al Undertrykkelse, men paa den anden Side burde Adelen, der ved denne Lejlighed havde mistet sin største Forret, den at regere, i det mindste beholde Resten af de Herligheder, som den oprindelig sat inde med». Reverdil 1916: 2.

<sup>1358</sup> «Men hverken hans Rettigheder eller hans Pligter, hverken de historiske Begivenheder eller mine almindelige Betragtninger formaade at fængsle ham.» Reverdil 1916: 2.

<sup>1359</sup> Reverdil 1916: 11.

young prince's lack of training for and interest in his future role was coloured, however, by his later experiences at the Danish court, when the king proved to be personally incapable of ruling because of mental problems.<sup>1360</sup>

Reverdil's anecdote takes us to the heart of a great paradox in Danish-Norwegian political history in the eighteenth century. On paper, the Danish kings were the most absolute monarchs in Europe. In the Royal Law of 1665, which has been described as Europe's only absolutist constitution and «the clearest and most concise expression of absolutist doctrine publicly available in Europe», the absolute monarch was defined as «the greatest and highest head here on earth, above all human laws, who does not know any head or judges above him in spiritual and worldly matters except God alone» (§2). In more concrete terms, this meant that the king had sole legislative powers (§3), the sole right to appoint and depose royal officials as he pleased (§4), the sole right to wage war, make treaties and impose new taxes and duties (§5) and the highest authority in the Danish church (§6).<sup>1361</sup>

In practice, however, the eighteenth century had seen a gradual weakening of royal power. The first three absolute monarchs had jealously guarded the prerogatives of the Crown. Frederick III's son and grandson, Christian V and Frederick IV, had written political testaments in which they advised their successors on how to defend and secure the monarch's control over the courts, the royal bureaucracy and the military. These texts reveal the monarchs' increasing awareness of the threat represented by what Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen has described as «the structural problem of the absolute monarchy», namely the conflict between royal autocracy and bureaucratic rule.<sup>1362</sup> The kings had absolute power, but were dependent on their administration to carry out their will. For practical reasons, the increasing amount of government business had to be delegated to the bureaucracy. There was a risk, however, that the routinization and delegation of power would lead to a permanent loss of royal control over the state. Christian V worried that the old Danish nobility would gain control of the central administration, and therefore advised his successor that he should replace the permanent government colleges with ad hoc commissions with limited mandates. Frederick IV, on his part, advised his crown prince Christian against using the old nobility in the highest government offices as well as the top army posts.<sup>1363</sup>

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<sup>1360</sup> Langen 2008: 84, 90.

<sup>1361</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1996b: 317; Munck 2005: 365.

<sup>1362</sup> «[Frygten for] embedsmandsvældet havde hold i virkeligheden, og man kan med rette betegne konflikten mellem kongelig autokrati og embedsmandsvælde som enevældens strukturproblem.» Olden-Jørgensen 1993: 315.

<sup>1363</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1996b.



In the reign of Frederick V, control of the state slipped almost completely out of the hands of the monarch. The king was personally uninterested in ruling his kingdoms, and also grew increasingly incapable to do so due to his poor health and alcoholism. Instead, he left the reins of state to the Marshall of the Court, Adam Gottlob Moltke, as well as a small group of German noblemen with seats in the Privy Council. The personal influence of the king over his government would become even more reduced in the reign of Christian VII, who was unable to rule due to mental illness. Commenting on king Frederick's reliance on Moltke, the Danish historian Harald Jørgensen describes the political role of the monarch in the mid-eighteenth century as a «fiction»:

On the surface, the fiction of the king as the centre of the twin kingdoms and the true executive of the government was maintained, but the all-embracing burden of government that the Royal Law had placed in the hands of the king was, in Frederick V's reign from 1746-66, not carried by the majesty but by his advisors.<sup>1364</sup>

In this final chapter, I shall analyse the last jubilee celebrated in the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century: the centenary of the introduction of absolutism in 1660. As will become apparent, the increasingly limited personal power of the absolute monarch was never a public issue during the jubilee. For the vast majority of the population, Frederick V was portrayed as an almost almighty figure that singlehandedly upheld justice, protected the kingdoms and ensured the welfare of his subjects. The centenary was a major public manifestation of the fiction of the king as the centre of political power. The centenary was conceived, moreover, as an opportunity for the regime and its apologists to convince the subjects of the perfection of the Danish system of government: Danes and Norwegians were «a happy people» that enjoyed «civil liberty under a hereditary and fatherly absolute government.»<sup>1365</sup> It was, last but not the least, an opportunity to convince the subjects of the absolute necessity and the perfect legitimacy of the change in the form of government that had taken place a hundred years before.

In the wake of the royal revolution in 1660/1661 the absolute monarchy used art, rituals and ceremonies and print media to glorify the absolute monarchs, broadcast its own view of the introduction of absolutism and its beneficial consequences for the kingdoms.<sup>1366</sup> Before analysing the centenary in 1760, we shall therefore first take a look at the events that led to the introduction of

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<sup>1364</sup> «Udadtil opretholdtes fiktionen om kongen som tvillingrigernes midtpunkt og regeringsmagtens sande udøver, men den alt omfattende regeringsbyrde, som kongeloven havde lagt i den regerende konges hånd, blev i Frederik V.s regeringstid fra 1746-66 ikke båret af majestæten, men af hans rådgivere.» Jørgensen 1985: 17.

<sup>1365</sup> Arentz 1760; [Pontoppidan] 1760a; Pontoppidan 1760b.

<sup>1366</sup> See Johannsen 2010; Johannsen 2011; Johannsen 2013.

absolutism, and then discuss the subsequent development of an official mythology about these events.

### **The introduction of absolutism in Denmark-Norway**

The introduction of absolutism took place in the direct aftermath of the Second Charles Gustavus War (1658-1660). After peace had been brokered with the Swedes in 1660, the government faced the formidable challenge of mustering the necessary resources to pay the war debt. State finances were in a terrible state, parts of the country were ruined and others had been lost during the war, and large contingents of soldiers had to be paid their wages. King Frederick III and the Council of the Realm therefore summoned the estates to a meeting in Copenhagen in September, the purpose of which was to agree on how to raise the necessary funds. The discussion at the meeting revolved around the introduction of new taxes on consumption. There soon arose a conflict between the nobility, who were reluctant to give up their old tax privileges, and the lower estates, who refused to bear the whole tax burden alone. The nobility gave in on many points, accepting larger parts of the burden while not giving away any of their privileges, but eventually the negotiations reached an impasse.

At this point, a group of conspirators from the lower estates convened a late night meeting in bishop Hans Svane's house on one of the first days of October, where they agreed to offer Frederick III and his successors hereditary right to the kingdom, in return for his confirmation of their privileges. The offer was cast as a gesture of appreciation for the king's steadfastness and bravery during the siege of Copenhagen in the war against the Swedes. The end of the elective monarchy would mean the concomitant end of the political power of the noble Council of the Realm. Previously, this body had shared sovereignty with the king: when a king died, the Council had the task of electing a new monarch. Although in the last centuries they had always chosen the eldest son of the late king, their right of election gave them a strong bargaining position. The king-in-waiting had to sign a charter, a constitutional document in which the king stated the terms of rule for the new reign and made promises to the Council. Crown prince Christian, the eldest son of Christian IV, had died in 1647. This left the succession uncertain when the old king died the following year without having secured the election of his second son Frederick. In order to be elected, Frederick was therefore forced to sign the most restrictive charter in Danish history. If the king was given hereditary right, however, all of these restrictions would become annulled. For the lower estates, the

motivation for making this move was to reduce the power of the nobility, in the hope that the king would reward them when his hands were no longer tied.

The sources does not allow a precise reconstruction of the extent of the king's complicity in these discussions, but we know that one of his closest advisors, Christoffer Gabel, was present at the secret meeting of the lower estates, and kept the king informed about the plans. According to Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen, there can be no doubt that there was a well-organized conspiracy between the court and the lower estates.<sup>1367</sup> On 8 October, the lower estates delivered the proposal to the nobleman Joachim Gersdorff, asking the nobles to join them in signing the offer to the king. Since the reluctant nobles hesitated to give their reply, delegates from the lower estates returned on 10 October, walking in a solemn procession to the Council's chambers in the castle where they demanded an answer. The Council of the Realm told them that they could not sign the offer, as the Estates General did not have a mandate to make constitutional changes. The lower estates did not accept the answer, and made the offer directly to the king himself. The situation now began to resemble a coup, as Frederick III ordered the closing of the city gates and set the burgher militia and the city's military garrison in a state of preparation. Urgent letters were also sent to military commanders around the country, who were told to be alert and prepared for domestic disquiet and foreign attacks. The orders were motivated by «die sich erhebende Chngement d'Estat.»<sup>1368</sup>

After three days, on 13 October, the nobility finally gave in under the mounting pressure and agreed to offer Frederick III and his successors hereditary right to the throne. The deputies of the three estates acclaimed the king as hereditary king of Denmark. The king then summoned representatives of the estates to a meeting to discuss the constitutional questions that arose as the king's charter was now in need of revision. The committee, which was dominated by royalist sympathizers and clients of the king, ended up recommending the annulment of the charter and that constitutional questions be left to the king to decide.<sup>1369</sup> On 16 October 1660, the committee together with the Council of the Realm signed a declaration that formally rendered the charter null and void. On the next day, the nobleman Peder Reedtz, acting on behalf of the Council of the Realm, handed over the charter to the king in a formal ceremony at the castle. On 18 October, the subjects swore an oath to the king and the royal family in a public homage ceremony on the square outside of Copenhagen castle. After a solemn procession, the king and the royal family was seated

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<sup>1367</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1996a: 20.

<sup>1368</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 93.

<sup>1369</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2010: 50.

upon a «*theatrum*» or tribune and received an oath of fidelity from chosen representatives of all the estates.

At this stage, there must have been some uncertainty about the consequences of the fundamental constitutional change that had been made. The kings of the Oldenburg dynasty had been given hereditary right to the Danish Crown. This did not mean, however, that absolute monarchy had been formally introduced, although it certainly involved future rearrangements of the form of government. The initiative lay in the hands of Frederick III, who simply promised the estates that he would inform them of changes in the form of government at a later date. In his analysis of occasional poetry from around the time of the homage ceremony on 18 October 1660, Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen has shown that there was an early awareness in some quarters that the transfer from elective to hereditary monarchy was the first step on the road to absolute monarchy. He points out a significant differentiation in the messages of the poems based on the language in which they were couched. Those poems that were written in Danish and German merely emphasized the emotional aspects of the events and praised the king's great merits. In Latin poems, however, «the absolutist perspectives were [...] not hidden, indeed it is often candidly stated, with the most non-misunderstandable political terms borrowed from Roman law and ancient history, that Frederick III is now an absolute monarch.»<sup>1370</sup> Olden-Jørgensen's study clearly shows that absolutism could not have come as a surprise for the political and cultural elites. He has elsewhere shown that the king and his German advisors nourished wide-ranging plans of introducing the absolute monarchy as early as October 1660.<sup>1371</sup>

Royal absolutism was formally introduced with the Sovereignty Act of 10 January 1661, an official document that unequivocally declared that the estates had granted absolute power to Frederick III in appreciation of his bravery and care for his subjects during the war. The document was phrased as a contract or a «letter of commitment»<sup>1372</sup>, in which the subjects placed all power in the hands of the king and swore to protect and uphold the absolute monarchy. The act itself had been prepared by the king and his advisors in secret and the estates were required to sign it and thus give up their old political rights in a situation that did not give any room for dissension or misgivings. Representatives of the Norwegian estates signed the document later, in August of 1661, as part of

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<sup>1370</sup> «I den latinske digtning dulgetes arvehyldningens absolutistiske perspektiver derimod ikke, ja ofte siges det ligeud med de mest umisforståelige politiske fagudtryk lånt fra romerretten og den antikke historie, at Frederik III nu er enevældig.» Olden-Jørgensen 1996a: 107.

<sup>1371</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1993.

<sup>1372</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1993: 299.

their acclamation of the now hereditary king Frederick III. The Norwegian subjects had not been involved at all in the decisions made at the Estates General in 1660, and were not even informed before after the acclamation ceremony that they were expected to conform the king's new status as an absolute monarch by signing the Sovereignty Act.<sup>1373</sup>

The kingdoms of Denmark and Norway had now officially become an absolute monarchy, and would remain so for another 187 and 153 years, respectively. The Council of the Realm was permanently abolished, which meant that the Danish high nobility lost its wide-ranging political powers. The central administration was reorganized into a collegial system and increasingly staffed with men from the lower estates. The nobility lost their monopoly on the lucrative posts as regional governors and were replaced by royally appointed governors who received fixed wages from the Crown. A decade after the introduction of absolutism, moreover, Frederick III's son and successor created new noble titles and constructed a system of rank that replaced the status associated with the old noble privileges. Rather than noble birth, the system was based on royal service and opened the door for men of burgher background to rise to the most prestigious positions. The estates would never again be summoned to discuss political matters. In short, the introduction of absolutism constituted nothing less than a political revolution.

### **The making of an official tradition: the introduction of absolutism in cultural memory**

Revolutions are often accompanied by the making of myths: idealized narratives that explains why the revolution had to take place and how it happened. Almost immediately after Frederick III was offered hereditary right to the throne, the royal government started disseminating myths about how and why the events of October 1660 had taken place. The officially sanctioned narratives about the political events of 1660 purported to say something about the nature of the absolute monarchy and why its introduction had been both necessary and justified. The myths also proved to have a long life: as we shall see, their frequent appearance during the centenary in 1760 indicate their longevity and power in Danish-Norwegian cultural memory. Before we move on to the analysis of how the introduction of absolutism was discussed in sermons and other texts during the centenary, we shall consider the genesis and propagation of these myths in the decades following 1660.

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<sup>1373</sup> Rian 2014a: 109; Nakken 2000: 12.

Historian C.O. Bøggild-Andersen referred to the myths collectively as an «official tradition», the genesis of which he identified at a very early moment in the history of the introduction of absolutism. Almost immediately after the homage ceremony on 18 October, king Frederick III himself tried to «establish a certain view of what had happened as the only correct and authentic one.»<sup>1374</sup> On 27 October, the University and court printer Morsing's widow published a semi-official newsletter of what had taken place at the Estates General, with the title *Relation auß Kopenhagen*.<sup>1375</sup> The text, which was intended both for an international and domestic readership, expressed a version of the events that was painstakingly crafted to serve the interests of Frederick III. According to the *Relation*, the estates had gathered to consider how they could alleviate the troubles of the kingdom. After some deliberation, and after considering the great bravery the king had shown during the war, the estates reached the unanimous conclusion that the best solution was to offer hereditary right to the king. If the king ruled alone over the kingdoms, he would be better able to protect his subjects and promote the welfare of all the estates. Seeing that this was the work of God, the king had gracefully accepted the offer.<sup>1376</sup>

As Bøggild-Andersen points out, the *Relation* makes a somewhat spurious statement about the causality behind the events that had taken place at the Estates General, namely that the estates had unanimously offered hereditary right to the king since they considered this to be the best way to promote the good of the country and the welfare of the estates. The text did not say anything about any external influence or pressure on the estates.<sup>1377</sup> There was, in other words, neither mention of the king's influence on and participation in the process, nor the military pressure exerted on the nobility. A similarly harmonious version of the events was also distributed to various foreign courts in a Latin notification from 18 October 1660.<sup>1378</sup>

The official version was later canonized in the official acts and documents that constituted the formal legal foundation of the absolute monarchy. The Sovereignty Act of 10 January 1661 stated that the estates had decided to give their brave and self-sacrificing king hereditary right to and absolute power («alle jura majestatis, absolut regering och alle regalia») over the kingdoms, «without

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<sup>1374</sup> «Allerede fra første færd søgte den ny regeringsmagts ihændeher kong Frederik III. at fastslaa en bestemt opfattelse af det skete som den eneste rigtige og autentiske.» Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 186.

<sup>1375</sup> Bøggild-Andersen refers to the Danish version published by the University printer Henrik Claussen. Olden-Jørgensen points out that the German version was published first, on 27 October, while the Danish version was published sometime in November, after Claussen had married Morsing's widow. The Danish version is probably a translation of the German version. Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 186; Olden-Jørgensen 1993: 308.

<sup>1376</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 186-187; The first part of the *Relation* is printed in Olden-Jørgensen 1996a: 27-28.

<sup>1377</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 188.

<sup>1378</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 188.

pressure and without any instigation, solicitation or request from His Royal Majesty, of [our] own free will and good consideration[...].<sup>1379</sup> The motivation for doing so was allegedly the selfless bravery that Frederick III had demonstrated during the war against the Swedes. This account thus repeated the earlier claim that the estates had given the king hereditary right unanimously and voluntarily, and added the positive assertion that the king had not had anything at all to do with the matter. The narrative also made a significant contraction and simplification of the events that had taken place in the last few months. For while the estates had certainly ended up offering hereditary right to the monarch in October 1660, they had not explicitly made him an absolute monarch. The introduction of absolutism was indeed an indirect outcome of the transfer from elective to hereditary monarchy, but not the only possible one. Royal absolutism was in fact only officially introduced with the Sovereignty Act itself. In the words of Øystein Rian, the regime used its «powers of definition» to make hereditary monarchy synonymous with absolute monarchy: «In the Sovereignty Act, heredity and absolutism was forged together in the regime's historical account: the people had conferred them simultaneously to the king.»<sup>1380</sup>

Already at the inception of the absolute monarchy, then, an official version about the Estates General and its consequences had begun to emerge. The official narrative stressed two components: the allegedly unanimous and voluntary action of all the estates, including the nobility, and the king's total passivity in bringing about the change of government. As we have seen, neither of them were entirely correct. The nobility had been reluctant and would almost certainly not have agreed with the constitutional change had it not been for their weak position and the threat of violence. The king had indeed stayed in the background, but the court had been complicit in the whole affair. Bøggild-Andersen suggests that the regime stressed this version of events in order to buttress the legality of the new form of government against external and internal enemies. Since the nobility had voluntarily transferred all power to the king without force or incitement, «opposition against the new order therefore lacked any justification and foundation».<sup>1381</sup>

The official tradition was reiterated and reinforced in the Royal Law of 1665. In its preface, the voluntary nature of the transfer of power in 1660 was once again underlined, in a phrase strongly reminiscent of the Sovereignty Act. The text stated that all of the estates had ceded their right of

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<sup>1379</sup> «[...]w-twungen och vden nogen hans kongel. mayt̃z tilskyndelsze, anmoedning eller begiering, aff egen frie villie och goede betenchede[...]». Mykland 1980: 96.

<sup>1380</sup> «I suverenitetsakten ble arven og eneveldet smeltet sammen i regimets historikk: Folket hadde overdratt dem under ett til kongen.» Rian 2014a: 447.

<sup>1381</sup> «En opposition mod den ny ordning savnede derfor ganske berettigelse og grundlag.» Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 191.

election, rendered the charter null and void and given the king and his successors absolute power and sovereignty, «without pressure and without any incitement, solicitation or request from Us, of their own free will and after mature deliberation.»<sup>1382</sup> The text, moreover, added yet another novel element to the story that became an important part of the official tradition. The subjects' emotional motivation for making the king an absolute monarch was replaced by a new factor, namely divine intervention. The preface was introduced by the claim that the whole sequence of events, from Denmark's survival in the war against the Swedes to the introduction of absolutism, had been a work of divine providence. Not only had God saved the king and his kingdoms from destruction and demise, he had also «moved» («bevæget») the estates to surrender their old rights to the king.

According to historian Knud Fabricius, the Royal Law's account of God's intervention in 1660 was merely «an image—or if you like, an aesthetical flower.» Divine providence was presented only as a mediate force that had worked through the estates. The Royal Law, claimed Fabricius, therefore represented the victory of natural law as the fundament for the state, as opposed to a more theocratical conception of the legitimacy of royal power.<sup>1383</sup> Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen gives the religious explanation a more substantial role in his own interpretation of the Royal Law. He sees the text as a synthesis of the Sovereignty Act's natural law-based temporal reasoning, on the one hand, and more traditional religious conceptions of the king as the Lord's anointed and God's deputy, on the other. The latter strain of thought was becoming increasingly influential at the time the Royal Law was written, not least due to professor Johan Wandal's lectures at the University in the 1660s. In his published work *De Jure Regii libri VI* (1663-1672), Wandal emphatically argued that the king derived his power directly from God. Although the professor humbly cast his work as a demonstration of how natural law-based absolute monarchy harmonized with Scripture and Lutheran doctrine, writes Olden-Jørgensen, it should in fact be interpreted as an attempt at create an official doctrine of state that would make the clergy the «obvious producers of ideology» for the new regime. In this context, the religious explanation of the events of 1660 in the Royal Law is more than a decorative embellishment: it reflects a conscious attempt to meld theocratical arguments with arguments derived from natural law. In this way, argues Olden-Jørgensen, the author of the Royal

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<sup>1382</sup> «[...]utvungen og uden nogen Voris tillskyndelse, anmoding eller begiering aff eygen frii Villie og fuldberaad Huu[...]». Tamm & Jørgensen 2012: 152.

<sup>1383</sup> «Guds indgriben i Schumachers Indledning til Kongeloven [...] er et Billede, –eller om man hellere vil, en æstetisk Blomst.» Fabricius 1920: 309.



Law, Peder Schumacher, took into account the need for a stronger emphasis of the religious explanation without weakening the natural law foundation of the introduction of absolutism.<sup>1384</sup>

The Royal Law was not published until 1709. Before then, it was safely deposited in a silver case at Rosenborg castle and only taken out to be read aloud during anointment ceremonies, the first of which took place in 1671. The ceremonies took place at Frederiksborg castle in front a small and select group of courtiers and officials. One part of the text, the so-called constitutional part («forfatningsdelen») or first 7 paragraphs were incorporated into the first book of Christian V's Danish and Norwegian Law (1683/1687) and thus made public, but the preface and the rest of the law dealing with the hereditary succession remained a secret.<sup>1385</sup> Until its publication, in other words, it could hardly have had a strong impact on the public remembrance of the events of 1660. The beautiful and expensive folio-edition from 1709 was, however, printed in limited numbers and distributed to the royal family, family members in other European royal houses and a relatively small group of royal ministers, ambassadors, bishops, university professors and other high-ranking officials.<sup>1386</sup> The exclusivity of its first edition gave rise to a number of handwritten copies of the Royal Law in the following years, which would also have contributed to a moderate spread of the text.<sup>1387</sup> The text was eventually published by the royal archivar Frederik Rostgaard in a popular edition in 1722.<sup>1388</sup> By far the most important reproduction of the Royal Law in terms of public availability was its inclusion in Ludvig Holberg's *Description of Denmark and Norway* (1729, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1749) and in abbreviated form in the third volume of his *History of the Kingdom of Denmark* (1735). At the time of the centenary in 1760, the Royal Law was therefore widely available to the interested public.

The propagation of the official version about the events of 1660 was, however, not dependent on the public availability of the Royal Law. As Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen shows in his study of occasional poetry from the days and weeks following the Estates General in October 1660, court poets, royal clients, professors, students and others were eager to use their lyrical talents to please the regime. These poems reveal a «great attentiveness» to the official version of the Estates General as it had been described in the *Relation*.<sup>1389</sup> There were many shrewd, ambitious and loyal

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<sup>1384</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1999: 105-106.

<sup>1385</sup> Tamm 2012: 24.

<sup>1386</sup> Jørgensen 2012b: 257-264.

<sup>1387</sup> Jørgensen 2012a: 179-182.

<sup>1388</sup> According to Jesper Düring Jørgensen, however, the distribution of this cheap version might have been limited as it appears to be even more rare today than the folio-edition from 1709. Jørgensen 2012b: 267.

<sup>1389</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1996a: 107.

writers willing to publicize and propagate what they understood to be the politically correct interpretation of the events. Decades later, accounts of the introduction of absolutism also began to appear in national histories in the Danish language. For a complete consideration of the construction of myths about 1660, we must widen the scope and take a look at texts written by people from outside of government circles.

### Popular reading: Hiørring's *Leyers-Politie* and Holberg's histories

One of the earliest writers to publish a work describing the events of 1660 was the minister of the Vartov hospital and orphanage, Anders Matthiesen Hiørring (1609-78). Hiørring had experienced the siege of Copenhagen and the subsequent Estates General first hand and published two accounts in the early 1660s: *Leyrs-Krantz* (1660) and *Leyers-Politie* (1661). The former work was a description of the siege of Copenhagen from August 1658 to May 1660. According to Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen, *Leyrs-Krantz* became «the book about the siege» and was reprinted no less than ten times from 1677 to 1802. Olden-Jørgensen describes Hiørring as «both a man of the church and the king», and also stresses the civic patriotism of *Leyrs-Krantz*: Hiørring emphasized the endurance, solidarity, patriotism, charity and fear of God that had bound the king and the people of Copenhagen together against the enemy in the critical months of the siege.<sup>1390</sup>

*Leyrs-Krantz* became Hiørring's greatest commercial success, but it is his second book, *Leyers-Politie*, that shall concern us here. The book was probably published sometime in the first half of 1661, since the preface was signed on the second anniversary of the storm of Copenhagen, 11 February 1661. The first part of the work is an exegesis of biblical statements about the nature of good government, while the second part is a detailed account of what took place in Copenhagen from August 1658 to January 1661. As Bøggild-Andersen points out, Hiørring's interpretation is both contemporaneous with and almost identical to the official account in the Sovereignty Act, which had been made public only a month before.<sup>1391</sup> It is worthy of note that Hiørring clearly felt the need to discount potential arguments against the official version. As an eyewitness to the events that had taken place in Copenhagen in the autumn months of 1660, Hiørring must have been well aware that the whole process resembled a *coup d'état*. After describing the events themselves, Hiørring therefore discounted all potential objections against the legitimacy of the process. First, he denied

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<sup>1390</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 52.

<sup>1391</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 191.

that either the king or anyone else had planned anything in advance of the Estates General: the decision to offer Frederick III hereditary right to the throne had happened both unexpectedly and spontaneously, solely as a consequence of their gratitude and love for the king. The king had in fact not heard anything at all about the idea before the lower estates made the offer.<sup>1392</sup> Second, Hiørring claimed that the nobility had made the decision to hand over the charter and acclaim the king as hereditary monarch voluntarily and without being forced. Someone might misunderstand this and claim otherwise, wrote Hiørring, so in order to prove that it in fact had been a voluntary decision, he recounted the story as he knew it.<sup>1393</sup> He claimed that when the nobility had been presented with the lower estates' proposal, they had never said or done anything against it and, after a «good consideration» had agreed to it and offered the king hereditary right to the throne. The greatest problem for Hiørring, however, was to make a convincing argument as to why the city's gates were closed and the citizen militia placed on alert. He claimed that the closing of the city gates «did not happen to force anyone against their will», it had only been done as a security precaution. Since it was known that there were people with different intentions in the city, it was done to ensure that there would not be any room for partisanship or disagreement.<sup>1394</sup> As Bøggild-Andersen points out, Hiørring had been in the city in October 1660 and experienced the closing of the city first hand, so he must have known that the official claim that the nobility had made the decision voluntarily had to be taken with a grain of salt: «His explanation of this precaution does not appear convincing to his readers and can hardly have convinced himself.»<sup>1395</sup>

*Leyers-Politie* is one of the earliest published texts expressing a providential interpretation of the introduction of the absolute monarchy. Hiørring saw God's finger at work behind the whole affair, from the start of the Charles Gustavus War until the king was granted hereditary right: the

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<sup>1392</sup> «Effterdi da Geistlige/Bisper/ Proviser/Præster oc alle som høre til den Geistlige Stand/saa oc Borger oc alle udi den Borgerlige Stand aff Guds sønderlige Indskiudelse/tilforn icke betenckt/men siden fuldvel betenkt oc med vel beraad hu oc hierte haffver præresenteret/ offret oc giffven hans Maystet til Ære oc Tacknemmelighed/at hand haffde staaet med dem i Fare oc Farlighed/oc icke offvergivet oc opofret dem i Fiendens Mact og Eyedom/at hand aff dem/oc deris Efterkommere Evindeligh skulle kiendis/actis oc æris offver all Danmark at være en ret Arffve=Herre/som de med all Underdanighed vilde lyde oc tiene. Dette haffver aldrig nogen hørt at hans Mayestet skulle tænckt eller vidst det Ringiste aff/før end det hos Geistlige oc Borgerlige Stand var betænckt oc siden præsenderedt.» Hiørring 1661: m8r.

<sup>1393</sup> «Dette udi tide at remedere oc forrekomme/at icke Misforstand skal føde Dumdristighed at tale paa det mand intet vide eller forstaaer/ vil jeg alleene fortælle det jeg vide/ oc legge det under deris Censur som endnu leffver oc vide all Leyligheden.» Hiørring 1661: m6v.

<sup>1394</sup> «Men at Porten for Byen bleff i luct/skeede ey til den ende at nogen skulle tvingis imod sin Villie: Men efterdi dette begyntis som siuntis at haffve nogen viit Udseende oc mand vidste her vaare adskillige Gemytter oc Sinde kand mand vel giøre sig vide Tancker/og derfor bleff det eractet got oc Raadsomt at Porten bleff i luct oc Borgerne bleff i Gevehr som de oc vaare tilforn/paa det der skulle icke giffvis Aarsag og Rum til nogen Parthi oc Misforstandt.» Hiørring 1661: n1r.

<sup>1395</sup> «Hans forklaring af denne forholdsregel virker ikke overbevisende paa hans læsere og kan neppe have overbevist ham selv.» See note 592 in Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 191.

Swedish king had believed that he would be acclaimed king of Denmark before he was finished with Copenhagen but instead, God revealed his providence by using the Swedish «conceit and campaign» to elevate king Frederick III, who had faithfully trusted the Lord through all his adversity.<sup>1396</sup> As we shall see later on, the providential interpretation of the Swedish wars and the subsequent chain of events that culminated with the introduction of absolutism was ubiquitous among the clergy during the centenary in 1760. Hiørring was of course not the originator of the idea, but merely an early propagator of what must have been a standard interpretation of the events in 1660 among Danish and Norwegian clergymen.

As time went on, the introduction of absolutism also began to be treated by historians. The publication of historical writing about 1660 came later than one might expect, however. There had indeed been an early attempt to write an official history about the event: in 1661, Frederick III gave the historian and poet Vitus Bering the task of writing one work on the siege of Copenhagen (1658-1660), one history of the deeds of the king's forefathers, and one account of the «conditions of our royal and hereditary government».<sup>1397</sup> Out of these works, however, only the two former were ever published. The account of the siege was published posthumously in 1679, whilst Bering's Latin history of the Danish kings from king Dan to Cristopher of Bavaria, *Florus Danicus*, did not see the light of day until 1698.<sup>1398</sup>

As it turned out, the first historical account of the political events of 1660 published in Denmark-Norway was the historian Ludvig Holberg's first work, *Introduction Til de fornemste Europæiske Rigers Historier* (1711). Holberg would also describe the event in more detail 28 years later, in his *Dannemarks og Norges Beskrivelse* (1729) and, finally, in the third volume of his Danish history, *Dannemarks Riges Historie* (1735). In a recent article, Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen has identified a significant development in Holberg's accounts of the introduction of absolutism. Whereas the first two texts drew a rather simple, harmonious and one-dimensional picture of the events of 1660, completely in line with the official tradition, Holberg's final account was much more complex and realistically wrought. Olden-Jørgensen sees the tendency in the two earlier works as a consequence of Holberg's preoccupation with natural law. In his own work on natural law, *Introduction til Natur- og*

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<sup>1396</sup> «Nu siuntis Gud i Gierningen at svare oc aabenbare lade tilsuene/her var aff Gud forseet/her skulle skee en Hylding/som end denne Svenskens Indbildning oc Tog skulle giffve Aarsag/men den som siuntis slet at skulle været ude som et Lius/oc som tilforn annammede Hylding oc Crone effter all Fornufft qvit oc ledig/hand skulle aff Gud som hand hiertelig forlod sig paa i Modgangs Tid/Ziris oc Prydis: Oc det saa uformodentlig/som hans Mayestet tilforn aldrig haffde tænckt.» Hiørring 1661: m3r.

<sup>1397</sup> «[...] saa vel som af vores egen kongelige og denne vores Arveregerings Tilstand». Rørdam 1879: 53.

<sup>1398</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 1990: 55.

*Folkerettens Kundskab* (1716), Holberg discussed the character of government (book 2, chapter 7) and the ways in which governments are established (book 2, chapter 8).<sup>1399</sup> In this discussion, Holberg made a case for the fundamental legitimacy of absolute monarchical government. Absolute power was always legitimate, wrote Holberg, as long as the original decision to confer absolute power on the monarch was done voluntarily, in the form of a contract between ruler and people. Holberg also listed four legitimate reasons to introduce absolutism: good deeds («Velgierninger»), fear («Frygt»), advantage («Fordel») and distress («Nød»). As Olden-Jørgensen points out, Holberg's account of the introduction of absolutism that he had published 5 years before closely followed the «natural law recipe for the introduction of legitimate absolute monarchy».<sup>1400</sup> According to Holberg, the Danish estates had decided to confer absolute power on the king voluntarily, as a token of gratitude for the king's good deeds during the previous war and because they realized that it was necessary because of the poor state of the kingdoms:

In this war, the king had demonstrated an undescribable bravery and resolve/and had therefore won the hearts of his subjects to such a degree/ that they did not know what gratitude they could show him/ and/ as the kingdoms at the same time was in a great confusion/ that could not be remedied except through a change of government/ it was decided by the clergy and the burghers that they would restitute the sovereignty and hereditary right to his Majesty/ that had belonged to the old Danish kings/ a highly necessary work that was also agreed to by the nobility after serious consideration/ and therefore all the estates, after they had given thanks to his royal Majesty for the great care and effort he had had in defending the fatherland, conferred an absolute sovereignty and hereditary right/ which his Majesty accepted/ and assured all the estates of a mild and merciful government.<sup>1401</sup>

When Holberg returned to the topic in his *Dannemarks og Norges Beskrivelse* in 1729, his account of the introduction of absolutism was longer and more detailed, but essentially the same: the poor state of the kingdoms and appreciation of the king's great merits during the war led the estates to voluntarily offer hereditary right and absolute power to Frederick III. The more extensive and detailed text has

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<sup>1399</sup> As Olden-Jørgensen points out, the discussion was largely borrowed from Holberg's main source and inspiration, Samuel Pufendorf's *De jure naturae et gentium* (1672). Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 124.

<sup>1400</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 126.

<sup>1401</sup> «Udi denne Krig havde Konge ladet see en ubeskrivelig Tapperhed og Bestandighed/ og derved vundet sine Undersaatteres Hierter saa meget/ at de viste icke hvad Tacknemmelighed de ville lade see imod ham/ og/ som Rigerne paa samme Tid var udi stor Forvirelse/ som icke kunde remederes uden ved en Forandring udi Regjæringen/ blef der besluttet af Geistligheden og Borgerskabet at restituere Hans Majest. udi den *Souverainiteat*, og Arve-Rett/ som de gamle Danske Konger havde været udi/ hvilket høit fornøden Verck efter alvorlig Betenckning blef og saa approberet af Adelen/ og saaledis af samtlige Stender efter aflagde Tacksigelse til Hans Kongl. Mejest. for den store Omhyggelighed og Møye/ hand havde haft at forsvare Fæderne-Landet/ tilstillet et fuldkommelig *Souverainité* og Arve-Rett/ hvilket Hans Majest. antog/ og forsickrede samtlige Stender om en mild og naadig Regjæring.» Holberg 1711: 684-685.

made it possible for Olden-Jørgensen to identify Holberg's sources, and his findings are revealing. Apart from one original document, Holberg based his account on Hiørring's *Leyers-Politie* and Robert Molesworth's *An Account of Denmark as It was in the Year 1692*. Holberg often copied the two texts verbatim, but he consistently left out those part that did not fit with his overall interpretation. Whereas both of these authors told a story of class struggle, conspiracy and conflict, Holberg described a much more harmonious process. More specifically, he excluded Hiørring's references to the pressure exerted against the nobility and Molesworth's claim that Frederick III had promised the clergy and the burghers material rewards for their services at the Estates General. Again, writes Olden-Jørgensen, Holberg's theoretical conception of the legitimacy of absolute monarchy demanded that he suppress those aspects of the story that suggested that the contract between ruler and subjects had not been made voluntarily.<sup>1402</sup>

Six years later, Holberg dealt with the topic for the last time in the third volume of his *Dannemark Riges Historie*. According to Olden-Jørgensen, the presentation of the event in this work was a significant departure from Holberg's previous accounts: «Gone was the politically correct, natural law-based schoolbook example with a calm, rational and unanimous decision. Instead we get the dramatic history of class struggle, conspiracy and force, which we already know from Holberg's sources Hjørring and Molesworth.»<sup>1403</sup> Holberg's inclusion into his narrative of the political and military pressure on the Danish nobility created the new challenge of giving a convincing explanation of how absolutism had been legitimately introduced in 1660. According to Olden-Jørgensen, Holberg's solution to the problem was to explain away the fact that the nobility had been forced to agree with the change of government. He did this by claiming, rather spuriously, that only a small part of the nobility had been unwilling. One part of them were already on the king's side, while another had realized that the state of the kingdoms made it necessary to change the form of government. Only a minority of the nobles were squarely against it, but they were «balanced by the majority, so that their agreement, either it was willing or unwilling, is a real agreement.»<sup>1404</sup> In addition, Holberg claimed that it was not the king who had forced the nobles, but the «confused

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<sup>1402</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 128-134.

<sup>1403</sup> «Væk er det politisk korrekte naturretlige skolebogeeksempel med en rolig, rationel og samdrægtig beslutning. I stedet får vi den dramatiske historie om klassekamp, sammensværgelse og tvang, som vi allerede kender fra Holbergs kilder Hjørring og Molesworth.» Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 134.

<sup>1404</sup> «[...]ballanceres af de fleste, saa at deres Samtykke, enten det er villigt eller uvilligt, er et virkeligt Samtykke.» Holberg 1735:481-482: Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 136.

conditions in the kingdoms» and «the resolution of the other estates».<sup>1405</sup> With this rhetorical trick, writes Olden-Jørgensen, Holberg managed to maintain that the decision to confer absolute power and hereditary right on the king had been made voluntarily, without ignoring the factual information in his sources.<sup>1406</sup>

Even though Olden-Jørgensen is quite correct in describing the account in *Dannemarks Riges Historie* as a more complex narrative that was more open about the political conflicts in 1660 than in Holberg's earlier works, there are in fact more instances of rhetorical subterfuge in the text that contribute in constructing a more harmonious impression of the Estates General. A major point in Holberg's narrative is the king's passivity. As we have seen, this had been a key point in the official tradition since the very beginning, and Holberg followed it closely.<sup>1407</sup> He admitted that there was a party at court that worked to achieve a change in the form of government, chief among which were the queen, Field Marshall Schack and the king's favourites Hannibal Sehested and Christoffer Gabel, but he excluded Frederick III himself from this group. The king, according to Holberg, was one of the meekest rulers of his time.<sup>1408</sup> When he discussed the lower estates plans to offer the king hereditary right to the throne and absolute power, and the court's complicity in these plans, Holberg insisted that the king «remained passive, trusted everything to divine providence, kept quiet without involving himself in the slightest[...]».<sup>1409</sup> He raised the question whether it might not be possible that «a great politique lay hidden under the behaviour of this king», but he concluded negatively: everyone who knew the character of this king ascribed his passivity to his natural moderation and caution. For Holberg, the king's passivity had a direct impact on the legitimacy of his absolute power:

One can therefore say, that no other ruler has had a better claim to their to their [absolute] power than king Frederick, because instead of using force or intriguing for many years to achieve it, like others have done, the conditions of the times alone paved the way for the sovereignty.<sup>1410</sup>

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<sup>1405</sup> «[...] endskiønt man vil sige, at endel af Adelens Samtykke ikke var aldeles utvungen, saa maae man dog tilstaae, at det var ikke Kongen som tvang dem, men Rigets forvirrede Tilstand, som ved intet andet Middel kunde læges, og de andre Stænders Resolution, der i Henseende til deres Tall og Mængde, samt Meriter udi foregaende Krig, kunde regnes for Landets Styrke[...]». Holberg 1735:481; Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 136.

<sup>1406</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 137.

<sup>1407</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 304.

<sup>1408</sup> Holberg 1735: 436.

<sup>1409</sup> «Kongen derimod holdt sig gandske passivé, ladende allting komme an paa GUds Forsyn, blev stedse stille uden at bemænge sig med det ringeste [...]» Holberg 1735: 466.

<sup>1410</sup> «Man kand derfor sige, at ingen Potentat har haft bedre Adkomst til sin Souveraine Magt end Kong Friderik, thi istedenfor at andre enten ved Magt eller mange Aars Konst have bragt sig saadan til veie, saa banede her alleene Tidernes Conjunctioner Veien til dette Souverainitetet;» Holberg 1735: 467.

The litmus test of this alleged meekness was of course the question of whether the king himself had commanded that the city gates be closed and alerted the army and the citizen militia. Holberg evaded the matter completely by claiming that the lower estates, the soldiers and Field Marshall Schack were the instigators of this measure. Holberg mentioned the frightened reactions of the assembled nobility when they heard these news, but he quickly softened the appearance of a threat of violence by adding that the nobility «had no reason to fear any force or violence under such a pious and merciful king».<sup>1411</sup>

Holberg's insistence on the king's lack of direct involvement in the affair was one way of strengthening the legitimacy of the introduction of absolutism. The point of such more or less subtle rhetorical strategies was to make the estates' decision seem voluntary rather than forced. Another way of achieving the same thing is found in Holberg's reference to the Sovereignty Act. As previously mentioned, this Act was signed on 10 January 1661 and presented to the representatives of the Danish estates during the winter of 1661. The document was written without any prior negotiations between Frederick III and the estates about its wording or content, it was issued without any prior warning, and the representatives of the estates had to sign the document one by one.<sup>1412</sup> A contemporary witness and outsider, the imperial ambassador to Denmark, pointed out in a letter to his government that the document contained many expressions, such as «sovereignty» and «absolute», that had not been mentioned at all when the estates gave the king hereditary right in October 1660.<sup>1413</sup> The unilateral manner in which the document was presented to the estates could easily be construed as a challenge to the legitimacy of the introduction of absolutism. Holberg, however, evaded this problem by making it appear as if the Sovereignty Act had been signed by the representatives of the estates during the meeting in October.<sup>1414</sup> After having described how the nobility capitulated and agreed with the lower estates' proposal to change the form of government, Holberg wrote: «In this way, the sovereignty was agreed to by all estates, and immediately thereafter the so called [Sovereignty Act] was composed, which was first signed by all those who were present

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<sup>1411</sup> «I det øvrige havde de sig ingen Magt eller Violence at befrygte under en saa from og naadig Konge [...]». Holberg 1735: 474.

<sup>1412</sup> Rian 2014a: 107.

<sup>1413</sup> Fridericia 1894: 547; Tønnesen 2013: 20.

<sup>1414</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 303.



in Copenhagen, and later sent to those who were absent to be signed, in all the provinces of Denmark and Norway.»<sup>1415</sup>

Exactly like it had been presented in the Sovereignty Act itself, Holberg contracted a series of events that in reality had taken many months into a matter of days. This chronology was patently false, and Holberg must have known it, but the assertion served the purpose of making it appear as if the estates had agreed to the introduction of absolutism during the Estates General in October 1660.

### Visual representations of the introduction of absolutism

We have thus far seen how the introduction of absolutism was described in official documents and popular works of history. Another relevant question to consider is how the royal revolution in 1660 was portrayed in visual media. As Birgitte Bøggild-Johannsen has pointed out, contemporary visual representations of the event were much more limited in number and more exclusive than printed and manuscript texts: only four contemporary paintings are known to have been made, three of which have survived. All three of them depict the homage ceremony on 18 October 1660. The most well-known is the German artist Wolfgang Heimbach's large painting from 1660, which was originally displayed in the Knight's hall («Riddersalen») in Copenhagen castle. A second and smaller painting of the homage ceremony is attributed to the Norwegian artist Michael van Haven, and was possibly part of a trilogy of paintings made after 1671, the two others depicting Christian V's anointment (1671) and the crowned Christian V. A now lost painting of the «Suveränitetshandlung» in 1660, owned at one point by Count Christian Rantzau, may have been a larger version of the same painting. The third surviving painting is an unsigned and undated image displayed at Gavnø Castle, executed by an unknown and much less skilled painter.<sup>1416</sup>

In her analysis of Heimbach's and van Haven's paintings, Bøggild Johannsen identifies striking similarities in their composition. Although they depict different moments of the homage ceremony, they both share a panoramic view of the scene in which Frederick III and the royal family appear very small and indistinct. According to Bøggild Johannsen, the composition actually

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<sup>1415</sup> «Saaledes blev Souverainitetet af alle Stænder bevilget, og blev derpaa strax forfatted den saa kaldte Arve Eenevolds Regierings=Act, hvilken først blev underskreven af alle dem, som vare nærværende i Kiøbenhavn, og siden skikked de fraværende til Underskrivelse i alle Provincierne af Dannemark og Norge.» Holberg 1735: 475.

<sup>1416</sup> In an article from 2010, Bøggild Johannsen wrote that the original location of Heimbach's painting is uncertain, but that it was probably intended for one of the staterooms in Copenhagen Castle. In 2011, she established that it was indeed displayed in Copenhagen castle, and listed in an inventory from 1673. For more about the provenience of the paintings, see Johannsen 2011: 96-97; Johannsen 2010: 339-341.

«counteracts or inverts the prevalent doctrines of state portraits, which normally placed indisputable focus upon the main actor, the prince.»<sup>1417</sup> Instead, the pictures appear to enhance the crowds of people surrounding the royal family on the raised platform. Bøggild Johannsen interprets this compositional choice as a variant of the image of the state depicted on the famous engraved frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*. In this image, the body politic is depicted as a mass of individual people that all turn their gaze towards the head, the absolute monarch. In much the same manner, the images of the homage ceremony in 1660 depicted the teeming crowd as an incarnation of the common will and the unanimous decision to hand over absolute power to the monarch:

The myth of *consensus communis* [...] was convincingly illustrated by the sea of human beings, individually representing a variety of appearances and emotions, yet by means of their gazes, attitudes, and the basic elements of composition, in particular the effects of light, being directed towards the true origin of power, their lord and master, the king.<sup>1418</sup>

As Bøggild Johannsen points out, various compositional devices in the two paintings steer the gaze towards the king and the royal family. The most striking effect in both of the paintings is a beam of light that emerges from the clouds above to illuminate the platform on which the royal family stands. In addition to directing the gaze to the true centre of the events, the beam of heavenly light also underlined the divine presence and approval of the act.<sup>1419</sup>

Bøggild Johannsen includes two other paintings by Wolfgang Heimbach in her analysis of the visual staging of the introduction of absolutism. Both paintings depict Frederick III at the battle of Nyborg in 1659 (a battle which the king did not in fact witness in person). On the first, Frederick III is seen standing on a hill with an view of the battle field, dressed in military garb and a blue coronation mantle, lifting a sword in his right hand and holding his left hand to his heart. His gaze is directed towards an angel in the heavens. The second painting is an equestrian portrait of Frederick III, likewise dressed in military costume and situated on a hill next to the battle. The latter painting is dated 1660, while the former is dated 1659, although this probably refers to the date of the battle rather than the year it was made. Both paintings, argues Bøggild Johannsen, were probably painted by Heimbach around the time of the introduction of absolutism.<sup>1420</sup> Unlike Heimbach's and van Haven's paintings of the homage ceremony on 18 October 1660, the two battle paintings focus

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<sup>1417</sup> Johannsen 2010: 342.

<sup>1418</sup> Johannsen 2010: 343.

<sup>1419</sup> Johannsen 2011: 101.

<sup>1420</sup> Johannsen 2010: 344.

exclusively on the person of the king, representing him as a saviour of the fatherland. Bøggild Johannsen interprets the motives as a «visual translation» of the main argument for a constitutional change expressed in the *Relation*, namely that it had been done in gratitude appreciation of the king's great care, vigilance and bravery during the war.<sup>1421</sup>

### Divine intervention

The beam of light landing on the monarch in Heimbach's and van Haven's paintings of the homage, as well as the distinctly religious tenor of the image of the kneeling Frederick III at Nyborg, is our cue to consider another significant aspect of how the introduction of absolutism in 1660 was remembered in cultural memory. Divine intervention was presented as the real cause behind the introduction of absolutism from the very start. The parishes of Copenhagen celebrated a thanksgiving service already on 13 October 1660, where they had thanked God for having given the Oldenburg dynasty hereditary right to the throne, and where they prayed that the Lord would ensure that the work continued in agreement and harmony.<sup>1422</sup> The two annual thanksgiving services in Denmark, in memory of the storm on Copenhagen (11 February) and the battle of Nyborg (14 November) became more permanent reminders of how the Lord had intervened in the war to save the king, the royal family and the kingdoms. The former was indeed established as an annual event well before the introduction of absolutism (established by royal decree on 18 January 1660), but there is good reason to assume that the Danish victories in the Swedish wars merged together with the introduction of absolutism in the cultural memory to form an integrated narrative of successive divine interventions.

An early example of this connection is the gold medal commissioned and paid for by archbishop Hans Svane, ascribed to the engraver Jeremias Hercules, which Svane gave as a gift to Frederick III and the royal family in November 1666.<sup>1423</sup> On the obverse of the medal was one laureled miniature portrait of each of the eight members of the royal family, surrounding a bible verse in Latin: «I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him» (Psalm 91,15). On the reverse, Svane had listed a sequence of significant historical events that exemplified the message

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<sup>1421</sup> Johannsen 2010: 344.

<sup>1422</sup> Nielsen 1884: 350; Johannsen 2010: 335-337.

<sup>1423</sup> Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen speculates whether Svane may have presented the medal on 14 November, «the king's name day and the anniversary of [the battle of] Nyborg». If this is correct, it is further evidence of the significance of this date. (See page 104). Johannsen 2011: 103.

of the Bible verse: the liberation of Amager (10 October 1658), the liberation of Copenhagen from the Swedish siege (30 October 1658), the storm of Copenhagen (11 February 1659), the peace of Copenhagen (27 May 1660) and the homage ceremony in Copenhagen (19 October 1660) [sic].<sup>1424</sup> The medal suggested that God had helped Frederick III through the hard trials of the war and honoured him with making him an absolute monarch in October 1660. Another example of the same connection is the poet and psalmist Thomas Kingo's psalm «Dig store Gud og Zebaoth», which was originally part of an officially prescribed book of psalms and therefore intended to be sung in all Danish churches on 11 February.<sup>1425</sup> In the third verse of the psalm, Kingo emphasized the continuity between God's protection of the king during the war and the introduction of absolutism:

You protected the king with your sword,  
And drew his bow,  
Which won him many victories,  
When the enemy threatened the most!  
You stopped his enemy in their tracks,  
Protected his throne yourself,  
And adorned his head with  
A most splendid crown.<sup>1426</sup>

According to this interpretation, Frederick III enjoyed a special relationship with the deity. The Lord had ensured that the king had not only survived the terrible tribulations of the war against the Swedes, but that he had also emerged from it as a more powerful king than any other Danish monarch before him. The fact that the crisis years of 1657-1660 had led to an unexpected strengthening of the monarchy, threw a miraculous light on every single aspect of king Frederick's reign before he had become an absolute monarch. The king had, for instance, not originally been destined for the throne of Denmark and Norway. It had been expected that Frederick's older brother, the crown prince Christian, would follow their father Christian IV on the throne, but the crown prince's death in 1647 had paved the way for Frederick III. The story of the king's unexpected election had obvious parallels to God's election of Jesse's youngest son, the shepherd David (1

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<sup>1424</sup> The date of the homage is most likely an error. If it is intentional, however, it could refer to the day that the king's transformation from elected monarch to hereditary monarch was completed. Johannsen 2011: 130-131; Galster 1936: 69.

<sup>1425</sup> For unknown reasons, Christian V decided to recall Kingo's psalm book for the winter months, *Danmarks og Norges Kirkers Forordnede Psalme-Bok. Vinter-parten* (1689). When a revised version was published in 1699, the psalm was not included. Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 41.

<sup>1426</sup> «Du Kongen med dit Sverd ombandt,/ Og spendte selv hands Bue, / Hvor ved hand megen Seyer vandt,/ Naar Fienden mest mon true! / Du hindrede hans Fienders fied,/ Bevaagte selv hans Trone,/ Og prydede hans Hoved med/ En saare deylig Krone.» Quoted from Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 40.

Samuel 16, 1-13).<sup>1427</sup> Another aspect of the king's reign that was now seen in a new light was the king's charter from 1648, which Ludvig Holberg had described as the most limiting charter ever signed by a king in Denmark.<sup>1428</sup> After Frederick had become an absolute monarch, the fact that he had once been the «weakest» of the Oldenburg monarchs became further proof of the miraculous quality of the events of 1660. The providential interpretation of king Frederick's reign was also strengthened by his motto, *Dominus Providebit*, or «God will provide» (from Genesis 22, 8). The king had indeed selected his motto at the very start of his reign. After he emerged from the Charles Gustavus Wars as an absolute monarch, however, the motto could be used to explain why everything had turned out the way it did, namely because the pious Frederick III had entrusted everything to the will of God. In fact, the motto could be, and was, interpreted as the king's prophecy of divine providence.<sup>1429</sup> Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen has shown that references to the king's motto were legion in the occasional poetry from October 1660.<sup>1430</sup>

The church was naturally a primary channel for the propagation of the idea of Frederick III as a divinely protected monarch, but it also found its way into other types of media. The divine intervention in the war against the Swedes was iconographically treated in the so-called *Ebenezer*-coins that were minted in the wake of the storm of Copenhagen. The name *Ebenezer* (Hebrew for «stone of help») was a reference to the memorial stone erected by Samuel to commemorate the Israelites' victory over the Philistines (1 Sam 7,12). The commemorative coins depicted the hand of God emerging from a cloud, cutting off a hand that is reaching for a crown. It bore the inscription «SOLI DEO GLORIA», the honour is God's alone, the date 11 February, and Frederick's monogram.<sup>1431</sup> The *Ebenezer*-motive was also reproduced in other formats. In the Treasure Collection

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<sup>1427</sup> The parallell was in fact already remarked upon by bishop Jesper Brochmand in the sermon he delivered at Frederick's coronation ceremony in 1648. Brochmand used 1 Samuel 16,7 («Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him, for *the Lord seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.») to prove that Frederick had been elected by the Lord: «Most merciful king and master, the same thing has happened with your majesty's election to these kingdoms as it did with David: he was not the oldest: neither his father nor the prophet Samuel thought that David was the one whom God wanted to elevate to the royal throne. Your Royal Majesty must in truth confess that it has happened according to Your Majesty's motto: DOMINUS PROVIDEBIT. The deed and the outcome shows that God and not other has himself elected your Majesty.» Brochmand 1650: d2r; Fabricius 1920: 96.

<sup>1428</sup> Holberg 1735: 43.

<sup>1429</sup> The vicar Jens Knudsøn Thillerup interpreted the king's choice of motto in this way in his jubilee sermon from 1760: «Det synes, at høystbemelte Monarch har ved disse Ord, der ventelig ere laanede af Skabelsens Bogs 22:8, deels ligesom spaaet sig Selv dend lykkelige Forandring, der i Hands Tiid skulle gaae for sig i Regieringen, deels trøstet sig i de mangfoldige haarde Omstændigheder, som faldt in i hands Regiærings Tiid.» Jens Knudsøn Thillerup, *Jubel-Prædiken Holden for Maglebye Meenighed [...] paa Jubel=Festen Dend 16de Octobr: 1760 Til Erindring om Eenevolds Magten som for 100 Aar siden blev indført*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispemæde. D1-69: [3]; See also note 552 in Nielsen 2010: 322.

<sup>1430</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 1996: 37, 41, 55-56, 81, 96.

<sup>1431</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2011a: 37; Galster 1936: 56.

at Rosenborg Castle, there is a silver goblet from 1745 with an inlaid *Ebenezer*-coin surrounded by a verse in Danish commemorating the victory.<sup>1432</sup> The Treasure collection also owns a perpetual calendar («Jacobs Staf oc Riiinstok») in silver, with symbols marking the annual holidays and other memorable dates. The date 11 February is marked with the *Ebenezer*-motive, «a sword chopping a hand reaching for a crown».<sup>1433</sup> The same collection contains a carved walnut that was once used to contain spices, a so-called pomander. The walnut is carved on one side with a portrait of Frederick III surrounded by national and provincial coats of arms and, on the other side, a portrait of his spouse, queen Sophie Amalie surrounded by inscriptions of the seven virtues. On the one inside half of the walnut, there are six compartments for spices. On the other inside half, there is a carved *Ebenezer*-motive: a crowned «F3» above a figure of a sword, cutting off a hand that is reaching out for the crown. Around the edge of the carving reads the words «Soli Deo Gloria» and the date «11. Feb.» Attached to the walnut with a gold chain is a ring composed of two hands: an iron hand grasping for a golden apple that the silver hand is holding. On the iron hand is engraved a «C» and the inscription «I take with my cunning», while the silver hand carries an «F» and the words: «But you will surely lose it». According to Jørgen Hein, the pomander «must have been a popular proganda item», since an almost identical example has been found in a private Swedish collection.<sup>1434</sup>

### Damnatio memoriae: Corfitz Ulfeldt and the pillar of shame

So far, we have considered the construction of official myths about the *coup d'état* in 1660. We have seen how the government already at a very early stage took control over the memory of the introduction of absolutism and defined the nature and meaning of the political change. We have also witnessed how representations of the introduction of absolutism was disseminated in various media both in its immediate aftermath and in the decades following 1660. There is one aspect of this process, however, that we have not yet considered. Like most radical political changes, the introduction of absolutism produced both winners and losers. It has already been pointed out how the initial resistance of the Danish nobility and their forced assent was transformed into a voluntary and unanimous decision: the Sovereignty Act and the Royal Law canonized the myth of the nobility's unforced participation in October 1660. In retrospect, it seems that the creation of this

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<sup>1432</sup> «Gud være Lov og Priis,/ Den Fnysende fick Riis;/ Thi Herrns eget Swærd/ Sloeg Fiendens heele Hær.» Brock 1870: 49.

<sup>1433</sup> Brock 1870: 57.

<sup>1434</sup> Hein 2009: 73-74.

myth was not necessarily only self-serving rhetoric that strengthened the legitimacy of the new regime, but may also have been an important stabilizing measure that allowed the Danish nobility to take its place within it. Two prominent persons had taken their resistance to king Frederick III too far, however, to be reintegrated into the community and find a place in the new order.

As king Christian IV's son-in-law, the nobleman Corfitz Ulfeldt had been an influential statesman and politician in the 1640s, but his relationship with the old king had increasingly become strained as Ulfeldt came to play a leading role in the oppositional party in the Council of the Realm. After Frederick III's accession to the throne in 1648, the relationship between the new king and his brother-in-law Ulfeldt quickly deteriorated. Ulfeldt was accused of implication in a conspiracy to poison king Frederick in 1650 and, although he was eventually cleared of all charges, he and his wife Eleonora Christina felt unsafe and fled to Sweden in 1651. During the first Charles Gustavus War, Ulfeldt assisted the Swedish enemy in the attack on Denmark, and he later played a leading role as a negotiator for the Swedes in the Peace of Roskilde. Ulfeldt came into conflict with the Swedish king, however, and in 1659 he was arrested in Malmö for conspiracy with the Danish government and treason against Sweden. He then managed to escape to Denmark, where he and Eleonora Christina was arrested and imprisoned on the island of Bornholm. After signing a declaration of submission in 1661, the couple were allowed to travel abroad. But Ulfeldt did not manage to stay out of trouble for long. In 1663 he made a secret offer to help Elector Frederick Wilhelm of Brandenburg in acquiring the Danish throne. The Elector was eager for an alliance with Denmark and informed Frederick III, who accused Ulfeldt of treason and sent out a request for the arrest of him and his wife. The same year, Eleonora Christina was arrested by Charles II of England and handed over to Denmark, where she lived in imprisonment for the next twenty-two years. Ulfeldt himself died in exile in 1664.<sup>1435</sup>

In the years following the introduction of absolutism, Frederick III launched a policy of *damnatio memoriae*, a sustained attack on the reputation and memory of the traitorous Ulfeldt couple.<sup>1436</sup> In December 1661, while the two were in the king's custody in Copenhagen, the king ordered the president of Copenhagen Hans Nansen to «demolish or remove» Eleonora Christina's coat of arms in Helliggeistes kirke in Copenhagen.<sup>1437</sup> In July of 1663, the Supreme Court condemned Ulfeldt to death in absentia for high treason (*«crimen laesae Majestatis in supremo grado»*). A month later, a thanksgiving prayer was read from all pulpits in Denmark and Norway, where Ulfeldt's treason was compared to examples from the Old Testament of the ill-fate of those who had laid their hand on

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<sup>1435</sup> Heiberg 1993.

<sup>1436</sup> For a definition and discussion of the concept of *damnatio memoriae*, see Vamer 2004: 1-9.

<sup>1437</sup> Nielsen 1884: 371.

the Lord's anointed.<sup>1438</sup> On 13 November 1663, Corfitz Ulfeldt was executed in effigy in the inner courtyard of Copenhagen Castle. After spitting on, trampling and destroying Ulfeldt's coat of arms, the executioner decapitated and quartered a wooden resemblance of Ulfeldt that was filled with animal guts. The head and right hand of the wooden figure was displayed on the Old Town Hall in Copenhagen for the next sixty years, until the great fire in 1728.<sup>1439</sup> The graphic punishment of Ulfeldt *in absentia* was rapidly followed by yet another attack on visible reminders of the previously so prominent Ulfeldt couple. In December of 1663, Frederick III ordered his castle bailiff Jochim Waltpurger to destroy the couple's names and coats of arms in all the churches of Copenhagen where they could be found.<sup>1440</sup>

As a final measure, the government erected a more permanent monument to the treason of Ulfeldt. In the sixth paragraph of its verdict against Ulfeldt, the Supreme Court had ruled that one of Ulfeldt's town houses should be demolished, never to be rebuilt again, and that a «pyramid» should be erected in its place, upon which should be engraved the reason why this had been done.<sup>1441</sup> In the following year, Frederick III ordered the Quartermaster General Henrik Ruse to demolish Ulfeldt's house on Gråbrødretorv and erect «pyramid or pillar of shame» («Pyramis eller Schandpille») in its place. The pillar of shame bore an inscription designed by the king himself: «The traitor: Corfitz W[ul]f[eldt]: In eternal mockery, shame and disgrace.»<sup>1442</sup> The pillar would remain standing for the next 142 years in the centre of what was now called Ulfeldt's square, where it served as a permanent visual reminder of Corfitz Ulfeldt's treason and as a warning to what would befall those who betrayed the absolute monarchs.<sup>1443</sup> The passage of time did not soften the hearts of Frederick's successors on the throne: after the pillar was damaged and the inscription rendered unreadable by the great fire in Copenhagen in 1728, Christian VI ordered it to be repaired and placed on a new foundation in 1741.<sup>1444</sup> Karin Kryger speculates whether the monument was merely a personal matter for Frederick III, or whether the population could also identify with the monument, and concludes that there are good reasons to assume the latter: Ulfeldt's treason had had direct and tangible

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<sup>1438</sup> Heiberg 1993: 231.

<sup>1439</sup> Heiberg 1993: 235.

<sup>1440</sup> Nielsen 1884: 394.

<sup>1441</sup> Heiberg 1993: 230.

<sup>1442</sup> «Forræderen: Corfitz WF: Til Æwig Spott: Skam og Skiendsel» Galster 1940-41: 94; Adriansen 2011: 41-42.

<sup>1443</sup> The pillar was ordered to be removed in 1841 by Christian VIII, after complaints from the owners and residents of the houses round Ulfeldt's square. After its removal in 1842, it was kept in storage until it was erected in 1903 in the garden of the Prince's Mansion («Prinsen's Palæ»), where it was inaccessible for public scrutiny. After the opening of the National Museum in 1892, it was given a prominent place in the garden, where it still stands today. In 1977, a granite stone inscribed with Ulfeldt's initials and the years 1664-1842 was placed on Gråbrødretorv where the pillar of shame used to stand. Galster 1940-41: 102; Adriansen 2011: 42.

<sup>1444</sup> Galster 1940-1941: 101.



consequences for the Danish population, since he had assisted the Swedes in their attack on Denmark. Ulfeldt also represented the unpopular nobility, whose power the burghers strongly resented.<sup>1445</sup> 150 years after its erection, the pillar of shame seems to have retained some of its potency as a symbol of treason against the absolute monarchy: in right-hand corner of the artist J.P. Møller's painting of the ruins of Ulfeldt's square after the British bombardment in 1807, a man points his hand towards the pillar of shame, comparing the actions of the British with Ulfeldt's treason.<sup>1446</sup>

As time went on, however, there was a complete turnaround in the popular perceptions of both Ulfeldt and the pillar of shame. At some point in the early decades of the nineteenth century, people began seeing the pillar less as a monument to Ulfeldt's treason and a more as a threat and warning against the opponents of a despotic political system. Ulfeldt was increasingly perceived as a martyr, and the pillar of shame as a brutal and barbaric remnant of the past. According to Marie-Louise Berner, the pillar went from being «an antiquated political monument to being a monument to an antiquated political system.»<sup>1447</sup> When Christian VIII acceded to the Danish throne in 1840, there was therefore a public demand to have the pillar of shame removed. After the lawyer Balthazar Christensen was arrested for a speech where he compared the pillar of shame to the antiquated laws that limited the freedom of the press, the pillar became one of the central focal points for popular rioting in support of Christensen. The pillar of shame was finally removed in 1842.<sup>1448</sup>

At the time of the centenary in 1760, however, the pillar of shame was still standing where it had always stood, in the centre of Ulfeldt's square. The Danish population still gathered in churches every 11 February to commemorate God's deliverance of the kingdoms at the storm of Copenhagen. The canonized narratives about the introduction of absolutism still enjoyed a hegemonic position in Denmark-Norway. The centenary in 1760 could therefore build on well-established and living traditions that were the product of a century of collective remembrance of the introduction of absolutism. As we shall see, most of these traditions did indeed appear in some form or another

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<sup>1445</sup> Kryger 1988: 157; See also Linde 1946: 34.

<sup>1446</sup> Bjørn 1990: 110-111; Mentz 2007: 139.

<sup>1447</sup> Berner 1998: 167; See also examples in Linde 1946: 40-47.

<sup>1448</sup> Berner 1998: 166-173; It should be added, however, that the pillar of shame had not completely died as a site of memory. Georg Galster (writing in the early 1940s) spoke of Ulfeldt in very negative terms as a traitor to the country and expressed dismay that the pillar was placed next to a copy of the Danish national symbol, the Jelling Stone, in the gardens of the National Museum. Galster's emotional aversion against the treasonous Ulfeldt was apparently intensified by the German occupation of Denmark: «In these days that are so dark for our country» wrote Galster, «the thoughtful viewer will surely feel indignation over this arrangement». Galster 1940-41: 103.

during the centenary. We shall start with considering the government's preliminary planning and preparations for the jubilee.

### Defining the framework: why 16 October 1760?

In previous chapters, we have seen that the jubilees in 1736 and 1749 were preceded by discussions about which dates were the most appropriate for a centennial celebration. In both of these cases, the discussions ultimately reflected the government's concern about establishing an interpretation of the past that was appropriate for public commemoration in the age of the absolute monarchy. We lack such sources for the centenary in 1760, which means that we cannot know for certain why the government selected 16 October 1760 to be the first day of the jubilee. This is unfortunate, since there is nothing natural or obvious about this date. Just like the election of Christian I in 1448/49 and the Danish-Norwegian Reformation in 1536/37, the introduction of absolutism in 1660/61 did not happen all at once, but was rather a long and drawn-out process consisting of many events that might be retrospectively construed as significant. It had taken a while before the political consequences of the revolution of 1660/1661 became evident. Every important political decision made at the Estates General in October 1660 contained within it the germ of royal absolutism, but their full scope did not become evident until the creation of the Royal Law in 1665. A number of events along the way could be retrospectively construed as the true turning-point, depending on what aspects of the phenomenon as a whole one wanted to emphasize. The problem with the Sovereignty Act in this regard is that it was issued *after* the Estates General, without any prior discussion among the estates. Instead, the document was sent around Denmark to be signed by the Council of the Realm and approximately 1500 representatives of the three estates.<sup>1449</sup> Not only did these proceedings smack a bit too much of calculating divide-and-rule tactics, they did also not lend themselves well to artistic representation. As we have seen, neither textual nor visual representations of the introduction of absolutism had focused on the Sovereignty Act.<sup>1450</sup> All of these factors probably excluded 10 January 1661 as an appropriate date for a centenary. Birgitte Bøggild Johansen points out that, although the official declaration of absolutism took place in January in

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<sup>1449</sup> Dyrvik 1998: 78.

<sup>1450</sup> A partial exception are the coins that were struck to commemorate the Norwegian homage ceremony in July 1661. In contrast to what had happened in Denmark, the Norwegian estates signed the Sovereignty Act in the same place (Akershus) and at the same time (7 August). The coins depicted Frederick III on the obverse, and an image of Akershus fortress on the reverse. However, since the coins merely depict the location where the event took place and not the event itself, they were hardly strong visual reminders of the Sovereignty Act. See Dyrvik 1998: 82; Nakken 2000: 12.

1661, «subsequent commemorations, including pictorial [...], would place a stigma on 18 October and the immediate preceding days [...] as the “magic moments”, i.e. the birth of absolutism, accordingly playing down the memory of 10 January.»<sup>1451</sup>

What was obvious to the mastermind(s) behind the jubilee in 1760 is no longer self-explanatory. In the lack of any firm documentary evidence for why 16 October was selected as the key moment of transition, we must consult other sources to gain an understanding of possible motivations. A strong indication that the royal regime itself considered 16 October 1660 to be a pivotal date is found in Frederick IV's preface to the first printed edition of the Royal Law from 1709. In the preface, the king reflected on how God intervenes in human affairs. In the history of his own kingdom, he claimed, there were several examples of divine mercy: Only two royal dynasties had ruled the kingdoms in a period of 2000 years. 200 years ago, the Lord had let the clear Evangelical light shine upon them. God had protected the kings and their families against danger and united the subjects with them in love and fidelity. The most notable of all these divine mercies had been granted to Frederick's grandfather, king Frederick III, when God ended the war and arranged it so that the estates gave him hereditary right to the throne. The king's comment about the start of this process is what interests us here:

And it may be said with justification that this most important resolution, intended to promote the good of all the citizens, has in particular been implemented on 16 October in the year 1660, on which day the charter that our said grandfather had issued was annulled by all those that were Councillors of the Realm at the time, with their signatures, and his Majesty liberated from the oath he had made on the same charter.<sup>1452</sup>

The king went to on describe subsequent important events: the homage ceremony on 18 October, the estates' signing of an instrument on 17 November 1660 that formally rendered the charter null and void and relieved Frederick III of his oath for all eternity, as «final conclusion to this great work», the signing of the Sovereignty Act on 10 January 1661.<sup>1453</sup> The king, or rather Frederik Rostgaard who actually wrote the preface in his name, evidently saw the annullment of the charter on

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<sup>1451</sup> Johannsen 2013: 208; See also Johannsen 2010: 345.

<sup>1452</sup> «Og kand det med billighed siges at denne højvigtige, og til alle Indbyggernes fremtarv henseende *Resolution* i særdelighed er bleven sat i verk den *16 Oktobris* i det Aar 1660, paa hvilken dag den Haandfæstning, som høystbemelte Voris Herr Farfader havde udgivet af de samtlige da værende Rigens Raad ved deris paaskrift blev *Casseret*, og hans Majesteet fra sin paa samme Haandfæstning gjorde Eed gandske og aldeelis blev befriet.» Tamm & Düring Jørgensen 2012: 142-143.

<sup>1453</sup> Tamm & Düring Jørgensen 2012: 144.

16 October 1660 as the start of a process that ended on 10 January 1661.<sup>1454</sup> This could be one possible explanation why 16 October was selected as the date to commemorate, namely that it was perceived as the moment that marked the true *beginning* of the introduction of absolutism in Denmark-Norway.

The most significant piece of evidence of the importance attributed to the date 16 October 1660, however, is a text that was begun in the year of the centenary. In a history of the introduction of absolutism that was originally intended to be published in time for the jubilee but was never finished, the historian and royal archivist Jacob Langebek strongly emphasized the importance of 16 October 1660, which he saw not only as the beginning of the introduction of absolutism, but also simultaneously as its culmination and completion:

By this act His Majesty was completely relieved of the constraints of the charter, and in the same manner that His Majesty had earlier acquired hereditary right to the throne for himself and his successors, he now received a complete absolute and sovereign power to conduct his government after his own free will and most merciful discretion.<sup>1455</sup>

According to Langebek's view, the annulment of the charter on 16 October 1660 not only marked the transition from an elective to a hereditary monarchy, it also liberated the king completely from the influence of the nobility and the lower estates and gave him absolute power. As we have seen, Jacob Langebek was involved in the preliminary discussions before the tercentenary in 1749. It is therefore quite likely that he was also asked to give his opinion in 1760, and that 16 October was his choice.<sup>1456</sup> On the other hand, it could also be that Langebek's history was influenced by the centenary, rather than the other way around—the historian continued working on it for many years, so this specific paragraph could in fact have been written after 1760.

Whoever it was that made the final decision, there seems to be grounds to argue that the choice of date was no less deliberate than the dates of previous centenaries, and that 16 October was thought to carry enough historical significance to represent the genesis of absolutism. There are indeed a couple of images from the second half of the eighteenth century that may support the notion that what took place on 16 October was perceived as an important transformative moment.

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<sup>1454</sup> Rostgaard discusses the preface to a letter to Frederik IV in Bruun 1871: 55.

<sup>1455</sup> «Ved denne Act blev Hs Mt. Aldeles løset fra Haandfæstningens Forbindelse, og paa den maade som Hs Mt. forhen havde erholdt arve Ret til Tronen for sig og sine Efterkommere, saa fik Han nu en fuldkommen Absolut Enevolds Herredom og Souverain Magt at føre sin Regiering efter egen fri villie og Allernaadigste velbehag.» Langebek 1881: 119.

<sup>1456</sup> The earliest mention of the centenary that I have managed to find is indeed a letter from Langebek to Johann Ludvig von Holstein from 3 February 1760, in which the historian mentioned the possibility of celebration of a jubilee later in the year. Rørdam 1895: 289.

One of them dates from just a few years before the centenary: in Caspar Peter Rothe's edition of the Royal Law from 1756, one of two copper engravings pictured the solemn moment when the annulled charter was delivered to Frederick III on 17 October 1660.<sup>1457</sup> Similarly, the painter Peter Abildgaard made the exact same moment represent the introduction of absolutism in his suite of historical paintings for the Knight's Hall in Christiansborg castle.<sup>1458</sup> Both of these images actually depicted an event that took place on the following day, 17 October 1660. Both dates, however, had to do with the estates' voluntary elimination of the constitutional limits to royal power. Of the two events, it can be assumed that only the former lent itself to artistic representation.

### Popular editions of historical works

The centenary in 1760 saw the publication of several historical works that were either about the introduction of absolutism itself, or at least thematically relevant for the centenary. The most expensive and monumental of these works was Erik Pontoppidan's *Origines Hafnienses*, a topographical work about Copenhagen and its history from its origins to the early years of the eighteenth century.<sup>1459</sup> The front page stated that the book had been published in «the jubilee year 1760». In the dedication (to prince Frederick) Pontoppidan mentioned that, a hundred years before, God had allowed the Oldenburg kings to «enforce the absolute power of the old Danish kings» and that the memory of this event deserved to be renewed and refreshed in the hearts of all Danish and Norwegian men with a jubilee.<sup>1460</sup> Apart from the dedication, however, *Origines Hafnienses* did not refer directly to the centenary, and Pontoppidan must have started working on the book long before plans for the upcoming jubilee became official.<sup>1461</sup> It might, however, well have been a conscious choice to publish the book in time for the centenary. Copenhagen and its burghers played an important role in the mythology of the introduction of absolutism, and Pontoppidan's work dealt with several topics that could be perceived as relevant for the centenary: the war against the Swedes (p.401-415), the introduction of absolutism (415-416) and Copenhagen's privileges of 1661 (378-383).

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<sup>1457</sup> The other engraving pictured Frederick III resting his right hand on the Royal Law, while pointing to a background image of the homage ceremony on 18 October 1660. Johannsen 2011: 89, 109.

<sup>1458</sup> Johannsen 2011: 116.

<sup>1459</sup> Pontoppidan 1760c.

<sup>1460</sup> Pontoppidan 1760c: a3v.

<sup>1461</sup> The preface was dated 23 June.

There was at least one precedent for using a centenary as an opportunity to launch the publication of costly and prestigious historical works. The dynastic tercentenary in 1749 had seen the completion of the historian Niels Pedersen Slange's history of the reign of one of the most popular Oldenburg monarchs, Christian IV.<sup>1462</sup> Slange's history had taken more than two decades to produce, so it was obviously not originally intended to be a contribution to the tercentenary.<sup>1463</sup> However, the approaching jubilee seems to have hastened its publication. The landowner Peder Fogh, who was involved in the completion of the work, wrote a letter to Jacob Langebek on 22 June 1749 where he discussed some minor revisions and informed the historian about some practical matters regarding its production. According to Fogh, «it would be desirable that the work be finished for the upcoming Jubilæum Regiminis Oldenburgici, I don't know what fate looms over the histories of our Danish kings, that they so belatedly see the light of day in a proper form».<sup>1464</sup> When the work was finally published in time for the tercentenary, Fogh wrote a dedication to king Frederick V where he underlined the fact that the history was published in the same year as the jubilee. Slange's history, to which the present king and his father had contributed financially, could «be considered an honour-jewel that Your Royal Majesty has given to the public and posterity at such a solemn occasion».<sup>1465</sup>

Apart from Pontoppidan's book, all of the historical works that were actually published for the centenary in 1760 were reproductions of original documents or republications of older works in the form of relatively cheap pamphlets, the demand for which was clearly stimulated by the centenaries' actualization of events from national history. One example is the publication in 1760 of the so-called *Nøyagtig Efterretning om Souverainitetet eller hvad som har tildraget sig paa Kiøbenhavns Mode fra den 10 Sept. til den 17 Nov. Anno 1660* («Accurate intelligences about the Sovereignty or what took

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<sup>1462</sup> Full title: *Den Stormægtigste Konges Christian den Fierdes Konges til Danmark og Norge, de Venders og Gothers, Hertugs til Slesvig, Holsten, Stormarn og Ditmarsken, Greves til Oldenborg og Delmenbosrt, Historie*. Slange & Gram 1749

<sup>1463</sup> The history had been long in the making. The 77-year old Slange had delivered his manuscript to Christian VI in 1732, asking the monarch for financial support for its publication. The king passed the manuscript on to the royal historiographer Hans Gram and asked him for his opinion on whether it was worthy of publication, but Gram found it so full of errors and flaws that he suggested a major revision. Thus began a long and tense collaboration between the two historians to improve the enormous manuscript. After Slange died in 1737, Gram was given full control over the manuscript and continued the revision on his own, but the work was still not completely finished when Gram himself died in 1748. The work was then taken over by Gram's successor Jacob Langebek, who oversaw the publication of the work in two large volumes in the jubilee year. See Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 306-307.

<sup>1464</sup> «Kunde Verket blive til fuldkommen Ende bragt til det forestaaende Jubilæum Regiminis Oldenburgici, var det vel at ønske, veed icke, hvad for et Fatum, der henger over vore danske Kongers Historier, at de saa seent kommer in justa forma for Liuset [...]». Letter from Peder Fogh to Jacob Langebek, 22 June 1749, in *Breve til J. Langebek*. Nr. 1-254. (NKS 2042 kvart)

<sup>1465</sup> «Da det nu saaledes [...] kommer for Lyset just i det Aar da Eders Kongel. Majestet haver behaget gudeligen at anordne en Taksigelses Jubel-Fest [...] kand det ansees, som et Ære-Smykke, hvormed Eders Kongelige Majestet haver regaleret Publicum og Efterkommerne ved saadan Solennitet[...]». Peder Fogh's dedication to the king, signed August 4<sup>th</sup> 1749, in Slange & Gram 1749.

place at the meeting in Copenhagen from 10 September to 17 November 1660»).<sup>1466</sup> The *Accurate intelligences* was a third person account of the events at the Estates General in 1660, interspersed with twelve in extenso quotations of official documents from the meeting, as well as a reproduction of the Sovereignty Act.<sup>1467</sup> The publisher Andreas Hartvig Godiche justified his publication of the text in the preface, where he wrote that it was both useful and pleasant to acquire knowledge about the reasons why the jubilee was solemnly celebrated, especially since there circulated so many erroneous versions about what had happened in 1660.<sup>1468</sup>

A similar public service was rendered by the Royal Library's bookbinder J.W. Boppenhausen, who published a shortened and slightly revised version of the chapter on the introduction of absolutism in the third volume of Ludvig Holberg's *Dannemarks Riges Historie* (1735). The text was sold together with a woodcut depicting the solemn procession on its way to the homage ceremony on the Castle Square on 18 October 1660.<sup>1469</sup> In the preface, Boppenhausen wrote that it was the duty of every subject to promote «jubilee-joy», and that his personal contribution had been to publish Baron Holberg's account of the «history of the sovereignty». He had particularly wanted to serve his non-learned and poor fellow citizens, «who are not able to acquire costly books, but who should not be ignorant of the fundament and origins of our joy and happiness.»<sup>1470</sup> Boppenhausen's publication appears to have been circulated widely: it was advertised for sale in most of the largest towns of Denmark and Norway as early as 17 October.<sup>1471</sup> The text was also published in a German edition.<sup>1472</sup> A month after the jubilee, Boppenhausen's text received a scathing review in the learned journal *Nye Tidender om lærde Sager*. The anonymous reviewer criticized Boppenhausen for having done nothing more than copying Holberg, and thus not bringing anything new to the public. He also made fun of

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<sup>1466</sup> Godiche (ed.) 1760.

<sup>1467</sup> The identity of the author of this text has been a source of speculation since the eighteenth century. Historians have primarily been interested in the document because of one particular section, which is the only part of the narrative that is written in the first person. This section, which appears to be written by a clergyman, describes a meeting that allegedly took place on 5 October 1660 in bishop Hans Svane's house, between the representatives of the clerical and the burgher estates as well as the king's representative Christoffer Gabel. The importance of the document lies in the fact that it is the earliest recorded instance of the lower estates' plans to offer the king hereditary right to the throne. It also contains the only concrete, although uncertain, evidence that king Frederick was personally involved in planning the transition from elective to hereditary monarchy. For thorough discussions of the original document, see Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 138-183; Svane-Knudsen 1989: 178-182.

<sup>1468</sup> Godiche (ed.) 1760: 1-2.

<sup>1469</sup> *Kjøbenhavnske Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger No.80. 13. October 1760.*

<sup>1470</sup> «hvorved jeg i sær har havt for Øye, at ville tiene ubelæste og uformuende Medborgere, som ikke har Evne til at anskaffe sig kostbare Bøger, og dog ikke bør være uvidende om Grunden og Begyndelsen til vor Glæde og Lyksalighed.» Boppenhausen 1760a.

<sup>1471</sup> In Denmark it could be bought in Sorø, Holbæk, Slagelse, Helsingør, Odense, Ålborg and Viborg. In Norway, it was sold in Christiania, Halden, Arendal, Kristiansund, Bergen, Trondheim and Kristiansand. *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender. No. 83. Fredagen, den 17de October.*

<sup>1472</sup> Boppenhausen 1760b.

the accompanying woodcut, which he claimed was so badly made that the people and building resembled «Martinians and houses of cards than well formed humans and symmetrical buildings».<sup>1473</sup>

A third example is a text published in the year after the centenary in 1760, titled *Conversation between a peasant and a burgher, occasioned by the latest jubilee for the sovereignty that was celebrated in Denmark and Norway*.<sup>1474</sup> As the title indicates, the text was written in the form of a dialogue between a peasant and a burgher who incidentally meet each other at the very moment the jubilee begins. The conversation starts with the peasant asking the burgher to explain why all the church bells are ringing on a Thursday, whereupon the burgher willingly tells him about the jubilee. Thereafter follows a long sequence where the burgher tries his best to answer the peasant's simple and naïve questions. The peasant is portrayed as completely ignorant of the kingdom's form of government and history, and constantly tries to make the burgher's explanations fit into his own rather narrow village horizon. The text has a strong bias in favour of the burgher estate and it is strongly prejudiced against the nobility— the burgher draws a bleak picture of the conditions in Denmark before the introduction of absolutism, and describes the nobility as a selfish and oppressive group. The burgher also manages to make the peasant accept the current state of affairs in society—among other things he convinces him of the necessity of a ban against the distillation and sale of spirits in the countryside. In the course of the conversation, the burgher promises the peasant to tell him the complete story of how absolutism was introduced in Denmark. Near the end, the following lines are exchanged:

The peasant:

Now farewell, and thank you for teaching everything so well, now I have enough to tell when I get home to Nille and my children; I do not think that even Peer the parish clerk knows as much as I do, if I can just remember it; but wait a minute, my friend! You promised me that you would tell me the whole story.

The burgher:

Yes, I did, and I would keep my word, but as we have been sitting here talking it has already been printed and can be bought in every market town at the bookbinders, there you can buy it and add it to our conversation, and you will then have it all, if you don't want to, you can

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<sup>1473</sup> «Hvilke Optøyer findes der ikke paa dette Ark? Hvem skulle vel paa dette Blad finde Kongen, den Kongelige Familie, Stænderne o.fl. .... Det er ikke Kongelige Personer, store Mænd og prægtige Bygninger man her skal finde? Ney! Skabeluner ere det, som meere ligne Martinianer og Korthuuse, end velskabte Mennesker og symmetriske Bygninger!» Ehrencron-Müller 1933: 199; Martinians are ape-like creatures encountered on the planet at the centre of the earth by the protagonist Niels Klim in Ludvig Holberg's novel *Nicolai Klimii iter subterraneum* (1741).

<sup>1474</sup> Original title: *Samtale imellem en Bonde og Borgere, i Anledning af seeneste Souverainitets Jubel-Fest holden udi Dannemark og Norge*.



borrow Holberg's Danish history from your minister whom you know so well, and let the parish clerk or schoolmaster read it to you. However, in the lack thereof and to ensure that your desire is satiated, I shall now give you a short extract thereof [...].<sup>1475</sup>

The rest of the text was a short historical narrative about the introduction of absolutism in 1660, entitled *Short extract or narrative about how the kingdom of Denmark has become hereditary and sovereign*.<sup>1476</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, this text was an abridged translation of the chapter «The Manner how the Kingdom of Denmark became Hereditary and Absolute» from the Irish diplomat and Whig politician Robert Molesworth's *An Account of Denmark as it was in the Year 1692*.<sup>1477</sup>

Generally, the *Short Extract* follows Molesworth's account almost verbatim. Among the few places the two texts diverge, are those paragraphs where Molesworth described the introduction of absolutism as a loss of liberty or as a «crime». The Danish translator also removed most of the passages where Molesworth discussed Frederik III's political calculations and suggested that Frederik III and his closest advisors were actively conspiring with the lower estates.<sup>1478</sup> Both of these revisions are telling: first, the accusation that the people of Denmark had lost their liberty in 1660 was particularly offensive to patriotic Danes in the mid-1700s. Danish works on political theory published in these years, some of them in fact in connection with the jubilee in 1760, were dedicated to proving that absolutism was compatible with civic liberty.<sup>1479</sup> Second, as we have seen, the claim that the king was personally involved in the introduction of absolutism ran counter to the official version of the events of 1660, as it was formulated in central acts such as the Sovereignty Act and the Royal Law.

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<sup>1475</sup> Bonden.

Nu Farvel, og Tak for god Underviisning om alle Ting, nu har jeg nok at fortælle naar jeg kommer hjem til Nille og mine Børn; jeg troer ikke at Peer Degn selv veed saa meget som jeg, om jeg ikkun kand huske det; men det er sandt, min Ven! I lovede mig jo hele Historien hiem med mig.

Borgeren.

Ja det gjorde jeg, og skulle og holde Ord, men imedens vi har siddet og talet sammen er den alt trykt og kand faaes i hvert Kiøbstæd hos Bogbinderne, der kand du kiøbe den, og føye den til vor Samtale, saa har du det altsammen, hvis du ikke vil det, saa kand du laane af din Præst, som du dog er saa meget vel kiendt med, Holbergs Danske Historie, og lade Degnen eller Skolemesteren læse dig det for deraf. Imidlertid og i Mangel deraf at du dog paa nogen Maade kand faae din Lyst styret, vil jeg her meddele dig et kort Udtog deraf. Far nu vel, og da jeg saaledes har holdt Ord i alle Ting, saa glem ikke heller hvad du har lovet mig. *Samtale imellem en Bonde og Borgere* 1761: 41.

<sup>1476</sup> Original title: *Kort Begreb eller Fortælning om hvorledes Konge-Riget Dannemark er bleven arvelig og Souverain*.

<sup>1477</sup> Molesworth 1694.

<sup>1478</sup> See for instance Molesworth 1694: 55-57 and *Samtale imellem en Bonde og Borgere* 1761: 46-47.

<sup>1479</sup> Edvard Holm writes the following about Danes and Norwegians in the mid-eighteenth century: «Nothing could agitate the men of that period more than when they thought that they were accused of being slaves. No one could be more eager than they in claiming their right to be called free citizens.» [my translation] Holm 1883: 88. See also Pontoppidan 1760a; Sneedorff 1776; Sørensen 1983.

The question that naturally comes to mind is why a publisher, supposedly eager to contribute to the celebration of the centenary of the absolute monarchy, would choose to translate a text written by an author that was openly hostile towards the very same form of government. One could possibly read the translation of Molesworth as a subtle form of satire. I would argue, however, that the most probable reason is much more prosaic than this. The simple fact is that Molesworth's chapter on the introduction of absolutism was the most well-written, and also the shortest, account available at the time.<sup>1480</sup> In addition, the most obvious alternative—Ludvig Holberg's history—had already been published in an abridged version the year before. The anonymous translator was, moreover, not the first Dane to translate—or plagiarize—Molesworth's text. As we have already seen, Ludvig Holberg himself had done the exact same thing, with similar selective revisions, in his *Description of Denmark and Norway* (1729) and in the third volume of his *History of the Kingdom of Denmark* (1735).<sup>1481</sup> Holberg was definitely no follower of Robert Molesworth: the chapter «On the government» in his *Description of Denmark and Norway*, was a staunch defence of the absolute monarchy cast as an explicit refutation of Molesworth's *Account*.<sup>1482</sup> There was therefore a respectable precedence for using Molesworth's book to support claims that were diametrically opposed to what the author had originally intended.

Before the centenary in 1760, the historian Jacob Langebek started preparing what was intended to become an illustrated and authoritative history of the introduction of absolutism in 1660. He received official approval for the idea when he proposed it to Johan Ludvig von Holstein in February of 1760. In his proposal, Langebek explained why he found the publication of such a work necessary: the history of the absolute and hereditary royal power was scattered in many different writings and interspersed with many errors, he claimed, so he saw it as his duty as a Keeper of the Royal Archives to gather them in one place with enlightening commentary. If a centenary should be celebrated in 1760, such a book would be «necessary in order to make the celebration more solemn». If not, the work would in any case increase and strengthen the loyal joy of the king's subjects. To give the book more lustre, he suggested that it should contain copper engravings of a portrait of Frederick III, of the «sovereignty medal», and of Wolfgang Heimbach's painting of the homage ceremony on 18 October 1660. Langebek was certain that the work would meet a popular demand

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<sup>1480</sup> C.O. Bøggild-Andersen writes that the account is «brilliantly narrated—from an artistic perspective, the introduction of absolutism in Denmark has never before or since been portrayed with such force and such clarity [...]» [my translation] Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 239.

<sup>1481</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 128-136.

<sup>1482</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 127; Olden-Jørgensen 2014: xvii-xxi.

and that all expenses would be covered by advance subscriptions. He asked, finally, for von Holstein's opinion whether the book should have the form of a history interspersed with original documents, or an annotated collection of original documents.<sup>1483</sup> It was decided that Langebek should write a history appended with the most important acts and documents. Langebek was not able to finish the work in time for the jubilee, and his manuscript was not published until the late nineteenth century.<sup>1484</sup> In addition to his own tardiness in writing the book itself, Langebek's correspondence reveals that he also had difficulties with arranging the production of the copper engravings.<sup>1485</sup> The last mention of the work is in a letter to a friend in November 1763, after which it seems to have been forgotten.<sup>1486</sup>

In his original letter of proposal to von Holstein, Langebek added a comment that is highly illuminating with regards to his view on the official tradition regarding the introduction of absolutism. After a full hundred years had passed since the events themselves, wrote Langebek, the public was now ready for an extensive historical treatment of the event:

After the passage of a hundred years, when neither the children nor the grandchildren of those who lived then are alive anymore, one can so much more freely publish what one would maybe otherwise have hesitated to allow see the light within living memory; In addition, most of it has probably already been published here and there.<sup>1487</sup>

The passage of time had, in other words, removed any residual need to conceal those aspects of the introduction of absolutism that would have been perceived as controversial by the people that had experienced the events with their own eyes. A hundred years after the absolute monarchy had been introduced, its legitimacy was no longer in danger of being challenged. While it is impossible to know with certainty what Langebek was specifically referring to in this passage, it is at least likely that the role and actions of king Frederick III at the Estates General in 1660 was a central issue. In his analysis of Langebek's manuscript, Bøggild-Andersen points out that the historian went quite far in suggesting that the king played an active part in a conspiracy to introduce hereditary and absolute monarchy in Denmark. Among other things, Langebek claimed that the king discussed and planned the matter with some of the leading actors in advance of the meeting. He also explicitly questioned

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<sup>1483</sup> Rørdam 1895: 289-290.

<sup>1484</sup> Møller 1823: 32; Paludan-Müller 1883: 106; Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 359-360.

<sup>1485</sup> Rørdam 1895: 297, 311, 315, 337.

<sup>1486</sup> Rørdam 1895: 370.

<sup>1487</sup> «Efter Hundrede Aars Forløb, da verken Børn eller Børnebørn af de da levende nu ere i Live, kan man saa meget friere udgive, hvad man kanskee ellers tog i Betragtning udi Mands Minde at lade komme for Lyset; Tilmed er formodeligen det meste længe siden Stykkeviis bleven bekiendt». Rørdam 1895: 289.

Ludvig Holberg's claim that the king had behaved «cool and neutral» during the introduction of absolute monarchy.<sup>1488</sup> «It is puzzling», writes Bøggild-Andersen, «that he dared to go so far in this direction despite official tradition established in the Sovereignty act. Maybe this—besides his poor ability to write a book and his tardiness—was one of the reasons that his manuscript was never completed and published». <sup>1489</sup> Although the latter sentence is pure speculation, Bøggild-Andersen is nonetheless correct in his assessment of the revisionist aspects of Langebek's history. If it had been published, the work would have offered the public a careful reassessment of the official version that had been dominant in Denmark-Norway for a hundred years.

### The introduction of absolutism in jubilee sermons

We shall now consider how the Danish and Norwegian clergy dealt with the topic of the introduction of absolutism in their jubilee sermons. The task of selecting appropriate bible verses and writing the official collect and prayer was entrusted to Ludvig Harboe, the bishop of Zealand. Harboe submitted a draft on 27 May 1760, which was approved without corrections by Johan Ludvig von Holstein, possibly after consulting with the king.<sup>1490</sup> Harboe suggested twelve verses, four of which were selected for the centenary.<sup>1491</sup> For the morning service, he chose Psalm 18 50, 51: «I will sing praises unto thy name, who giveth great deliverances to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.»<sup>1492</sup> Like the verse chosen for the morning service in 1749, the selection of Psalm 18 encouraged the clergy to draw parallels between David and Frederick V, as well as between David and Frederick III. We can assume that the psalm's reference to David's «deliverances» was perceived as particularly relevant to the present occasion. In a Danish

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<sup>1488</sup> Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 360.

<sup>1489</sup> «At han paa trods af den i Enevoldsarveregeringsakten fastlagte tradition vovede sig saa langt du i denne retning, vækker undren. Maaske var det—ved siden af hans ringe evne til at skrive en bog og hans sendrægtighed—en af aarsagerne til, at hans udkast aldrig blev fuldendt og publiceret». Bøggild-Andersen 1971: 360.

<sup>1490</sup> The documents in the Danish Chancery bears von Holstein's comments of approval in the margin. As we saw in chapter 5, Christian VI was personally involved in selecting bible verses and reading the jubilee prayers and texts, but we have no similar proof of Frederick's personal involvement in the preparatory planning of the centenaries in his reign.

<sup>1491</sup> For the early morning service and the evening service, von Holstein chose two verses from the First Book of Kings: God's promise to David that he would uphold his dynasty on the throne (1 Kings 2,4) and the people's joy over God's blessings towards David and Israel (1 Kings 8, 66). For the noon service, he selected a verse from the Book of Job about God's elevation of kings to the throne (Job 36,7). See DRA. DK. D21-117: no. 310 («Texter til Prædikener paa forestaaende Jubel-Fest.»).

<sup>1492</sup> There is not an exact correspondence between the King James Version and the Danish rendition in these verses. I have therefore used the last sentence of verse 49 and the entire verse 50 from KJV, to approximate the Danish version, which reads like this: «Jeg vil synge dit Navn Lof, som beviiser sin Konge store Saligheder, og gjør Miskundhed imod sin Salvende, imod David og hans Sæd, ævindeligen.»

Bible from the mid-eighteenth century, the introductory paragraph that summarized the contents of Psalm 18 explained that, in the psalm, David demonstrates his trust in God, who had helped and saved him (1-4), describes his temptations and distress and how God had shown his wrath against the enemies (5-16), speaks about God's salvation and how he had considered his innocence (17-25), speaks about God's ways and how he showed himself to each and everyone in particular (26-37) and finally, speaks of how God had helped him against his enemies, for which David praised him (38-51).<sup>1493</sup> The intention behind selecting this verse was clearly to stimulate the clergy to draw parallels between the patiently suffering David and Frederick III, on the one hand, and their respective enemies, on the other.

The parallel was strengthened in Harboe's jubilee prayer, which contained several statements about the nature of the absolute monarchy and how it had been introduced. After praising the wisdom of divine providence in the first paragraph, Harboe presented the introduction of absolutism in words that alluded to David's hardships and his subsequent elevation to the throne:

As you humbled us, you made us great. The time the danger was the greatest, you made us feel that your help was the closest. The throne others sought to destroy, you established with the strength of your glory. When these kingdoms had become weakened by a dangerous war, you led us out of it to be healed.<sup>1494</sup>

This paragraph was vaguely phrased, but every minister would know that it referred to the war against the Swedes, the siege of Copenhagen and the miraculous victory against the Swedish enemy during the storm of Copenhagen on 11 February 1659. The prayer went on to claim, in a phrase that was strongly reminiscent of a similar claim in the Royal Law of 1665, that God, «who has all hearts in your hand, steered the hearts of all the estates, and united them as one heart, to deliver our most merciful kings absolute power and command.»<sup>1495</sup>

After having thus described the introduction of absolutism, Harboe praised the spiritual and worldly benefits that the absolute monarchs had shown their subjects. All five of them had been «like Josiah». They had protected and propagated God's pure word, not only to their own subjects at home but also to the «blind heathens, over which the Prince of Darkness ruled [...]». They had

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<sup>1493</sup> Biblia 1740: 630.

<sup>1494</sup> «I det Du ydmygede os, gjorde Du os store. Den Tiid Faren var størst, lodst Du kiende din Hielp at være nærmest. Den Throne andre søgte at kulkaste, befæstede Du ved Din Herligheds Styrke. Da disse Riger ved en farlig Feyde vare blevne svækkede, udførde Du os til at vederqvæges.» *Texter, Collect & Bøn* 1760: 3r.

<sup>1495</sup> «Du, som har alles Hierter i din Haand, styrede alle Stænders Hierter, og forenede dem som eet Hierte, at overlevere Vore Allernaadigste Konger Eenevolds=Magt og Herredømme.» *Texter, Collect & Bøn* 1760: 3r.

ensured that the sacraments were correctly administered and that the congregations had faithful shepherds to feed them with wisdom and understanding. Harboe went on to claim that the kings had also shown their royal mildness and care in worldly matters. No one, claimed Harboe, could complain that they were oppressed. Every king had been like a father that all his subjects could approach with good faith. The small and the great alike had equal access to their fatherly hearts and equal protection under their just government. Their absolute power had been used to «place a rein in the mouths and a ring in the nose in all those who wanted to oppress and treat unfairly their brothers.»<sup>1496</sup>

The main body of extant sermons from the centenary are the seventy sermon manuscripts that were submitted to bishop Ludvig Harboe from the clergy in Zealand.<sup>1497</sup> In addition, there are five additional manuscript sermons in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, most of which are written by clergymen from southeastern Norway.<sup>1498</sup> Finally, eleven clergymen from both Norway and Denmark published their jubilee sermons after the jubilee. The sermons from 1760 are much more homogenous and similar to each other in content than the sermons from the previous jubilee in 1749. In part, this must be an effect of the thanksgiving day celebrated in Denmark on 11 February every year from 1660. Although the thanksgiving day marked another historical event, namely the victory over the Swedes during the storm of Copenhagen in 1659, its theme of the providential salvation of king, city and kingdoms was transferrable to the introduction of absolutism. Besides, there was a clear causal relationship between the Charles Gustavus wars and the Estates General in October 1660 that probably stimulated many clergymen to use established motives from the 11 February tradition. As we shall see, the debt to the thanksgiving day tradition is particularly evident in the way the clergy spoke of king Frederick III and his conduct during the war and in its immediate aftermath.

I shall here discuss four key topics, three of which have to do with the events of 1660 themselves, while the fourth has to do with the aftermath of the introduction of absolutism. The first topic is how the clergy spoke of Frederick III and his conduct during the Charles Gustavus wars and the subsequent Estates General. I will show how the official tradition and its image of the passive king

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<sup>1496</sup> «Deres Eenevolds=Magt er bleven anvendt til at lægge dem en Tømme i Munden og en Ring i Næsen, som ville undertrykke og forfordeele deres Medbrødre.» *Texter, Collect & Bøn* 1760: 4r.

<sup>1497</sup> LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69; The box includes a few duplicates.

<sup>1498</sup> There are four Norwegian sermons in *Taler og Prædikener holdte ved Jubelfesterne 1749 og 1760* (Kall 467 kvart); In addition, there is the Norwegian chaplain Henric Friderich Pram's sermon, delivered at Holmen church in Copenhagen in *Jubelprædiken holdt d. 16de October 1760 i Holmens Kirke i Kööbenhavn* (NKS 1116 kvart).; There is also a sermon by Povel Matthias Bildsøe, but this is a copy of the one in bishop Harboes collection: *D: Povel Matthias Bildsøes Tvende Hellige Taler* (GKS 2813 kvart).

merged with the biblical story of king David to create a powerful and suggestive image of a divinely elected and protected monarch. The second topic is the manner in which absolutism was introduced. As we shall see, the clergy insisted that the change in the form of government had taken place so quickly and peacefully that it should be seen as undeniable proof of God's intervention in the affair. The third topic is the question of the origins and legitimacy of absolutism. Here, I shall consider how the clergy positioned themselves in relationship to two different modes of explanation: absolute monarchy by divine right versus absolute monarchy based on a contract between the monarch and his subjects. Finally, I shall discuss the clergy's claims about the positive social consequences of the introduction of absolutism, focusing on the question of how the constitutional change had affected the conditions of the Danish peasantry.

### **Danish David: The myth of the passive and patiently suffering king**

The verse selected by bishop Harboe for the morning service encouraged the clergy to draw parallels between king David and king Frederick III. The ministers followed suit, making the history of David's divine election, his patient endurance of hard trials and his subsequent elevation to the throne of Israel the template for how they told the story of Frederick III and the introduction of absolutism. Broder Brorson, minister of Dronninglund on Jutland, is a good example of how this could be done. In his application, Brorson systematically compared the lives of the two kings: they had both become kings unexpectedly, they had both experienced difficulties before they could accede to the throne, they had both been the Lord's anointed, they both suffered persecution, and so on. After his long and detailed comparison, Brorson concluded with the claim that, since Frederick III had been shown the same blessings as David, or in fact even greater blessings, «one can rightfully call him the Danish David.»<sup>1499</sup>

Another Broder Brorson, the recently appointed minister in Vor Frelser's church in Copenhagen, also focused on the patient suffering of Frederick III in his sermon.<sup>1500</sup> According to Brorson, the way in which Frederick III had been made an absolute monarch was a perfect example of how God manages his affairs on earth: «when [God] wants to please, he saddens, when he wants

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<sup>1499</sup> «[...]saa at man med Føye kand kalde ham den Danske David;» Brorson 1765: 81.

<sup>1500</sup> There were several Danish clergymen bearing the name Broder Brorson in the eighteenth century. This Broder Brorson was the son of the famous Danish bishop and hymn writer Hans Adolph Brorson. Hans Adolph Brorson had a brother named Broder Brorson who was bishop of Ålborg and father of the third Broder Brorson, the parish minister of Dronninglund.

to give, he takes, when he wants to elevate, he oppresses». The reason behind this method, wrote Brorson, was that the honour for all things should befall God. No other king of the Oldenburg dynasty had experienced such trials as Frederick, and no other king had experienced the same elevation. One could therefore use David's own words on Frederick: «As you humiliate me, you make me great 2. Sam.22 v.36.»<sup>1501</sup> No other monarch had ever had a better and more legitimate access to the throne than him. Frederick had wanted nothing else than what God had wanted, and he proceeded with a «godly wisdom and meekness, and let the entire progress and outcome of the matter depend on God.»<sup>1502</sup>

Peder Discher, vicar of Blovstrød and Lillerød in Northern Zealand, expounded the same verse (2 Samuel 22, 36) in his exordium.<sup>1503</sup> According to Discher, «this confession makes a great king, who had been well practiced in the school of suffering and adversity, in which he had learnt how precious but strange the ways of God's providence is with the children of man; how necessary and useful suffering is for us humans.»<sup>1504</sup> Discher claimed that adversity was God's way of strengthening the faith of men, and that the school of suffering was the place in which most children of God had reached their faith. God's purpose with adversity is to teach man to know himself so that he can govern himself in better times, to teach him the ways of the world so that he does not abuse it in more fortunate times, and to teach him to trust God alone so that he learns to fear God above all things in better times. Discher briefly mentioned some examples from the life of David to prove his propositions, but quickly moved on to Frederick III. A hundred years ago, wrote Discher, this pious king could speak with the words of David and say «As you humiliate me, you make me

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<sup>1501</sup> «det heder om ham, som af David: I det du ydmyger mig; gjør du mig stor, 2 Sam. 22 v.36.» Brorson 1760: 36; The Danish translation of this verse differs from KJV, which reads: «Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great.»

<sup>1502</sup> «[...]med en gudelig Viisdom og Sagtmodighed, og lod den gandske Sags Fremgang og Udgang ankomme paa Gud[...].» Brorson 1760: 37.

<sup>1503</sup> The same verse (2 Samuel 22, 36) was quoted in bishop Harboes jubilee prayer, which can explain why several ministers discussed this verse. See *Texter, Collect & Bøn* 1760: 3r.

<sup>1504</sup> «Denne Bekiendelse gör en stor Konge, som var bleven vel övet i Lidelser og Gienvordigheders Skole, hvorudi han havde lært, hvor dyrebar skiönt forunderlig Guds Forsyns Veje ere med Menniskens Börn; hvor nödvendige og nyttige Lidelser ere for os Mennisker.» Peder Discher, *Jubel-Prædiken over Psalmen 18 v.50,51 holdet for Blaaströds og Lilleröds Meenigheder d:16 Octobr: 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [2]; Diderich Kierulf expounded the same verse in his exordium, and made the exact same point as Peder Discher: «Det samme, som David bekiender i vores Indgangs Ord: I det Du ydmyger mig, gör Du mig stor, kand ogsaa Danemarks og Norges Konger og Undersaatter bekiende, at Gud ved Ydmygelse haver ophöyet dem til den største Herlighed, Roelighed og Lyksalighed i Verden.» Diderich Kierulf, *Hvorledes Vi med vor Lof og Taksigelse skal ophöye Herren, som med Salighed og Miskundhed har ophöyet os, forestillet i en Prædiken over Höymesse-Texten Psal: 18. v:50,51. paa den anordnede Jubel-Fest d 16de Octobr: 1760 for den ved den Kongel: Regiering indförte Eenevolds Magt*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [9].



great.» From being a «limited and powerless king» he became a powerful absolute monarch. Instead of being governed by others, he could govern for himself.<sup>1505</sup>

Ludvig Friderich Broch, parish minister of Hitra and dean of Fosen in Norway, used the story of David's persecution by Saul to prove that God had elected and protected Frederick III. In his exordium, Broch gave a theocratical interpretation of the origins of monarchy: God has the power over all kingdoms on earth and it is he that gives and takes away power to and from whoever he pleases, whenever he likes. When God wants to elevate someone to power and glory, he does not follow «the ways of the world». Whereas humans use force, weapons, guile, flattery and hypocrisy to achieve power, fortune and glory, God humiliates and degrades his chosen ones. Broch used Moses, Joseph and David as examples of this method. All three had been degraded, enslaved or exiled before they were given power and glory. Before David became king, he was persecuted by Saul and forced to hide in the wilderness to survive. According to Broch, the purpose of these trials was to prepare David and give him the «care, the vigilance and the prudence» that was demanded of a king, to give him opportunity to elevate God in his heart» and to be forged according to God's will. These experiences taught David how hard it was to be poor and persecuted so that he, when he finally became king, could show compassion with the poor and weak.<sup>1506</sup>

Broch compared the biblical stories of how God tried his chosen ones, especially the story of David, with the events of 1660. He claimed that there was a clear parallell between how God had helped David, and how he had helped the Danish absolute monarchs. They had been given absolute power «in a way, in that condition and through those ways that are the opposite of the ways and means used by the world, to come to honour, highness and majesty».<sup>1507</sup> The introduction of absolutism had taken place when a «meek Moses» had sat upon the Danish throne. Broch portrayed Frederick III as a king that did not seek honour for his own part and that had had nothing to do with the groups that had sought to give him hereditary power. He «kept himself completely out of it, stayed still without involving himself at all and only complained to God, like Moses, over the oppressed, impoverished and ruined condition of his people, and let everything depend on divine providence.»<sup>1508</sup> Broch's description of the meek and passive king was at least in part modelled after

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<sup>1505</sup> Peder Discher, *Jubel-Prædiken over Psalmen 18 v.50,51 holdet for Blaastrøds og Lillerøds Meenigheder d:16 Octobr:1760*, [4].

<sup>1506</sup> Broch 1760: 19-23.

<sup>1507</sup> «[...] paa en Maade, i den Tilstand og igiennem de Veye, som er tvert imod Verdens Veye og de Midler Verden bruger, for at komme til Ære, Høyhed og Majestæt.» Broch 1760: 27.

<sup>1508</sup> «[...] holdte seg aldeles derudenfore, blev stille, uden at bemænge sig med det ringeste, sukkede ikkun med Mose til GUD, over sit Folkes fortrængte, forarmede og ruinerede Tilstand, og lod alting komme an paa GUDs Forsyn.» Broch 1760: 27.

Ludvig Holberg's account of the role played by king Frederick in the introduction of absolutism: phrases in Broch's text clearly indicate that he had read the historian's account of the events of 1660. Both shared Holberg's view of Frederick III as a passive and pious king that let the events unfold without getting involved. Whereas Holberg's account was strictly secular and emphasized the political intrigues at the Estates General, however, Broch's interpretation was entirely religious.<sup>1509</sup>

The fundamental motive in Broch's sermon was that king Frederick's hardships as well as his subsequent elevation was the work of God alone. The great contrast between the king's power before and after the events of October 1660 proved the miraculous qualities of what had taken place. This idea was summed up in a paragraph that echoed a similar phrase in bishop Harboe's prayer:

In this way, the royal throne was established, exactly when the enemy sought to destroy it; the crown received the greatest lustre, just when the enemy sought to tread it under his feet. Our kings were given the highest honour and dignity exactly when the enemy sought to devour and cast them away from their inheritance: This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Psal: 118, 23.<sup>1510</sup>

The fate of the kingdom's most notorious traitor, Corfitz Ulfeldt, was used by some clergymen as further evidence in support of the providential interpretation of Frederick's reign, and to strengthen the parallel between the Danish monarch and his biblical counterpart David. Like David, claimed Willads Gamborg of Hvalsø and Særløse parishes, Frederick III had not lacked traitors who had tried to oppress him, such as Ulfeldt and others, but God had stopped all of their contrivances. Like David, he could therefore say «as you humiliated me, you made me great».<sup>1511</sup> Other ministers described Ulfeldt himself in biblical terms, comparing him to various traitor-figures from the Old Testament. Ludvig Friderich Broch, for instance, likened Ulfeldt to king David's treasonous councillor Achitophel: «if David had his Achitophel, king Friderich had the known Ulfeld, who in so many ways persecuted him».<sup>1512</sup> Although obscure to most people today, an eighteenth century audience would probably have known that Achitophel was a councillor to king David that betrayed David by changing sides to his rebellious son Absalom. When Absalom's revolt failed, Achitophel

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<sup>1509</sup> For concrete examples of how Broch used Holberg's history, see Slettebø 2014a.

<sup>1510</sup> «Saaledes blev Konge=Thronen befæstet, just da Fienden tænkte at omstøde den; Kronen fik den herligste Glands, just da man søgte at træde den under Fødder. Vore Konger fik den allerhøjest Ære og Værdighed, just da Fienden tænkte at opsluge og bortstøde Dem fra sin Arv: Dette er skeet af Herren, og der er underligt for vore Øyne. Psal: 118,23.» Broch 1760: 30.

<sup>1511</sup> Willads Gamborg, *Jubel Prædiken over Psal: 18. v: 56, 57. til Erindring om den Eenevolds Regiering, som blef indført i disse Riger for 100 Aar siden, holdet i Hvalsøe og Særløse Meenighed d 16 Octobr: 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [14].

<sup>1512</sup> «Havde David sin Achitophel, saa havde Kong FRIDERICH den bekiendte Ulfeld, som paa saa mange Maader efterstræbede ham.» Broch 1760: 28; See also C. Steenbuch, *Jubel Prædikken over Texten Psalmen XVIII v holden i Rønne Kirke paa Bornholm d: 16 Octobris Ao 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [20].

had hanged himself. In an even more extensive analogy, Broder Brorson compared the Swedish king Charles X Gustavus to king Saul and Corfitz Ulfeldt to Saul's chief herdsman Doeg the Edomite. In 1 Sam 22 9, Doeg reveals to king Saul that David had visited Ahimelech, whereupon Saul orders Ahimelech to be slain. Just as Doeg had incited Saul's anger against David, claimed Brorson, Frederick III had had to suffer much from Ulfeldt. According to Brorson, Ulfeldt was not only responsible for the war between Denmark and Sweden, his irreconcilable hatred towards the king and insurmountable ambition had made him try to convince Charles Gustavus to break the Peace of Roskilde.<sup>1513</sup> Christian Jenssen of Fredensborg and Asminderød parishes used the story of Corfitz Ulfeldt as one of many examples of how divine providence had protected the absolute monarchs. According to Jenssen, Ulfeldt's pillar of shame should be seen not only as a monument to Ulfeldt's treason, but also as a monument to divine providence:

When we therefore see a pillar of shame erected in memory and disgust of such bad deeds, we can also appropriately consider it as a pillar of honour in memory of God's providence over the king, the government and the subjects. And when we thereafter read its inscription engraved: the traitor N.N. in eternal shame and disgrace, we should add the subtitle: in eternal praise and honour of the divine providence!<sup>1514</sup>

The image of the meek and patiently suffering king who was raised from danger and humility to safety and greatness was undoubtedly one of the most common motives in the jubilee sermons from 1760. For clergymen well versed in constructing such parallels between the Danish kings and their Old Testament monarchs it would have been quite natural to identify the likeness between king Frederick III and David. Many elements of the clergymen's narratives were also firmly established in the cultural memory, not least thanks to the annual thanksgiving days on 11 February. Some jubilee sermons indeed mentioned the annual thanksgiving day in memory of the storm of Copenhagen and connected it to the introduction of absolutism.<sup>1515</sup>

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<sup>1513</sup> Brorson 1765: 74-75.

<sup>1514</sup> «Naar vi derfor see en Skand-Støtte, som til Erindring og Afskye for slige Ugierninger er opreist, saa kand vi billig tillige ansee dem som en Ære Støtte til Erindring for Guds Forsyn over Kongen, Regjæringen og Undersaatterne. Og naar vi derpaa leser dens Opskrift indgravet: Førræderen N.N. til ævig Skam og Skiendsel, saa bör vi billig gjøre den Underskrift: Den Gudommelige Forsyn til ævig Pøris og Ære!» Christian Jenssen, *Det tilbørlige Forhold for Guds Godbed af Jubel Dagen, som en Dag Herren har gjort*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [26-27].

<sup>1515</sup> For instance in David Plesmer's sermon: «Ja da det syntes (næsten for 102 Aar siden), at vore mægtige Fiender vilde gjort een Ende paa den da værende gudfrygtige fromme Kongis, Kong Friderich den Tredies og denne velsignede Stammis Regjering gav Gud ham ikke alleene Een imod all Menniskelig Tanke, herlig Seier /: det vi aarlig d: 11 Febr. med skyldigst Taksigelse erindrer, ærer og ophøyer Guds Nafn for :/ men end og ved sin Majestet's Arm befæstede den Throne andre søgte at kuldkaste». David Plesmer, *Conc: Jubilæa d: 16 Oct: 1760 Text: Psal: 18. 50.51*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69:: [21]; Another example is Johan Neuchs' jubilee poem: «De Gamle vidste det, de aldrig det forglemte,/Som af den haarde Krig saa saare bleve klemte,/Men Fienderne forsvandt som Avnerne for Blæst,/Vi fik

Although the motive of the meek and patiently suffering monarch was thus closely associated with the reign of Frederick III, the motive was not wholly unprecedented in royal propaganda and iconography in Denmark-Norway in the early modern period. Frederick's father and predecessor on the throne had cultivated a similar image of himself during the period of unsuccessful warfare and family dispute that cast a shadow over the last decades of his reign. As Hugo Johannsen argues in an article on the motive of the «meek king» («Den ydmyge konge») in royal art from the reign of Christian IV, this king perceived the «political and personal humiliation» in the 1620's and 1630's as a personal «passion drama» and requested his artists to represent himself as a personification of the meek and self-sacrificing Christ.<sup>1516</sup> The most well-known and influential example of this theme is the painting of Christian's vision of Christ tormented, a vision that he received during his morning prayer at Rothenburg castle on 8 December 1625, in an early but difficult phase of his engagement in the Thirty Years War. The first documentary reference of a painting of the vision stems from 1631. It is therefore likely, writes Johannsen, that the king's decision to record the vision for posterity came after his defeat in the war had become a fact:

Only when he, who in contemporary sermons and prayers had been praised as a saviour [and] who risked life and kingdom for the sake of the Gospels, felt derided and mocked himself— only then did he feel a real need to seek solace in the identification with the suffering Christ, and hereby let his surroundings understand the greatness in the humiliations.<sup>1517</sup>

Henrik von Achen proposes a similar interpretation of the images: by creating an identification between the suffering Christ's the king, some of the sting was taken out of the latter's military defeats.<sup>1518</sup> Von Achen also points out the continuing relevance of the images of the king's vision, even beyond the reign of Christian IV himself. It conveyed a message about the dignity and divinity of the Crown, «because of rather than *despite* the misery of the times and the apparent loss of prestige».

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Taksigelsens og Lovsangs aarlig Fest./ Ja denne Jubel-Fest er født af samme Smerte,/Som klemte samme Gang til Dannemarkes Hierte,/Vor Konge FRIDERICH og Landet var paa Knæe,/Men reiste sig igien og staaer som Palme-Træe.» Neuchs 1760: 19.

<sup>1516</sup> Johannsen 1983: 128.

<sup>1517</sup> «Først da han, der i samtidige prædikener og bønner var blevet lovprist som en frelser, der vovede liv og rige for evangeliets skyld, selv følte sig forhånet og bespottet—først da, havde han for alvor behov for at søge trøst i identifikationen med den lidende Christus, og herigennem lade omgivelserne forstå storheden i ydmygelserne.» Johannsen 1983: 139-140; Henrik von Achen argues, on the other hand, that it is more likely that the vision was drawn or engraved shortly after the king had experienced it in 1625. Von Achen 1988: 45.

<sup>1518</sup> Von Achen 1988: 51.

This message, writes von Achen, could resonate in the reign of Christian's successor and throughout the century.<sup>1519</sup>

Daniel Johansen points out that replications of the image of Christian IV's vision at Rothenburg had a tremendous renaissance («en voldsom renessanse») in Norwegian churches from the 1680s, and particularly in the first two decades of the eighteenth century.<sup>1520</sup> Johansen connects the proliferation of the image in this period with the two wars in this period, the Scanian War and the Great Northern War in the reigns of Christian V and Frederick IV. Since both these kings had waged costly and not altogether rewarding wars against Sweden, the spread of the image in Norwegian churches in this period suggest that the personal sufferings of these kings may have been identified with the Christlike suffering of their predecessor Christian IV. According to Johansen, the paintings steered the commoners' attention away from the possibility that the wars were lost due to poor leadership, and over to a focus on the losses as imitations of Christ: «If Denmark-Norway had lost the war, according to the logic of the absolute monarchy it was the king's personal loss. The king had, like Christ, fought the good cause and lost for man.»<sup>1521</sup>

The clergy's merging of the biblical story of the suffering David with the history of Frederick III created a powerful myth of origins for the Danish absolute monarchy. Not only did this interpretation harmonize well with the well-established tradition of viewing the king as a passive and politically innocent actor at the Estates General in 1660, it also greatly enhanced the miraculous and God-given qualities of the introduction of absolutism. Every major disaster and calamity that had befallen the kingdoms during the Charles Gustavus Wars played a part in the divine plan: the near-destruction of Denmark was God's way of testing his elected and anointed king and preparing him for greatness. None of the ministers mentioned that the disastrous war had in fact started with a Danish attack on Sweden. Their accounts were centred almost exclusively on the king himself and his brave decision to stay with his subjects to defend his residential city Copenhagen. In keeping with this limited perspective, the ministers did also not mention that the countryside in Jutland and Funen had been ravaged by plague and pillaged by auxiliary troops from Poland and Brandenburg, sent by

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<sup>1519</sup> «I aller høyeste grad rommer fremstillingene av kongens syn et budskap om kongemaktens verdighet og gudommelighet, nettopp *på grunn av* mer enn *trass* i tidenes elendighet og det tilsynelatende prestisjetapet.» Von Achen 1988: 52.

<sup>1520</sup> According to Johansen, 22 images of the king's vision survives today, all of which are or have been in Norwegian churches. Johansen 2014: 267; An example of one of these images is found in Amundsen 1999: 51.

<sup>1521</sup> «Dersom Danmark-Norge hadde tapt krigen, var det etter eneveldig logikk kongens personlige tap. Kongen hadde som Kristus kjempet den gode sak, og tapt for menneskene.» Johansen 2014: 268.

the king's allies to assist in the war against the Swedes.<sup>1522</sup> The story of Frederick III as the Danish David instead directed sympathy and attention towards the king and his patient endurance of humiliation, making one of the most fateful moments in the history of the kingdoms into a matter between the Lord and his anointed.

## A bloodless revolution

Danish and Norwegian clergymen stressed the fact that the introduction of absolutism in 1660 had happened without any bloodshed, violence or civil war. This claim was discursively associated with the assertion that king Frederick III had passively and patiently received the voluntary offer of hereditary right and absolute power from the estates. Unlike other European kings in the past and in recent years, so this argument went, the meek and pious Frederick III had not had to resort to violence or conspiracy to become an absolute monarch. In the same vein, some clergymen emphasized the speed and ease of the enterprise: whereas other monarchs had had to plot and scheme for years to achieve absolute power, the introduction of absolutism had come about in a few days in Denmark. In Povel Matthias Bildsøe's sermon we find an illustrative amalgam of all these arguments:

Such important an undertaking that this change was, which has in other kingdoms cost not only many years of labour but also the blood of many people, was here, in a time when this kingdom was in the poorest condition, when the most meek and least selfish king sat on the throne, brought to an end in four days without the king making an effort to achieve it, without bloodshed, yes even without any particular unrest.<sup>1523</sup>

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<sup>1522</sup> See Lassen 1965.

<sup>1523</sup> «Saa vigtigt et Værk, som denne Forandring var, der haver i andre Riger kostet ey allene mange Aars Arbeide, men endogsaa mange Menniskers Blod, blev her paa en Tid, da dette Rige befandt sig i den sletteste Tilstand, da den sagtmodigste og mindst egennyttige Konge sad paa Thronen, i fire Dage bragt til Ende uden Kongens egen Bemøelse hervor, uden Blods Udgydelse, ja uden nogen synderlig Uroe.» Povel Matthias Bildsøe, *Jubel=Prædiken der blev holdet til Høymesse i Holmens Kirke paa Jubel=og Taksigelses=Festen for Souverainiteten den 16<sup>de</sup> Octobr: 1760. over de forordnede Text Psalm: 18. v: 50, 51*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [42]; See also Cramer 1760: 16; Brorson 1765: 78; Laurids Terpæger, *En Jubel-Prædiken holdet i Mebrn Kirke, Baarsøe Herred, Ao 1760 d 16 Oct til en Ihukommelse af Souverainitetet, indført i Danmark samme Dag for 100 Aar siden, sc. Ao 1660 d 16 Oct, og da overgivet til den stormægtigste Konge, Kong Friderich den Tredie*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [13]; Peter Flesborg, *Guds Lovs Ihukommelse for Hans Velgiærning, imod os ved Souverainitetet betragtet I Anledning af dend ordinerede Text [...] som til Erindring Om dend udi Kong Friderich dend 3dies Tiid [...] Eenevolds Magtes Indførsel udi Dannemark og Norge, og dens ved Guds Forsyn, endnu Vedvarelse indtil denne Tiid, som i Dag er 100 Ar siden, blev ved en Jubelprædiken for Grønholts Meenighed Annextet til Friedensborg Slotts og Asminderüds Meenigheder dend 16de Octobr: Ao 1760 forklaret*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [32]; Niels Bjørn Tødsleuf, *Prædiken over Psalm: XVIII vers: 50, 51 Til Erindring om den for et hundrede Aar siden Ved den Kongelige Regiering indførte Eenevolds Magt og Herredømme holdet d: 16 Octobris 1760 for Gjörlöw og Bracchendrup Meenigheder i Löve Herred af Niels Björn Tødsleuf*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [8]; Diderich Kierulf, *Hvorledes Vi med vor Lof og Taksigelse skal ophøye Herren, som med Salighed og Miskundbed har ophøyet os, forestillet i en Prædiken over Høymesse-Texten Psal: 18. v:50,51. paa den anordnede Jubel-Fest d 16de Octobr: 1760 for den ved den*

The insistence of the bloodlessness and ease of the introduction of absolutism in Denmark had two functions. First and foremost, it supported the overarching argument about the legitimacy of the change of government that was promulgated in the Sovereignty Act and the Royal Law, as well as in Ludvig Holberg's historical writings. The absence of violence, unrest and conspiracy strengthened the claim that the estates had made a free and voluntary offer to Frederick III. Second, the allegedly uniquely peaceful nature of the events of the 1660 further suggested that God had directed the whole affair. The minister Caspar Bruun combined both of these arguments when he wrote, in a phrase strongly reminiscent of Holberg's, that «[n]o kings in Europe have such claim to sovereignty as our kings have, since they have not acquired it by violence, force or sword, but received it as a voluntary present and gift by all the subjects, God who has all hearts in his hand, steered all minds to make the offer to the king;»<sup>1524</sup>

The theme of voluntary submission found visual expression on three of the jubilee medals that had been commissioned for the centenary. There is in fact a remarkable similarity in the designs on these medals, especially considering that they were commissioned and designed independently of each other. All of them depict a female figure, personifying either a virtue or a geographical entity, kneeling submissively in front of some form of representation of the absolute monarch. The magistrate of Copenhagen's medal, struck by Johan Ephraim Bauert, depicted a female personification of Copenhagen kneeling in front of Frederick III dressed in Roman garb, standing underneath a baldacin with a rudder in his left hand and giving the woman a wreath with his right hand.<sup>1525</sup> On the medal commissioned by the *Royal Danish Society of Sciences and Letters*, designed by one of its members Bolle Willem Luxdorph and struck by the medallist Johan Henrik Wolff, a seated

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*Kongel: Regjering indfördte Eenevolds Magt*, [13]; Jørgen Steenstrup, *Den Tachtsigelse Undersaatte ere Gud pligtige, der velsigner Dem med velsignede Regjenterne, at være underdanige*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [39].

<sup>1524</sup> «Ingen Konger har i Europa saadan Hiemmell paa Souverainité som vore Konger har, thi de har ei ved Vold, Magt, Sværd tilmasset sig dend, men taget imod dend som en samtykt Present og Foræring af alle Undersaatterne, Gud som har alle Hierter i sin Haand, styrde alles Sind til at offerere Kongen dend;» Caspar Bruun, *Jubel-Prædiken Til Tachtsigelse for Souverainitetets Indførsel*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [8]; There is a similar phrase in Ludvig Frederik Broch's sermon: «Det andre Potentater ved Magt, ved Sverd eller mange Aars Konst har bragt til Veye, og ved meget Blods Udgydelse holdt ved Lige, det har vore Allernaadigste og i Ævighed velsignede Konger, ved sin Guds frygt, ved sin milde, fromme og naadige Regjering erhvervet og vedligeholdt, saa ingen Konge i Verden kand beraabe sig paa eller fremviise, saa lovlig, saa god, gyldig og anstændig Adkomst til sin Eenevolds Magt, som de Danske Konger, hvilke med beste og grundigste Føye kand kalde sig Konger af Guds Naade[...]» Broch 1760: 30; See also Otto Wilsbech, *Dannemarches og Norges Jubilæum eller Fryde-Fest over Den Guds Store Welgierning Den saa ønskelig Forandring i Regjeringen ved den 16 Octobr. 1660, at overdrage Det Danske Konge-Huus Et Souveraine og Eene-volds Herredømme alt til Disse Rigers Sande Welgaaende efter Kongelig allernaadigste Anordning Forestillet Bregninge og Biergsteds Meenigheder den 16 Octobr. 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [32].

<sup>1525</sup> The inscription on the reverse, «VRBIS MELIORIS ORIGO» referred to Frederick III as the source of Copenhagen's privileges. Galster 1936: 349-350.

Apollo hands a kneeling woman a letter of privilege. The inscription read «LIBERTAS– PER ABSOL DOMIN ASSERTA D. XVI. OCT. MDCLX VOT SOLV D. XVI OCT. MDCCLX», or «Freedom secured by the absolute dominion on 16 October 1660. Vows made on 16 October 1760».<sup>1526</sup> In similar fashion, the medal that was commissioned by bishop Harboe, paid for by the clergy and struck by Daniel Jensen Adzer depicted a female personification of Denmark-Norway placing regalia in the lap of another female figure (Piety). It bore the inscription «SPONTE OBLATA PIE TUENDA», or «[What is] voluntary offered should be piously protected.»<sup>1527</sup>

The image of the introduction of absolutism in 1660 as a peaceful transfer of power or a bloodless revolution can be interpreted as part of the self-congratulatory tradition that Michael Bregnsbo has labelled the «Danish way», according to which social and political revolutions in Denmark had all happened «peacefully and in understanding between the different groups in society.»<sup>1528</sup> During the bicentenary in 1736, Andreas Hojer and several Norwegian clergymen had made similar statements about the Danish Reformation in 1536. In 1760, the events of 1660 were added to the list of peaceful revolutions in the Danish past, making the absence of discord between the monarch and estates an absolutely consistent pattern in the history of Denmark and Norway. In the sermon he delivered for the parishes of Veksø and Stenløse in 1760, the dean Jacob Muus made a point of how quickly and fortunately the three «great blessings» in Danish national history had taken place. The Oldenburg dynasty's accession to the throne, the Reformation and the introduction of absolutism had all been peaceful and quick:

[...] even though all great changes made either in the church or in the state are most often dangerous and accompanied by great confusion, the Lord gave such a notable luck and wonderful progress to these three that here, unlike elsewhere, they did not cost any man's blood, yes! not even any trouble, sword or battle.<sup>1529</sup>

As the sermons quoted so far indicate, the claim that the introduction of absolutism in Denmark had been uniquely peaceful had an implicit comparative dimension. Generally, the clergymen did not specify which other European states they had in mind when they claimed that comparable events in

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<sup>1526</sup> Galster 1936: 334-335

<sup>1527</sup> Galster 1936: 295.

<sup>1528</sup> Bregnsbo 1996: 311; See also Bregnsbo 1997a: 264-268.

<sup>1529</sup> «Og endskiönt alle store Forandringer, foretagen enten i Kircken heller i Landet, ere oftest farlige, og [tiit] af store Forvirringer; Dog gav vor Herre til disse Tre saadan besynderlig Held og forunderlig Fremgang, at de kostede ikke her, som vel andensteds, nogen Mands Blod, ja! icke eengang nogen Tumult, Sverd heller Strid [...]» Jacob Muus, *ALOE SECLISENIS Sola in Horto Regio Conspicua*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69.



other countries had been accompanied by bloodshed. There are a few exceptions, however, all of which point to the same country as the relevant comparison.

The clergyman Bagge Ussing claimed that the important change in the form of government in Denmark had occurred «without the least bloodshed, which has recently happened, however, in another country, but without anything being achieved.»<sup>1530</sup> With a similar phrase, the minister of Ballerup and Måløv Peder Dorscheus wrote that «that power, which even in our times has been sought by other peoples and that has cost much bloodshed, without being achieved, was here conferred on this pious and brave king without the shedding of a single drop of blood.»<sup>1531</sup> Both Ussing and Dorscheus thus alluded to a recent failed attempt at introducing absolutism in another country, a failure that had had bloody consequences. What recent event were these clergymen referring to? The answer is found in a third sermon. Christian Jenssen discussed how divine providence had ensured that the absolute monarchy had survived in Denmark despite dangers such as war and plague, which could have killed the kings or their heirs if God had not protected them. As proof of «how easily such changes in government could happen when God does not prevent it», Jenssen cited the example of Sweden. There, the death of Charles XII had resulted in the abolition of hereditary absolutism and a return to «the previous form» of government, which had led to a palpable worsening of the subjects' conditions. The Swedish subjects were desperate to have «the happy form of government that we enjoy», and had «made an attempt to acquire the same a short while ago, which was unhappy and fruitless, since the hand of the Lord's providence was not involved in the act, like it was with us.»<sup>1532</sup>

What the three clergymen was referring to, was a failed royalist coup attempt in Stockholm in the summer of 1756. A group of conspirators led by queen Louisa Ulrika had tried to reintroduce absolute monarchy in Sweden, but they were discovered and the plan was thwarted by the government. Eight men that had taken a leading role in the coup, among them four Swedish noblemen, were tortured and publicly executed and the powers of the monarch was even further

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<sup>1530</sup> «[...] og kom denne højvigtige Regiærings Forandring overmaade lykkelig i Stand, uden mindste Blods Udgydelse, som dog ei længe siden er skeed i et andet Land, og endda intet udrettet derved.» Bagge Ussing, *En Jubel=Prædiken, holden for Lundbye og Ølsted Meenigheder d: 16 Octobr: 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69.

<sup>1531</sup> «Og den Magt, som endog i vore Tider har hos andre Folk været søgt, og som har kostet meget Blods Udgydelse, og dog ei er erlanget, blev her uden mindste Blods Draabes Udgydelse denne fromme og tapre Konge frievillig overdragen.» Peder Dorscheus, *Kong Davids Løfsang for Herren for hands imod ham og hands Sæd beviiste Velgjerninger*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69; See also Laurids Terpæger, *En Jubel=Prædiken holdet i Mebrn Kirke, Baarsøe Herred*, [30]; Christian Beverlin Studsgaard, *Jubel Prædiken til taknemmelig Erindring for Souverainitetets Indførsel udi Danmark holden for Herlufsholm Meenighed i Siælland d 16de Octobris 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [8].

<sup>1532</sup> «[...]og til sammes Erlangelse for kort Tid siden have gjort et ulykkeligt og frugtesløs Forsøg, da Herrens egen Forsyns Haand ikke, som hos os, var med i Verket.» Christian Jenssen, *Det tilbørlige Forhold for Guds Godbed af Jubel Dagen, som en Dag Herren har gjort*, [28].

circumscribed. The coup attempt had provoked a paradoxical response in Denmark-Norway. The Danish administration considered the survival in Sweden of the form of government that was established in 1720 as a guarantee against Swedish military aggression. The memory of the devastating Great Northern War was a reminder of the danger Sweden could pose under a strong monarch. In the eyes of the Danish kings and their ministers, the factionalism and party strife in Sweden made the neighbouring kingdom much more harmless and malleable.<sup>1533</sup> In addition, the Swedish king Adolph Frederick came from the ducal dynasty of Holstein-Gottorp, which were sworn enemies of the Danish kings. A strong Swedish monarch with ties to Gottorp would therefore pose a significant threat to Danish territorial security.<sup>1534</sup>

Consequently, the official reaction of the Danish government was to condemn the coup, offer its support to the Swedish government and refuse shelter in Norway to fleeing Swedish royalists. Outside of government circles, however, people does not seem to have been aware of the official stance. In Christiania, the Norwegian deputy stattholder arrested the printer Jens Berg for publishing a Swedish text that supported the coup.<sup>1535</sup> In Copenhagen, the government prohibited Caspar Rothe from adding a preface critical of the Swedish government to his Danish translation of the transcripts of the Swedish Rigsdag negotiations. According to Edvard Holm, public opinion in Copenhagen was critical to the Swedish government. People «nourished too great an enthusiasm for absolute monarchy in itself, and that the government had a completely different view on the Swedish conditions was unbeknownst to them. Foreign policy was a closed book to the educated classes.»<sup>1536</sup>

The Danish government hushed down the most critical public reactions to the crackdown that prevented the reintroduction of absolutism in Sweden. Ussing, Dorscheus and Jenssen's sermons are an interesting postscript to the events of 1756. We find that, rather than expressing their support for the royalist coupmakers or condemning the Swedish government for preventing the introduction of an absolute monarchy, the clergymen chose to cast the coup as a proof of Denmark-Norway's exceptional relationship with God. Ussing and Dorscheu's oblique references to Sweden is

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<sup>1533</sup> In his plan for Frederick V's government, Adam Gottlob Moltke stressed the importance of ensuring that the existing form of government in Sweden was not abolished in favour of absolute monarchy: «Seit letzterem Frieden 1720 ist man bedacht gewesen, mit dieser Krone in gutem Verständnisse und in Einigkeit zu leben und hauptsächlich dahin zu sehen, dass die nach Ableben des Königs Carl XII in Schweden eingeführte Regierungsform beibehalten, und dem Könige keine grössere Macht zugestanden werden möchte als diejenige, mit welcher Friederich dem 1sten [r. 1720-1751] die Krone übertragen worden ist, weil sonst Dännemark zu besorgen haben würde, mit Schweden aufs neue in Kriege zu verfallen.» Hille 1873-1874: 57.

<sup>1534</sup> Holm 1897: 28-29.

<sup>1535</sup> Daae 1878: 14; Holm 1897: 155; Rian 2014: 295.

<sup>1536</sup> «Dertil nærede man altfor stor en Begejstring for Enevælden i og for sig, og at Regeringen saa helt anderledes paa de svenske Forhold, anede man ikke. Den udenrigske Politik var en ganske lukket Bog for den dannede Verden.» Holm 1897: 155; See also Holm 1883: 70-73.

probably a consequence of the prohibition against discussing «matters of state» from the pulpit.<sup>1537</sup> In addition, the government had a generally prohibitive attitude towards criticism of foreign governments in the public sphere, and regularly censored the newspapers after requests from foreign ambassadors. In the specific case of Sweden, Edvard Holm mentions two Danish works of political theory that criticized conditions in the neighbouring state without mentioning the name Sweden at all.<sup>1538</sup>

Two of these preachers had different views, however, about the prevalent views on the absolute monarchy in Sweden. Whereas Jenssen claimed that the Swedish subjects longed for the blessings of royal absolutism, Ussing claimed that they had a misconceived notion of the superiority of their own form of government:

Let then another country complement itself on its liberty, and call this a slavery for us. We shall let them have their imagined liberty and be glad for what they call slavery; because we have in deed and in truth far more freedom than they do, since we have had and have sovereign kings that are more fathers than masters, as they have always considered their subjects as children, and have rejoiced in being called father.<sup>1539</sup>

The allegedly unique absence of violence and bloodshed at the Estates General in Copenhagen 1660 was not only remarked upon by the Danish and Norwegian clergy. The idea was also advanced by two German historians who, apparently independently of each other, published short historical works about the introduction of absolutism in connection with the Danish jubilee. Franz Dominicus Häberlin, historian and university librarian in Helmstedt, published an *Umständliche historische Nachricht* about the introduction of absolutism in the jubilee year. On the very first page of his text, Häberlin argued that «this great event» was remarkable for having taken place without any public violence, whereas in other contemporary kingdoms, the same seldom happened without the shedding of «ganzer Ströme bürgerlichen Blutes [...]»<sup>1540</sup>. The Danish «Staats-Veränderung» had only taken a couple of days and had been carried out in a peaceful manner and without political subterfuge:

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<sup>1537</sup> *Danmarks og Norges Kirke-Ritual* 1685: 22.

<sup>1538</sup> Holm 1883: 72-73; For censorship of the newspapers, see Koch, 1889-1890: 71, 87-94; Rian 2014a: 247-255.

<sup>1539</sup> «Lad da længe nok et andet Land rose sig af sin Frihed, og kalde dette som et Slaverie for os. Vi lader dem gjerne deres indbildte Frihed, og er derimod glade ved det, som de kalder Trældom; thi vi have i Gierning og Sandhed langt meere Frihed, end de, da vi har havt og haver i vore Souveraine Konger meere Fædre end Herrer, saasom de altid har anseet deres Undersaatter som deres Börn, og virkelig glædet sig ved at kaldes Fader.» Bagge Ussing, *En Jubel=Prædiken, holden for Lundbye og Ølsted Meenigheder d: 16 Octobr: 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69.

<sup>1540</sup> Häberlin 1760: 1.

«Keines einigen Bürgers Blut wurde hiebey vergossen, und der fromme und tugendhafte Regent bediente sich zu Ausführung dieses grossen Werkes keiner verhaßten Staatsränke.»<sup>1541</sup>

A year later, Johann Friedrich Joachim, extraordinary professor of history and jurisprudence at the University of Halle, published a 114-page *Historische Nachricht von der, im Königreiche Dännemark im Jahr 1660. eingeführten, Souverainität*. In the preface, Joachim expressed his wonder that such an important matter had happened without the slightest unrest or reluctance. If one read through the histories of other European kingdoms, he wrote, one would see that such changes in the government was always accompanied by great unrest, war and bloodshed. None of this had happened in Denmark, where king Frederick III had left everything to divine providence and given his subjects the liberty to decide the fate of the country.<sup>1542</sup>

One should be wary of reading Joachim and Häberlin's text as completely «independent» appraisals of the history of Danish absolutism. Although the two historians were foreigners and not directly connected to the Danish court or royal administration, they might well have received or hoped to receive a reward for writing their texts. Historian Andreas Gestrich points out that it was quite common for German intellectuals to write manifests, political pamphlets and other apologetic writings in support of governments or other parties. These could either be directly commissioned by the government in question, or written on the author's own initiative in the hope of receiving a gratification. The two types are difficult to distinguish from each other, writes Gestrich, since the commissioned works often obscured their origins.<sup>1543</sup> It seems that Häberlin, at least, had some sort of client-relationship with the Danish government.<sup>1544</sup> Even though it is highly possible that the two historians may have written flattering accounts in the hope of gaining some form of reward, however, one does not necessarily need to doubt the sincerity of their claims that the political revolution in Denmark in 1660 had been unusually peaceful in a European perspective. It is quite possible that this was how the introduction of absolutism in Denmark-Norway was perceived abroad

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<sup>1541</sup> Häberlin 1760: 2.

<sup>1542</sup> «Vorrede» in Joachim 1761.

<sup>1543</sup> Gestrich 1994:194-195.

<sup>1544</sup> Häberlin wrote of the reasons why he had published the work. The first reason was that he wished to give those students from the Danish kingdoms that studies at his university a correct knowledge about the change of the form of government in their fatherland. The second reason was that he wanted to show his gratitude to the Danish king for a gratification he had received for a previous text he had written: «Ja darf ich es wagen, ohne Ruhmräthigkeit dieß öffentlich zy bekennen? so ist es auch eine allerunterthänigste Pflicht der Dankbarkeit und Devotion von mir das hundertjährige freudige Andenken dieses grossen Werkes in einer öffentlichen Schrift zu erneuren, weil Sr. itzo glorwürdigst regierenden Königl. Majestät von Dännemark und Norwegen [...], mein allergnädigster Herr, eine unter meiner Aufsicht und Anleitung verfertigte akademische Streitschrift allerhöchst Dero huldreichsten Aufmerksamkeit gewurdiget, und Höchstdero allergnädigste Zufriedenheit durch ein Königliches Gnadengeschenk mir allerhuldreichst zu erkennen gegeben haben.» Häberlin 1760: 9.

by those who knew anything about it. In any case, the example of the German historians show that the Danish and Norwegian clergy were not alone in claiming that the political history of Denmark-Norway was exceptionally peaceful and harmonious.

In a recent book about the history of the absolute monarchy, published in the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Estates General in 1660, Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen discusses the characteristics of what he calls «the Danish October Revolution», the introduction of absolutism. It is part of modern Danish self-perception, he writes, that political changes in Denmark occur gradually, naturally and based on consensus. The political change in 1660, however, reads as a «catalogue of all that, which we did not think was Danish»:

conspiracy, manipulation, military pressure and, as a result, an absolutist form of government [with a] constitution, the Royal Law of 1665, which is almost the recipe for the perfect dictatorship. Only on one point was the Danish national character true to form: the coup took place without blood.<sup>1545</sup>

Following Olden-Jørgensen, we might say that both the foreign and domestic apologists of the absolute monarchy in 1760 had a reasonable historical basis for at least one of their claims about the events in 1660, namely the absence of bloodshed and violence. When they also made it out to appear as if there had been no conspiracy, manipulation or military pressure involved, however, the image that remained was a miraculously harmonious event that seemed to have no parallel in the whole of European history. As professor Jens Schelderup Sneedorff put it in the jubilee speech he delivered at Sorø Academy on 18 October 1760, the change in the form of government in Denmark in 1660 was a rare historical example of a «voluntary submission based on a common good», and the Danish government the «only absolute government» that was built on trust and a common purpose between ruler and ruled.<sup>1546</sup>

### **The Lord moved their hearts: contractual and theocratical legitimations of absolutism**

In an influential article on the changing views on the Danish absolute monarchy in the late eighteenth century, Norwegian historian Jens Arup Seip argued that the theory of popular

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<sup>1545</sup> «For det lader sig ikke nægte, at et af Danmarkshistoriens skarpe hjørner, arvehyldningen 1660, nærmest er et katalog over alt det, vi ikke troede var dansk: sammensværgelse, manipulation, militært pres og som resultat en enevældig styreform, hvis grundlov, Kongeloven 1665, nærmest er opskriften på det perfekte diktatur. Kun på ét punkt fornægtede den danske nationalkarakter sig ikke: Kuppet forløb ublodigt.» Olden-Jørgensen 2010: 13.

<sup>1546</sup> Sneedorff 1776: 495.

sovereignty had become commonly accepted in Denmark-Norway by the latter half of the eighteenth century. He claimed that the theory's «opposite», absolute monarchy by divine right, had been discarded and was perceived as outdated in this period. According to Seip, the idea that sovereignty had been transferred from the people to the monarch was a «learned theory that at this point in time had penetrated the imagination of all literate circles» and was a standard idea «among everyone capable of discussion.»<sup>1547</sup> Danish historian Ole Feldbæk later made much the same point when he unequivocally stated that «[i]n the eighteenth century, the [concept of a] divinely ordained absolute royal power was an obsolete political theory».<sup>1548</sup>

Another Danish historian, Knud V.J. Jespersen, similarly identifies a development away from a divine right-conception of the Danish absolute monarchy to a theoretical legitimation of absolutism based on natural law. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the monarchy was increasingly seen as based on a contract between king and people. The idea was that, at some point in the remote past, the people had surrendered all power to the king in return for security and social order. Jespersen mentions Ludvig Holberg as a key proponent of this theory, but he also suggests that the absolute monarchs themselves started to conceive of their power in this way. He adds, however, a qualification:

However, this development can probably not be understood as a sign that society as a whole had become less religious, but should rather be perceived as sign that the close connection between state and church that the Reformation had introduced was under increased dissolution at this point in time, due to another European trend, namely the Pietist movement.<sup>1549</sup>

Jespersen argues that Pietism in led to a increased emphasis on religion as a private matter, reducing the importance of the monarch's role in guarding and promoting the true faith. Christian VI, writes Jespersen, managed to avoid the potential conflicts of Pietism by redefining royal power in rationalist terms, but «without completely letting God out of sight.» According to Jespersen, this strategy is reflected in Christian's royal motto: *Deo et populo*, «For God and People».<sup>1550</sup>

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<sup>1547</sup> Seip 1958: 14.

<sup>1548</sup> «I det 18. århundrede var den af Gud anordnede enevældige kongemagt forældet statsteori.» Feldbæk 1982: 69; See also Feldbæk 1991: 160; Dyrvik & Feldbæk 1996: 24.

<sup>1549</sup> «Denne udvikling kand dog næppe tages som udtryk for, at samfundet som helhed var blevet mindre religiøst, men skal snarere opfattes som tegn på, at den nøje sammensmeltning af stat og kirke, som Reformationen havde hidført, på dette tidspunkt var under begyndende opløsning som følge af en anden europæisk strømning, der netop på den tid gjorde sig stærkt gjeldende, nemlig den pietistiske fromhedsbevægelse.» Jespersen 2010b: 133.

<sup>1550</sup> Jespersen 2010b: 134.

The three interpretations arrive at similar conclusions, namely that the eighteenth century saw a gradual secularization or rationalization of conceptions of the origins and legitimacy of monarchical power in Denmark-Norway. On one level the argument is undoubtedly correct, as there were certainly changes in how monarchy was legitimized in this period. The political theories analyzed by Seip, influenced as they were by new conceptions of popular sovereignty and published during a period (1784-1799) of liberalization of the public sphere and moderate relaxation of censorship, could not have been written a hundred or even fifty years before. In the mid-eighteenth century, there were also Danish writers that argued squarely against divine right-theories, claiming that natural law was the only true basis of the monarchy.<sup>1551</sup> The question is, however, whether all of this implies that the new ideas replaced the old completely, or if they could in fact co-exist. Michael Schaich points out that the consensus in eighteenth-century scholarship has long been that the period saw a «de-sacralization» of monarchy, a weakening of its religious foundations, and a «disenchantment of the monarchy by divine grace paving the way for a more rationalized form of absolutist government.»<sup>1552</sup> As scholars have rediscovered the persistence of religion as a social and political factor in the period, however, the importance of the notion of divine right monarchy has also been reevaluated and historians have «shown that it enjoyed a wider currency than was once believed.» Rather than speaking of the decline or even the replacement of religion as a political or ideological force in politics and society in the eighteenth century, Schaich suggests that we should see religion as one important political discourse among other rival discourses: «There were clearly rival discourses in the eighteenth century predicated on more secular notions. Yet religious vocabulary commanded more ground in the ideological debates of the day than historians used to concede.»<sup>1553</sup>

There are in fact good reasons to reevaluate the claim that divine right-ideology became outdated in Denmark-Norway in the course of the eighteenth century. First of all it is necessary to clarify what it means that an idea is outdated. If it means that it has come to be perceived as slightly old-fashioned by leading intellectuals, Seip and Feldbæk may have a point. If it we should take it to mean that the idea had completely disappeared from public discourse, or that someone that defended it in public was perceived as irrational or foolish, their claims are less convincing. This is in fact what Seip implied when he claimed that the idea of divine right monarchy was «mentioned in a way that

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<sup>1551</sup> Holm 1883: 51.

<sup>1552</sup> Schaich 2007: 2-3.

<sup>1553</sup> Schaich 2007: 6.

shows that it at least was felt to be definitely outdated and often absurd.»<sup>1554</sup> He asserted that the «literate elites» and «everyone» capable of discussion had abandoned such ideas. The men of the church, however, were both literate and capable of discussion and they definitely contributed to the public discussion of political matters. It is telling that Seip did not include more than one single sermon in his study, although sermons constituted a major part of the output on the Danish-Norwegian book market throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>1555</sup> If he had, the picture might have looked different.

Studies of Danish and Norwegian sermons have already documented the lingering existence of divine right arguments throughout and even beyond the eighteenth century. Michael Bregnsbo pointed this out in his discussion of what he described as a «conflict» (Danish: «brytning») between a theocratic conception of monarchy and a «natural law-based contractual conception» of monarchy («naturrettlig baseret samfundspagts-opfattelse»). First of all, Bregnsbo found that the two ways of legitimizing the absolute monarchy were not mutually exclusive. They could, in fact, be used by the same preacher in different contexts: in his sermon at the centenary for the introduction of absolutism in 1760, the court preacher Johann Andreas Cramer stressed the contractual relationship between king and people, while his funeral sermon for Frederick V stressed purely theocratic notions of kingship. Second, the two modes of legitimation could co-exist in the same sermon as mutually reinforcing elements: the social contract or pact was merely consolidated by the divine decree that one should obey the ruler. The contract between the ruler and the ruled could, moreover, be harmonized with theocratical conceptions of kingship through a distinction between the primary and secondary origins of the kings' absolute power. God was the primary source of absolute power, but he had used the estates as his instruments. Finally, Bregnsbo shows that Danish ministers claimed the divine right of the king as late as the early nineteenth century, although at this point the idea had indeed come under increased pressure and could even be strongly criticized by other clergymen.<sup>1556</sup>

Øystein Idsø Viken discusses the same question in his study of Norwegian sermons from the years 1720-1814. Like Bregnsbo, he shows that divine right-arguments did not disappear from the Norwegian clergy's preaching in the long eighteenth century. In contrast to Bregnsbo, he has not found a single example of a minister arguing against theocratical conceptions of monarchy from the

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<sup>1554</sup> «Den nevnes på en måte som viser at den iallfall føles som avgjort foreldet og ofte som umiddelbart absurd.» Seip 1958: 11.

<sup>1555</sup> See Rian 2014b: 18; Seip did cite one letter, one diary and one sermon, all written by ministers, as proof of his assertion. See footnote 3 in Seip 1958: 12.

<sup>1556</sup> Bregnsbo 1997: 204-227.



pulpit.<sup>1557</sup> Viken suggests that ordinary people had little insight into natural law theories and that, consequently, theocratical arguments remained important in a church setting.<sup>1558</sup> With regards to the question of how the introduction of absolutism was discussed, Viken claims that ministers could use both modes of explanation interchangeably and even simultaneously. Typically, the ministers stressed that the people's desire to confer absolute power on the king had been instilled in them by the Lord. The claim that power had been conferred on the monarchs by God and the claim that it had been conferred by the people were thus not mutually exclusive, but rather mutually reinforcing.<sup>1559</sup>

Finally, Øystein Rian makes much the same point as Viken in a discussion of the royal regime's presentation of its own history («Kongehusets historiske forankring og misjon»). He claims that the «theocratical element in the doctrine about the introduction of absolutism» remained in place throughout the eighteenth century, side by side with the claim that the people had voluntarily conferred hereditary and absolute power on Frederik III and his successors. Danish jurists and intellectuals did indeed stop speaking of «God's governing hand» behind the monarchy, writes Rian, but «God's participation in history survived the rationalist currents, clearly because one had the need to explain important events as the will of divine providence».<sup>1560</sup>

The centenary in 1760 was naturally an apt moment to discuss the nature of the origins of absolutism, and almost all of the clergymen did indeed touch upon the topic in some way or another. A survey of the jubilee sermons reveal that both theocratic and contractual modes of explanation were in use during the centenary. Ludvig Friederich Broch may stand as an example of a minister that posited a purely theocratic conception of kingship in his sermon. In his exordium, Broch explained that God ordains kings to be his governors and deputies on earth. As he has made them in his own image, he invests them with dignity, authority and power. This is why, claimed Broch, the Lord calls them gods on earth in Psalm 82. Kings are only frail human beings, however, and God can remove their power at any time. Only those kings that turn their hearts towards Jesus Christ receive strength and protection from God, which is why all honour and praise must befall the Lord.<sup>1561</sup> Broch's general reflections on the nature of legitimate kingship was reflected in his historical account of the introduction of absolutism in 1660. In Broch's version, the estates' decision to confer absolute power on Frederick III was not mentioned with one word. Instead, he stressed how Frederick III's

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<sup>1557</sup> Viken 2014: 181.

<sup>1558</sup> Viken 2014: 181.

<sup>1559</sup> Viken 2014: 185-187.

<sup>1560</sup> «Likevel overlevde Guds medvirkning i historien de rasjonalistiske strømningene, åpenbart fordi man hadde behov for å forklare viktige begivenheter som forsynets vilje». Rian 2014a:448; See also Rian 2013: 73.

<sup>1561</sup> Broch 1760: 5-12.

great virtues and fear of God had led God to make him an absolute monarch. This was why, claimed Broch, the Danish kings could rightly call themselves «kings of God's grace».<sup>1562</sup>

Jørgen Steenstrup, minister of Raklev parish on Zealand, described the origins of the absolute monarchy in a completely different manner. Steenstrup introduced his exordium with the Apostle Peter's injunction to submit to every ordinance of man (Peter 2, 13). He then defined the word «authorities» as those who have the right to issue laws at will and do not have to stand accountable to anyone but God for their actions. Steenstrup moved on to explain the origins of the relationship between rulers and ruled. He claimed that few knew the «bond» that bound kings and their subjects together and obliged the latter to subject themselves to the former. «Many», wrote Steenstrup, «merely consider it to be arbitrary, that an external power forces them, which they can't resist. But we must look to other causes.»<sup>1563</sup> Steenstrup found these causes to have originated in the natural state of man. He argued that, after the fall of man, the chaos and violence of the human condition led «our ancestors» to see that only the fear of a higher power could make them desist from killing each other. They had therefore decided to confer the highest power on one person who could punish and control these evils. This person was given the sole right to issue law, punish criminals, reward merit and to demand of his subjects all that was conducive to the common good. In return, this person committed himself to protect the subjects and even risk his own life to uphold their security. «In such a way», wrote Steenstrup, «the families established a pact with their rulers, with which they mutually committed themselves to certain duties.»<sup>1564</sup> In the present age, claimed Steenstrup, all humans are divided under different governments so there is no longer any need to elect a king, but the ancestors' original pact are still in force. Subservience to the authorities is a general duty demanded of all subjects, but it is particularly a duty of Christian subjects under a Christian government. Steenstrup was somewhat unspecific when it came to describing how the historical introduction of absolutism in 1660 related to the contract made between rulers and ruled in the state of nature. The history of Denmark before 1660 was only briefly alluded to in an evasive paragraph:

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<sup>1562</sup> Broch 1760: 29-30; See also Bugge 1760: 18.

<sup>1563</sup> «Mange anseer det alleene som vilkaarligt, hvortil een udvortis Magt tvinger Dem, som de ikke kunde imodstaa. Men vi maa see til andre Aarsager.» Jørgen Steenstrup, *Den Tachsigelse Undersaatter ere Gud pligtige, der velsigner Dem med velsignede Regjenter, at være underdanige*, [5].

<sup>1564</sup> «Paa saadan Maade oprættede Familierne en Pagt med Deris Regjenter, ved hvilken de paa begge Siider forbandt sig til visse Pligter.» Jørgen Steenstrup, *Den Tachsigelse Undersaatter ere Gud pligtige, der velsigner Dem med velsignede Regjenter, at være underdanige*, [6].

I will not speak of the various different forms of government there has been in this country, according to which the subservience of the subjects have had to comply to a larger or smaller degree, since this is a matter which is forbidden to discuss here and which, furthermore, belongs to a different cathedra.<sup>1565</sup>

Steenstrup would rather only speak about the subservience he and his congregation owed to the absolute monarchs. He claimed that their forefathers had willingly submitted themselves to be subservient under the absolute monarchy, and had simultaneously committed subsequent generations of subjects to do the same.<sup>1566</sup>

Broch and Steenstrup represent two extreme poles in their interpretations of the origins of monarchy. Whereas the former did not allow for any agency except for the will of God, the latter placed a much stronger emphasis on the role of human agents in voluntarily conferring absolute power on the monarch to ensure their own safety. The clergy's discussion of the introduction of absolutism was, however, seldom as clear cut as these two examples. Most ministers can be placed somewhere around the middle of the spectrum between the two poles. The most common explanation was to claim that God had had the primary role in instituting the absolute monarchy, while the estates had played a secondary part. Povel Matthias Bildsøe, for instance, stated as a general principle that «all legitimate rulers have a mediate («middelbar») calling from God, as the most high lord and master of the world, to the government which they possess.»<sup>1567</sup> This principle was explained clearly in Romans 13, claimed Bildsøe, which stated that all power is ordained by God. It did not matter whether the king had been freely elected by the people or acquired power through military conquest, since the Lord had all human hearts in his hand and decided the outcome of all military conflicts. And if a king should inherit the throne, it was equally certain that God had considered all families in the kingdoms and all their future generations and chosen the family that was the best at all times and in all circumstances. Later in the sermon, Bildsøe discussed the historical introduction of absolutism in Denmark-Norway. In this section, he mentioned the estates' decision

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<sup>1565</sup> «Jeg vil ikke tale om den adskillig slags Regjeringes Form der har været her i Landet, og hvorefter Undersaatternes Underdanighed haver havt at rætte sig i høyere og mindre Grad, da det er een Sag, som her er forbudet at handlis om, og disuden egentlig henhører til eet andet Cathedra, end dette.» Jørgen Steenstrup, *Den Tacksigelse Undersaatter ere Gud pligtige, der velsigner Dem med velsignede Regjenterne, at være underdanige*, [12].

<sup>1566</sup> Jørgen Steenstrup, *Den Tacksigelse Undersaatter ere Gud pligtige, der velsigner Dem med velsignede Regjenterne, at være underdanige*, [13]; For a similar explanation of the origins of government, see Gerhard Treschow, *Takoffer til Gud, for den Behag, hand har viist sig at have i vore Eenevolds Konger som hand selv har satt og givet os*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69.

<sup>1567</sup> «Alle lovlige Regentere have et middelbart Kald af Gud, som Verdens allerhøyeste Herre og Konge, til den Regjering, hvilken de forestaaer.» Povel Matthias Bildsøe, *Jubel=Prædiken der blev holdet til Høymisse i Holmens Kirke paa Jubel= og Tacksigelses=Festen for Souverainiteten den 16<sup>de</sup> Octob:1760*, [9].

to confer absolute power on the king, and concluded that the peaceful and quick manner in which it had taken place proved that it had been an act of divine providence.<sup>1568</sup>

In a similar manner, Peder Jespersen Nyrop briefly described the events that took place at the Estates General in 1660 in a way that did not downplay the role played by the estates. He concluded, however, with asking who it was that had actually done this great deed. The answer pointed towards a more theocratic understanding of the introduction of absolutism: «No one except God. God did indeed use means and instruments to exercise his power, but it was he alone that both appointed and strengthened the means». If God had not strengthened and bent the estates, claimed Nyrop, their arms would not have been powerful enough and their hands not willing.<sup>1569</sup> Christian Beverlin Studsgaard, minister in Herlufsholm parish, similarly claimed that the absolute monarchy had been created by God himself. Out of all states in the world, only Denmark could say with certainty that the Lord had established the absolute monarchy for the benefit of the subjects. It was an «indisputable matter» that God had moved the hearts of the estates to make this decision and that he had awakened certain instruments to carry it out, namely Hannibal Sehested, Field Marshall Schack, bishop Svane and mayor Nansen. According to Studsgaard, God had used these great men as a means to carry out his decision and will to the best of the kingdoms. The deed itself, however, was the work of the Lord: «God's hand was clearly felt both in its beginning and its end, and from this arises our firm trust that this absolute government in these kingdoms and lands is a firm, unshakeable and eternal thing and a horn of salvation that the Lord himself has erected among us».<sup>1570</sup>

Similar examples could be multiplied.<sup>1571</sup> In 1760, the hegemonic interpretation of the introduction of absolutism among the Danish and Norwegian clergy was that the estates had been

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<sup>1568</sup> Povel Matthias Bildsøe, *Jubel=Prædiken der blev holdet til Høymisse i Holmens Kirke paa Jubel= og Taksigelses=Festen for Souverainiteten den 16<sup>de</sup> Octobr: 1760*, [42].

<sup>1569</sup> Peder Jespersen Nyrop in *Taler og Prædikener holdte ved Jubelfesterne 1749 og 1760* (Kall 467 kvart).

<sup>1570</sup> «Guds Haand kiændtes tydelig nok baade i Begyndelsen og Enden deraf og deraf flyder vor faste Tillid, at denne Eenevolds Regjæring i disse Riger og Lande er en fast, ubevægelig og ævig Stykke og et Saligheds Horn, som Herren self har opreist iblant os.» Christian Beverlin Studsgaard, *Jubel Prædiken til taknemmelig Erindring for Souverainitetets Indførsel udi Dannemark holden for Herlufsholm Meenighed i Sjælland d 16de Octobris 1760*, [11-12].

<sup>1571</sup> Brorson 1760: 16, 37-38; Sidemann 1766b: 36,45; Gunnerus 1760: 9,27-30; Treu 1760:28; Carl Ulric Amundin, *Prædiken paa Jubel=Festen dend = 16de Octobris 1760, af vores allernaadigste Konge Kong Friderich dend Femte til Erindring, om dend for hundrede Aar siden ved dend Kongelige Regjering indførte Eenevolds Magt og Herredømme, gudelig anordnet*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [34]; David Plesmer, *Conc: Jubilæa d:16 Oct: 1760 Text: Psal: 18. 50.51*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [22]; Søvren Tuxen, *Jubel-Prædichen, som er bleven, Til taknemmeligst Erindring, om Guds store Naade, og besønderlige Forsiun, over det høij-Kongelige Huus, og begge Røgernes Undersaatter, ved at indføre, Nu for Et hundrede Aar siden, Souverainitetet, Til Dend Kongelige Regjering, Paa Jubel og Tachsigselse-Festens Første Dag d 16 Octob: 1760 Holden [...] for Wemmelön og Hemmeshöj Meenigheder*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [10, 28]; Peder Bring, *Jubel Prædiken Paa den almindelige Jubel= og Taksigelse=Fest Til Erindring om den for Eet Hundrede Aar siden ved den Kongelige Regjering indførte Eenevolds Magt og*

God's chosen instruments and had carried out his will when they voluntarily chose to confer absolute power on Frederick III and his successors. As bishop Johann Ernst Gunnerus in Trondheim put it: «Everyone must in truth confess that this fortunate change here in the kingdoms was God's own deed and that his providence, so to speak, was the driving wheel in the whole machine.»<sup>1572</sup> There are very few examples of ministers that in their sermons did not somehow follow this providential mode of explanation. As we saw earlier, this was also essentially the same interpretation that was expressed in bishop Harboe's jubilee prayer and, originally and canonically, in the Royal Law of 1665. There seems to have been no real conflict between the two modes of explanation.

### Was 1660 a year of liberation? The absolute monarchy and the Danish peasantry

In his annalistic history of the reign of Frederick V (1832), the Danish nineteenth-century historian Gustav L. Baden wrote a short paragraph about the centenary in 1760. He claimed that the centenary was celebrated in such a way that «one could unfortunately clearly trace the old hereditary nobility's influence on the king, even though it was precisely the abolition of this corrupting influence that had moved the people to confer hereditary absolutism to Frederick III and his successors.»<sup>1573</sup> Although offended because the king had not celebrated the centenary in the city that had contributed to his unlimited royal power, claimed Baden, the burghers of Copenhagen had celebrated the jubilee in churches, at the university and in private festive gatherings. The centenary was also celebrated in the provincial towns. In the countryside, however, things were different: «But in the countryside, the celebrations did not mean much outside of the churches; because here the noble landowners still governed.»<sup>1574</sup>

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*Herredømme holden i Asmindrup og Grandløse Kirker d: 16 Octorbris Ao 1760*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [27]. Hans Wielsgaard, *Undersaatters Jubel=Pligt, forestillet udi en Prædiken, [...] paa den 16de Octobr: 1760 [...] holden for Næsbye og Tyvelse Meenigheder i Tyberg Herred og Sallands Stift*, LAS. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. D1-69: [9, 44]; Peter Flesborg, *Guds Løns Ihukommelse for Hans Velgjærning, imod os ved Souverainitetet betragtet I Anledning af dend ordinerede Text [...] som til Erindring Om dend udi Kong Friederich dend 3dies Tiid [...] Eenevolds Magtes Indførsel udi Dannemark og Norge, og dens ved Guds Forsyn, endnu Vedvarelse indtil denne Tiid, som i Dag er 100 Ar siden, blev ved en Jubelprædiken for Grønholts Meenighed Annæxet til Friedensborg Slotts og Asminderøds Meenigheder dend 16de Octobr: Ao 1760 forklaret*, [50].

<sup>1572</sup> «Enhver maa i sandhed tilstaae, at denne lyksaelige Forandring her i riigerne vaer Guds eegen gjerning og at hans forsyn, saa at taele, vaer hoovedhjuulet i den heele maschiine.» Gunnerus 1760: 27.

<sup>1573</sup> «[...]men feiredes saaledes, at man desværre tydelig kunde spore Arveadels paa Kongen store Indflydelse, og dog var det just Afskaffelsen af denne fordærvelige Indflydelse, som havde bevæget Folket til at skjænke Frederik III. og Successorer paa Thronen Arve-Enevældet.» Baden 1832: 204.

<sup>1574</sup> «Men paa Landet betydede Festligheden uden Kirkerne ikke meget; thi her regjerede endnu de adelige Herremænd.» Baden 1832: 204.

From what we know about how the centenaries were celebrated in the Danish countryside, the churches were in fact the only venue of celebration there. The situation was the same in Norway, where there are no reports of any popular festivities in the countryside. In this sense, Baden's observation is based on a misconceived notion of the nature of centennial commemoration in the eighteenth century. In another sense, however, Baden has a valid point: what he alluded to was a peculiar dissonance between the message of the centenary in 1760, on the one hand, and the political and social realities of the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway, on the other. The centenary loudly proclaimed the societal benefits of absolute monarchy for all the people of Denmark and Norway. One of the key arguments was that the introduction of absolutism in 1660 had taken the power from a rapacious and oppressive nobility, and given it to fair and selfless king who loved all their subjects and treated them as his children. As we saw in the introduction to this chapter, one of the lessons the Swiss tutor Reverdil was asked to teach the future king Christian VII in connection with the centenary was that «the people had sought the civil liberty the nobility wanted to take from them, under the wings of the royal power, and that [Christian] was therefore obligated to protect them from all oppression [...]».<sup>1575</sup> In his jubilee prayer, bishop Harboe alluded to the liberation of the people from the nobility with the claim that the absolute monarchs had used their power to «place a rein in the mouths and a ring in the nose in all those who wanted to oppress and treat unfairly their brothers.»<sup>1576</sup>

There was, however, one fundamental problem with such claims. While it was certainly true that the introduction of absolutism had robbed the nobility of the formal basis of their political power, it had not been accompanied by any significant improvement of the conditions of the Danish peasantry. In the kingdom of Denmark, especially on the island of Zealand, most peasants was bound by law to their place of birth (*vornedskaftet* until 1702, *stavnsbåndet* from 1733) and obliged to perform *hovveri* or corvée labour work on the seigneur's estate. The so-called *bals- og håndsret* gave seigneurs the authority to prosecute cases and execute punishments against peasants within their domains. Danish law (DL 6-5-5) also gave the seigneur the right to inflict light corporeal punishments on his peasants at his own discretion for minor offenses and acts of disobedience. These institutions were subject to various reforms in the latter half of the eighteenth century, but they were all still in place at the time of the centenary in 1760. With regards to alleviating the plight of the

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<sup>1575</sup> Reverdil 1916: 2.

<sup>1576</sup> «Deres Eenevolds=Magt er bleven anvendt til at lægge dem en Tømme i Munden og en Ring i Næsen, som ville undertrykke og forfordeele deres Medbrødre.» *Texter, Collect & Bøn* 1760: 4r.

Danish peasant, in other words, the first five Danish absolute monarchs did not have much to show for.

King Frederick IV was indeed praised by contemporaries for the abolition in 1702 of the centuries-old institution of *vornedskeab*, which bound the male peasants on Zealand, Lolland, Falster and Møn to the estate where they were born. The institution had not only forbidden the peasant from going anywhere without the seigneur's permission, it also gave the seigneur the right to forcefully move his tenants to any farm or house within his domains, irregardless of its quality. The decree in 1702 stated all peasants that were born after the first year of Frederick's reign (1699) were free to move wherever they wanted. According to Peter Henningsen, however, several factors contributed to limiting the impact of this decree. Chief among these was the establishment of the *land militia* in 1701, which demanded that all the enrolled men—meaning almost every young male that did not lease a farm from a landowner—stay at their place of birth for the entire six-year period of service, on threat of punishment.<sup>1577</sup> Frederick's policies were in any case completely reversed by his son and successor Christian VI almost immediately after he acceded to the throne. Christian VI was attentive to complaints from both estate owners and peasants against his father's land militia and abolished it only eighteen days into his reign, due to its «damaging effects» on society and the militia soldiers.<sup>1578</sup> The abolition of the militia led to fresh complaints from the estate owners, however, who quickly discovered that they had now lost their only effective means of securing a steady labour force on their estates: the young men that were no longer required to stay at home for the duration of their service moved elsewhere in droves. Pressure was added from the military leadership, who also wanted the reestablishment of the land militia. Christian VI followed their advise, and the land militia was reintroduced in 1733. The estate owner was given the responsibility of mustering a fixed amount of soldiers from his estate, and in return he was given the right to prevent every male person between the age of 14 to 36 who had not served in the militia from leaving their place of birth, provided he could offer them land tenure or service. With this measure, the so-called *stavnsbånd* had been introduced.<sup>1579</sup>

Whereas the *vornedskeab* had limited the freedom of movement for the peasants in certain regions of Denmark, the *stavnsbånd* bound all adult male Danish peasants to their place of birth. In the following decades, moreover, the law concerning the land militia was repeatedly amended, each

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<sup>1577</sup> Henningsen 2006: 260-264.

<sup>1578</sup> Henningsen 2006: 271.

<sup>1579</sup> Feldbæk 1982: 147-148.

time increasing the total number of men affected by the *stavnband*.<sup>1580</sup> There were some minor attempts at reform in the reign of Frederick V, but these had generally very little effect on the social and economic circumstances of the Danish peasantry. The primary aim of the reforms was to improve agricultural production rather than to alleviate the conditions of the peasants. The politically cautious and conservative members of Frederick's Privy Council were in any case careful not to alienate the class of rich landowners. According to Ole Feldbæk, the financial problems caused by the Seven Years War (1756-63) and the subsequent austerity politics put a final halt to any further reform plans the government may have had in these years. In total, it is therefore not altogether unfair to claim that the first hundred years of absolute monarchy had seen a steady increase in the estate owner's legal rights and authority over their peasants, rather than any form of liberation of the Danish peasantry.

It is against this historical background that we shall now consider how the question of the liberty of the Danish peasantry, or lack thereof, surfaced during the centenary in 1760. This question is relevant to examine more closely, precisely because it is a matter where the difference between ideals and reality was especially conspicuous.<sup>1581</sup> What we shall consider here is how Danish-Norwegian clergymen and intellectuals handled the dissonance between ideal and reality in the context of the centenary for the introduction of absolutism. Did the canonized memory of 1660 as a year of liberation influence how they spoke of the Danish peasantry? Did they even speak of the conditions of the Danish peasantry at all?

With regards to the clergy, the answer to the final question is no. There is an almost total silence about matters concerning the Danish peasantry. This is hardly surprising, since the great majority of the surviving sermons from the centenary were delivered in rural parishes in Zealand, a region of Denmark where the freedoms of the Danish peasants had traditionally been most circumscribed. It would perhaps have been too incongruous for the congregation if their vicar had tried convincing them of how the absolute monarchs had liberated them from the grasp of their local seigneur. Instead, the clergymen emphasized a whole range of other positive effects that the introduction of absolutism had allegedly had in the kingdoms. The most common argument was that the kingdoms had now experienced forty long years of peace. Just as they had done during the dynastic tercentenary in 1749, the preachers praised Frederick V and his father for not having involved their kingdoms in the destructive wars that had raged in Europe in their reigns. In 1760, the

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<sup>1580</sup> Henningsen 2006: 265.

<sup>1581</sup> Holm 1883: 105-106.



contrast between Denmark-Norway and Europe was sharpened by the ongoing Seven Years War (1756-1763) that the kingdoms had so far stayed out of. Christian Jenssen, for instance, celebrated «[t]he golden peace that others, who now swim in their blood, miss so dearly» as one of «the most important fruits of the absolute government».<sup>1582</sup> Another common argument in favour of the absolute monarchy was that the monarchs had all been God-fearing kings eager to promote the pure faith: they had built schools and churches, provided capable teachers for the congregations, punished sin and converted the heathens.<sup>1583</sup> The kings were quite conventionally presented, moreover, as mild and fatherly rulers who gave all their subjects equal opportunity to approach the throne. The chaplain Peter Flesborg, preaching in an annex church in the parish of Fredensborg castle and Asminderød, enumerated what he claimed to be the most important and beneficial deeds of each of the five absolute monarchs that had ruled Denmark-Norway since 1660. He praised Frederick III for having established new government colleges and staffed them with competent men, Christian V for creating the Danish Law Code that protected the life, honour and property of all subjects, Frederick IV for establishing new schools that contributed to the fear of God in all Danish youth, and Christian VI for having introduced confirmation in the Danish church. Finally, he praised the current monarch for founding institutions that took care of the poor, sick and needy.<sup>1584</sup> Like the majority of clergymen, however, Flesborg did not focus on what any of the kings had done for the Danish peasantry. The only sermon in which I have found any direct reference to this question is written by Peter Discher, minister of Bløvsstrød and Lillerød. Discher made a strong claim about the liberation of the peasantry after 1660:

[I]n truth, no one in this country have greater cause to rejoice in the change in the form of government and to thank God for it than the peasants. Because the yoke and burdens of their slavery have in many ways been lightened and relieved since that time. Before, the peasants were nothing but the slaves of the nobility who even had the right to prosecute and punish them and who could treat them as almost as they pleased. To murder a peasant was something a nobleman could do without suffering more than a mere pecuniary fine. This is true not only of the peasants on noble lands, but also on crown lands, since the king had to pledge that no one but the nobility should be enfeoffed with crown lands. Every peasant therefore had to fear his seigneur more than the king. Furthermore,

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<sup>1582</sup> «Dend gyldene Fred, som andre, der nu svømmer i deres Blod, saa fölelig savner. At denne Fred er een af de betydeligste Frugter udaf Eenevolds Regiæringen, er mer end klart, ei alleene af andre Rigers Historie, og blodige Successions Kriige, men og af vort eget Fædrene Lands Historie for Eenevolds Regiæringen.» Christian Jenssen, *Det tilbørlige Forhold for Guds Godhed af Jubel Dagen, som en Dag Herren har gjort*, [36]; See also David Plesmer, *Conc: Jubilæa d:16 Oct: 1760 Text: Psal: 18. 50.51*, [23]; Bugge 1760: 27.

<sup>1583</sup> See for instance, Gerhard Treschow, *Takoffer til Gud, for den Behag hand har viist sig at have i Vore Eenevolds Konger som hand har satt og givet os, forestillet i en Prædiken [...] paa Jubel=Festens første Dag d: 16 Oct: 1760 og holdt for Bircherøds Meenighed*, [14].

<sup>1584</sup> Peter Flesborg, *Guds Løvs Ihukomelse for Hans Velgiærning imod os ved Souverainitetet*, [54-55].

since the nobility often oppressed and fleeced the peasants, it also happened some times that the peasants arose in rebellion against the nobility. In this way, they waged war against each other and destroyed each other, thus weakening the kingdom, but in the end the peasants had to pay for the war and were whipped skinless.<sup>1585</sup>

All of this had changed, claimed Discher, with the introduction of absolutism. Apart from the most dramatic claims in the passage (seigneurs did generally not murder their peasants and there had been no major peasant uprisings since the sixteenth century), the clergyman's distinction between before and after 1660 was, however, much too sharply drawn. As previously noted, seigneurs had retained the so-called *bals- og håndsret* after 1660, and the burdens laid on the shoulders of the peasantry had not been lightened significantly after a hundred years of absolute monarchy. Discher's narrative appears to be based more on an anti-aristocratic sentiment and the postulated correlation between absolutism and liberty than on any historical evidence. The meagre empirical foundation of Discher's claims might explain why no other minister attempted to make the same argument, at least not in such unequivocal terms.

Although the clergy was thus generally silent on the topic, other writers discussed the conditions of the Danish peasantry under the absolute monarchy in their jubilee texts, and with considerably more sophistication than Discher. One of these writers was Jens Schelderup Sneedorff, professor of jurisprudence and political science at Sorø Academy. Sneedorff delivered a speech at Sorø Academy on 18 October 1760, as part of the Academy's celebration of the centenary. The speech was later printed and published.<sup>1586</sup> Sneedorff presented here a sweeping narrative of the political conditions in Denmark-Norway, from antiquity until the present. The three key concepts in his account was «inequality» («Ulighed»), «liberty» («Frihed») and «equilibrium» («Ligevegt»). Sneedorff made the state of nature his point of departure: in their original and natural condition, reason, strength, wealth and happiness were equally distributed among men. The freedom awarded

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<sup>1585</sup> «Og har sandeligen Ingen i Landet større Aarsag at glæde sig ved Regjeringens Forandring, og at takke Gud derfor, end Bønderne. Thi deres Trældoms Aag og Byrder ere i mange Maader lattede og lindrede siden den Tiid. Tilforn vare Bønderne ikke andet end Adelsens Trælle, over hvilcke de endogsaa havde Hals og Haand, og kunde handle med dem næsten efter eget Behag. At slaae en Bonde ihjel, var noget en Adels Mand kunde afsone med en gandske maadelig Penge-Mulct. Dette er ikke alleene at forstaae om Bønderne paa Adelsens Gods, men endogsaa paa Kronens. Thi Kongen maatte forskrive sig til, at ingen uden Adelen skulde forlehnes med Kronens Gods. Enhver Bonde maatte derfor frygte sin Adels- eller Lehnsmand meere end Kongen. Dernæst efterdi adelen ofte undertrykte og udsuede Bønderne, saa skeede det ogsaa imellem, at Bønderne satte sig op mod Adelen, og gjorde Oprør. De førte saaledis indbyrdes Krig med hinanden og ødelagde hinanden, Riget til Svækkelse, men tilsidst fick dog Bønderne at betale Krigen, og miste den største Røm af Huden.» Peder Discher, *Jubel-Prædiken over Psalmen 18 v.50,51 holdet for Blaastrüds og Lillerüds Meenigbeder d:16 Octobr: 1760*, [12-13].

<sup>1586</sup> Sneedorff had himself requested to deliver the speech, since he saw it as a «pleasant opportunity» duty to realize one of his most important and dearest duties, namely «to demonstrate the advantages of the government, under which I have the happiness to live[...]» Plesner 1930: 40.

to them by nature had, however, driven them to invent new means to increase production and to introduce the concept of private property. These novelties paved the way for social inequality, which had arisen when the ownership of land was concentrated in the hands of a few families. The invention of money and war had increased social inequality to such a degree that only power could limit it. According to Sneedorff, all forms of government had had the purpose of restricting inequality. If man had not invented government, humanity would have been enslaved to only a few powerful and wealthy individuals. As necessary as it was to constitute governments, however, as impossible had it been to eradicate inequality completely. As the examples of the ancient republics showed so clearly, tyranny ensued when the state tried to create equality among its citizens. Total equality was therefore incommensurable with liberty.<sup>1587</sup>

Unlike the ancient republics, however, the first Northern monarchies had managed to assuage the problems created by inequality through ensuring the protection of the liberties and property of the people. The unlimited power of the monarchs were based on trust between ruler and ruled, as well as the necessity of a «third power» that could maintain the equilibrium between the estates. In his account, Sneedorff demonstrated how this equilibrium had been gradually corrupted and brought out of balance in the course of Danish-Norwegian history. The first estate that had disturbed the equilibrium was the clergy, which had abused its power and tried to create a «clerical monarchy» in Denmark-Norway. With the Reformation in 1536, the clergy had indeed lost its power and wealth, but it had been replaced by the nobility as the dominant estate in the kingdoms. It was at this point in history that the peasantry, described by Sneedorff as «this numerous and useful portion of the state's inhabitants», had lost its freedom and properties. Sneedorff saw this as a consequence of the inequality produced by freedom: «The greater freedom a people has to acquire and use wealth, the easier laziness and waste in some, and industry and thrift in others, will make their conditions unequal.»<sup>1588</sup>

The historical weakening of royal power had made the inequality in Danish society greater, and the conditions of the Danish peasantry worse. Conversely, the reestablishment of a strong and unlimited monarchy in 1660 had reintroduced the long lost equilibrium between the estates and also improved the lot of the Danish peasantry. Importantly, Sneedorff did not claim that the introduction of absolutism had resulted in social equality. On the contrary, the «golden rule» on which the Danish monarchy was founded was that «civil equality cannot reach further in a monarchy than letting all

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<sup>1587</sup> Sneedorff 1776: 461-473.

<sup>1588</sup> «Jo større Frihed et Folk har til at forhverve og bruge Rigdomme, deslettere kan Ladhed og Ødselhed hos nogle, Flid og Sparsommelighed hos andre gjøre deres Vilkaar ulige.» Sneedorff 1776: 489.

subjects according to their estate and property enjoy an equal protection by the laws». <sup>1589</sup> The absolute monarchy had, among other things, created the necessary conditions for its citizens to pursue personal happiness, virtue and profit within the estate into which they were born. The kings had elevated the status of science, industry and trade, giving the burghers the opportunity to achieve honour and wealth without having to seek to rise out of their own estate. <sup>1590</sup> With regards to the Danish peasantry, Sneedorff implied that their lot had in fact been improved by the change in the form of government in 1660. The peasants had not, he claimed, been excluded from the fatherly care with which the absolute monarchs had sought to improve the conditions of all their subjects. When it came to the question of concrete policies, however, his praise was much more cautious and qualified: «Our first absolute monarchs wanted to give the peasants their liberty back but, as long as their conditions were not also improved, they abused their liberty to leave their estate.» <sup>1591</sup> With this short sentence, Sneedorff gave a short but pregnant interpretation of the abolition of the *vornedsskab* and the later introduction of the *stavnsbånd*: Frederick IV's liberation of the peasants had been premature, since it had not been preceded by any improvement of their conditions. The economic conditions had since been improved, wrote Sneedorff, and the honour of completing such a great work was saved for the present king, Frederick V. Recent times had seen «the most exquisite suggestions and the most fortunate attempts to return property and liberty to the peasant, not only without loss to the nobleman, but even to his greater gain.» <sup>1592</sup>

Historian Øystein Sørensen points out that Sneedorff's praise of king Frederick's policies did not actually harmonize well with their practical results. He argues that it should be read as an «attempt to influence the government to carry out practical reforms». <sup>1593</sup> Sørensen argues, moreover, that it would not have been clear in 1760 that the government's practice would not harmonize with his own ideas for reform, and that Sneedorff could base his claims on the government's will to publicly discuss agricultural matters and to modernize Danish agriculture through land consolidation. <sup>1594</sup> It seems safe to say, in other words, that Sneedorff's claims about the absolute monarchy's liberation of the Danish peasant was not so much an observation of existing conditions

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<sup>1589</sup> «Den borgerlige Lighed kan i et Monarkie ikke gaae videre end dertil, at alle som Undersaatter nyde efter deres Stand og Formue en lige Beskyttelse af Lovene. Paa denne gyldne Regel er vores Monarkie bygt.» Sneedorff 1776: 498.

<sup>1590</sup> Sneedorff 1776: 499-501.

<sup>1591</sup> «Vore første Eenevolds-Konger vilde give Bønderne deres Frihed igien, men, saa længe deres Vilkaar ikke tillige bleve forbedrede, misbrugte de Friheden til at forlade deres Stand.» Sneedorff 1776: 515.

<sup>1592</sup> Sneedorff 1776: 515.

<sup>1593</sup> «Dette må imidlertid leses som et forsøk på å påvirke regjeringen til å gjennomføre et praktisk reformarbeid.» Sørensen 1983: 75.

<sup>1594</sup> Sørensen 1983: 75.

in previous reigns as a carefully phrased encouragement and support of a burgeoning will to reform that was, at best, in embryo at the time of the jubilee.

Another Danish writer that grappled with the problem of reconciling an idealistic discourse of liberty with the current state of the Danish peasantry was the influential clergyman Erik Pontoppidan. We have met Pontoppidan several times in the course of this study, as a court preacher, bishop, leading pietist intellectual and author of the catechism *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* (1737). In 1760, Pontoppidan was prochancellor at the University of Copenhagen. His main contribution to the centenary, apart from his history of the city of Copenhagen, was a short pamphlet in which he attempted to demonstrate that the subjects of the Danish kings enjoyed as much civil liberty as the people of any other European nation.<sup>1595</sup> He introduced the discussion with the old proverb that said that «the world is ruled by fancy» («Verden regieres ved Indbildning»). Other peoples imagined that the bounds of civil liberty were narrower in Denmark-Norway than elsewhere. If one removed such fancies, wrote Pontoppidan, one would in fact recognize that the truth was in fact exactly the opposite.<sup>1596</sup> His defense of Danish absolutism started from a set of fundamental assumptions: first, he claimed that that natural and absolute state of freedom that every human being seems entitled to is lost as soon as we are born into the world and that, consequently, civil society (det Borgerlige Selskap) is necessary and entitled to impose certain obligations on the individual. The question was therefore only how the power and authority of society was used. If this was to be considered «innocent and righteous», it had to promote the true welfare of the entire society as well as the individual. Second, Pontoppidan claimed that since nothing is perfect in this imperfect world, even the most perfect government contains something imperfect within it. When discussing the question of civil liberty, one could therefore not demand perfection, but only settle for the least imperfect, that is, «the boundaries of liberty by which the members of society are relieved of the most evils and helped to the most good.»<sup>1597</sup> On the basis of these principles, Pontoppidan went on to distinguish «despotic government» from «proper absolute power». In the former type of government, there was no guarantee that laws were good or that they were held in force. With reference to Montesquieu's *L'Ésprit des lois* (1748), Pontoppidan claimed that the barbaric governments of the east exercised their power in a completely random fashion, which gave the

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<sup>1595</sup> The text was also translated into the French. See Pontoppidan 1760b.

<sup>1596</sup> Pontoppidan 1760a: 3-4.

<sup>1597</sup> «[...] saadanne Friheds Grendser, ved hvilke Selskabets Lemmer fritages fra det meeste Onde og forhielpes til det meeste Gode.» Pontoppidan 1760a: 6.

subjects no assurance of their liberty and personal safety. In the latter, on the other hand, the subjects enjoyed «true liberty» since they were safe from the random exercise of power.<sup>1598</sup>

After having laid down these fundamental principles, Pontoppidan went on to demonstrate the truth of his claim that the civil liberty of the Danish and Norwegian nations were as great, good and true as any other people in Europe. The demonstration took the form of a discussion of some central areas of society (justice system, forced conscription, legislation, taxation, freedom of thought, freedom of religion), in which Pontoppidan compared the Danish system favourably with various European examples. He claimed, for instance, that the last hundred years had not seen one single instance of any arbitrary execution of justice. Precisely because the Danish kings were above the law, they had subjected themselves to it and even lost cases that concerned their own property and interests, and the laws themselves were so mild and just that even otherwise critical foreigners conceded that they admired them. Danish and Norwegian subjects did not have to fear judicial torture, except in a few special cases.<sup>1599</sup> We shall not consider the rest of Pontoppidan's apology for Danish absolutism in detail, but rather focus on how he treated the question of the Danish peasantry.

The introductory admission of the imperfection in all forms of government allowed Pontoppidan to discuss the conditions of the Danish peasant with a measure of candour, although a very modest one. He had to concede that the liberty of the Danish peasantry on the estates of the landowners was inhibited in one respect, namely that their *corvée* labour («Hoverie-arbeid») was not regulated and fixed, but was left to the discretion of their seigneur. If the seigneur was wise and prosperous, he spared his peasants, but if not, «their circumstances is not much better than the so-called serfs in Holstein and some other countries, with regards to the male sex.»<sup>1600</sup> The Danish Law did not acknowledge serfdom, wrote Pontoppidan, since Frederick IV had abolished it in Zealand, and a peasant had recourse to the law and the justice system to save himself from the oppression of his seigneur. The law gave the Danish peasant the same freedom from injustice and oppression as elsewhere. If instances of oppression against the peasants did indeed take place («via facti») they were subject to due punishment, which could be seen from examples of Supreme Court judgements

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<sup>1598</sup> Pontoppidan 1760a: 7-8.

<sup>1599</sup> Pontoppidan 1760a: 11-14.

<sup>1600</sup> «[...] hvis ikke, da tilstaaer jeg, deres Vilkaar ere ikke meget bedre, end de saa kaldre Livegnes i Holsteen og en Deel andre Lande, saa vidt Mandkiønnet angaaer.» Pontoppidan 1760a: 16.

against the unjust actions of landlords. In his concluding remark, Pontoppidan reiterated his claim that the *law* awarded the Danish peasants as much liberty as anyone else.<sup>1601</sup>

Pontoppidan's arguments were based on the careful differentiation between theory and practice. On the one hand, he admitted that the structure of Danish society was of such a nature that the landowners could indeed oppress their peasants if they so wished. On the other hand, he claimed that the laws did not acknowledge serfdom and that the justice system gave the peasants the opportunity to be relieved from oppression. The argument rested, however, on the rather uncertain assumption that the peasants indeed had a fair and open access to the justice system, and free opportunities to protest against instances of oppression. Much the same as in Sneedorff's speech, the actual historical record of royal policies directed towards alleviating the situation of the peasantry did not allow Pontoppidan to state that the peasants had in fact been liberated. He could only argue that the Danish legal system gave them the formal opportunity to air their grievances and get redress. Pontoppidan's attempt to reconcile his ideal view of Danish-Norwegian society with the actual circumstances of the Danish peasantry suggests that the gap between ideal and reality could cause a degree of cognitive dissonance for the enlightened elite. As Henrik Horstbøll puts it in his discussion of Pontoppidan's text, «[t]he status of the peasants and the unspecified [amount of] corvée labour was the only dark spots in the image».<sup>1602</sup>

The same quandary is perhaps best illustrated by the circumstances surrounding the publication of the German poet Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's ode to the centenary in 1760. Klopstock was part of a circle of German artists and intellectuals that had been invited to Copenhagen in the 1750s to enhance the cultural prestige of the absolute monarchy.<sup>1603</sup> Klopstock contributed to the centenary with an ode that was published shortly after the celebrations in the periodical *Der Nordische Aufseher*, edited by Klopstock's friend and fellow expatriate, the court preacher Johann Andreas Cramer.<sup>1604</sup> Before publishing the ode, however, Klopstock asked his friend Andreas Peter Bernstorff for comments. Bernstorff was a young official, recently appointed to a position in the German Chancery as well as a post in the newly created General Customs Chamber («Vestindisk-guineisk Rente-samt Generaltoldkammer»). He was also the nephew of Count J.H.E.

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<sup>1601</sup> Pontoppidan 1760a: 18.

<sup>1602</sup> «Bøndernes status og det ubestemte hoveri var de eneste mørke pletter i billedet.» Horstbøll 1992: 128.

<sup>1603</sup> Bohnen 1992: 162.

<sup>1604</sup> The ode was published without a title, but in the index of *Der Nordische Aufseher*, it is called «Ode auf das Jubelfest der Souveränität in Dänemark». It was republished in the newspaper *Reichs Post-Reuter* on 3 November 1760. In later editions of Klopstock's poetry, the ode was called «Das neue Jahrhundert». Riege (ed.) 2004: 467-468; For more about *Der Nordische Aufseher*, see Bohnen 1992: 165, 174-177.

Bernstorff, the powerful minister of foreign affairs and the maecenas who had invited Klopstock to Copenhagen.<sup>1605</sup>

In the letter, A. P. Bernstorff commended Klopstock on his well-written ode. He also made, however, a couple of concrete suggestion for revisions. Bernstorff's first suggestion was that Klopstock remove from the ode the note that began with the words «Auch der lebhafteste Republikaner», which evidently explained that Denmark had had good kings and no tyranny for the past hundred years. A reader that could know without an explanatory footnote that the Spartans calmly curled their hair before their certain death, wrote Bernstorff, would also be familiar enough with the recent history of the kingdoms to know that all the absolute monarchs had been good.<sup>1606</sup> Besides, «the well known truth» that the Danish kings were powerful enough to do harm, was too advantageous for the kings and too uncomfortable for the public to be needlessly mentioned.<sup>1607</sup> Bernstorff's second suggestion was that Klopstock end his ode with the stanza that began with the words «Wie glücklich sind wir!». The suggestion evidently meant removing one or more stanzas from the end of the ode. Since the published version of the ode indeed ends with this stanza, and since Klopstock's manuscript is not extant, our only clues to what the original stanzas might have said is Bernstorff's comments.<sup>1608</sup>

According to Bernstorff, it was against the nature of a jubilee ode to conclude with a plea or wish that was only a passing thought, that made one lose sight of the main purpose of the ode and, finally, that could not be expressed in the perfect language of the ode. But what had originally been Klopstock's concluding wishes in his jubilee ode? Bernstorff's next three comments makes it clear that Klopstock had touched upon matter concerning the conditions of the Danish peasantry. Bernstorff wrote that, although the peasants in the greatest part of the kingdoms were truly free, the peasants in Denmark proper were under certain constraints («unter gewissen Einschränkungen sind»). The «main wish» in Klopstock's ode, that the peasants' land be made inheritable did not, wrote Bernstorff, concern their liberty.<sup>1609</sup> Bernstorff then pointed out to Klopstock that Frederick IV had issued a public edict that had established the freedom of his subjects, an edict that had not been

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<sup>1605</sup> Bohnen 1992: 164.

<sup>1606</sup> Klopstock referred to this Spartan practice in his ode: «Nicht für ein Vaterland nur,/Wo das Gesetz und Hunderte herrschen; Auch für ein Vaterland,/Wo das Gesetz, und Einer herrscht,/Lockt, wenn der Tod sein großes Herz verdient, Auf einem hohen Thermopylä!/ Oder auf einem andern Altare des Ruhms/ Lockt er sein Haar, und stirbt!» *Der Nordische Aufseher* 1770: 513.

<sup>1607</sup> «Die bekannnte Wahrheit, daß unsere Könige viel böses thun können, ist dazu dem Regenten zu vortheilhaft, und dem Publico zu unangenehm, um ohne Noth angebracht werden zu dürfen.» Riege (ed.) 2003: 103.

<sup>1608</sup> Helmut Riege confirms that the manuscript is not extant. Riege (ed.) 2004: 468.

<sup>1609</sup> «Der Hauptwunsch daß ihre Güter erbl. werden mögten, gehet die Freyheit nicht an.» Riege (ed.) 2003: 104.



revoked. As long as the peasants did not have their freedom, Bernstorff considered it to be «somewhat offensive» to speak of this in public.<sup>1610</sup> Finally, Bernstorff wrote that he considered the topic to be an inappropiate reminder of an unpleasant fact, in an ode that was otherwise dedicated to pleasant things:

[...]Ist diese Ode einem fröhl. Gegenstande gewidmet, und ein Ausdruck der Freude, und der Danckbarkeit, und wie verändert sich die Scene, wenn ich nun erinnert werde, daß ein Theil meiner Mitbürger Slaven und unglückl. sind etc.<sup>1611</sup>

Andreas Peter Bernstorff later went on to become a leading members of the Danish government and one of the contributors to the reforms that would eventually abolish the *stavnsbånd* in 1788.<sup>1612</sup> Even earlier, in the mid-1760s, he had managed some of his uncle J. H. E. Bernstorff's estates in Zealand, where he introduced several agrarian reforms that were widely publicized as a model to follow. Kersten Krüger describes the younger Bernstorff's attitudes to agrarian reforms as based on a mixture of traditional paternalism and Enlightenment thought.<sup>1613</sup>

In the year of the centenary of the introduction of absolutism, however, Bernstorff could only encourage his friend Klopstock to craft his celebratory poem in a way that steered attention away from the lacklustre commitment to rural reform in the reigns of the five first absolute monarchs. According to Bernstorff, the centenary should only be a time of joyous thanksgiving, and not an opportunity to press for political reforms.<sup>1614</sup> By and large, this seems to have been the attitude of Danish-Norwegian intellectuals during the first (and last) centenary of the introduction of absolutism. The Danish peasant was apparently the proverbial elephant in the room that everyone thought about, but noone adressed.

## The magistrate in Copenhagen

The burghers of Copenhagen had been a central part of the coalition that offered the king hereditary power at the Estates General in 1660. A centennial celebration of the most important event in the

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<sup>1610</sup> Riege (ed.) 2003: 104.

<sup>1611</sup> Riege (ed.) 2003: 104.

<sup>1612</sup> As foreign minister, Bernstorff was not directly involved in Danish internal affairs, but he was nonetheless personally engaged in the reforms and was also perceived by the public as a leading reformer: «In Bewußtsein der Öffentlichkeit stand Andreas Bernstorff an der Spitze der Reformbewegung [...]». Krüger 1992: 45.

<sup>1613</sup> Krüger 1992: 43.

<sup>1614</sup> Helmut Riege writes the following of Bernstorff's comment: «A.P. Bernstorff war offenbar die handschriftliche Fassung der Ode nicht lobrednerisch genug, d.h. zu politisch. Klopstock wollte prinzipiell nur verdientes Lob ausdrücken.» Riege (ed.) 2004: 469.

recent history of the kingdoms bore the promise of becoming a great symbolical affirmation of the historical bonds between king and his residential city and a manifestation of Copenhagen's privileged position as a midwife of absolute monarchy. Unexpected signals from the king himself a few weeks before the jubilee promised something even better, namely material advantages in the form of further privileges for the city. As it turned out, the jubilee failed on both accounts.

The magistrate had started already in the first months of the year to make plans early for creating a large and costly ephemeral monument in Copenhagen. The artist Johann Cristoph Holzbecher had even drawn a sketch of a spectacular monument that promised to parallel the Honour Temple from 1749.<sup>1615</sup> The magistrate subserviently asked the royal administration in advance for permission to «celebrate this important day with some solemnity.» The first disappointment came when Johan Ludvig von Holstein replied that since the king had decided to «spare both the city and his dear and faithful subjects of expenses», he did not want any «further solemnities» to take place during the jubilee than «thanksgiving to God [...]».<sup>1616</sup> The magistrate instead directed its funds and energies towards creating a jubilee medal that it intended to give to the king and the royal family as a gift during the jubilee. The medal came to fruition, but not without some minor complications. As with the illuminations, the magistrate needed approval in advance from the government to produce the medal. The magistrate acquired the approval of Adam Gottlob Moltke, who only told them to make a slight adjustment to the design of the medal. When the president of the magistrate asked Johan Ludvig von Holstein to approve the revised sketch, however, he reacted with disapproval. According to von Holstein, the president had asked for permission to strike a jubilee medal «as had been granted to the University and the Asiatic Company.» Von Holstein replied that he had «not seen or received the said sketch, and that no one has been granted permission from the Chancery to strike medals, just as it is unknown to me that the University has received such a permission or intends to strike any medal.»<sup>1617</sup> The medal was eventually produced at the royal mint, however, despite von Holstein's lack of enthusiasm.<sup>1618</sup>

The magistrate compensated for the relative lack of festivity with an act of charity that was aimed at promoting the reputation of the town. In a letter to the 32 men on 9 October 1760, they

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<sup>1615</sup> Johannsen 1985: 112.

<sup>1616</sup> «[...] som hans Majestet for at spare saavel Staden som sine kiære og troe Undersaatter for Udgifter, ikke allernaadigst finder for got ved denne Leylighed at lade skee viidere Solenniteter, end Taksigelse til Gud [...]». KSA. Rådstueskriverens kontors arkiv. MC 423: 98.

<sup>1617</sup> «At jeg ikke har seet eller faaet den forbemelte Tegning, og at herfra Cancelliet ikke for nogen er expederet Tilladelse at lade slaae Medaillier, ligesom det og i sær er mig uvitterligt at Universitetet har faaet saadan Tilladelse, eller agter at lade slaae nogen Medaille;» DRA. DK. D99-16: p. 1055.

<sup>1618</sup> KSA. Rådstueskriverens kontor. MC 424: 20.

wrote that since the city would not pay any expenses for illuminations for the upcoming jubilee, the 32 men could take 1000 riksdaler from the city's coffers and hand them out to the «poor, homeless, sick and bedridden among the burgherly and civil estate.» The ostensible purpose of this act of charity was to give the city «some gloire» (i.e. renown, honour) during the jubilee.<sup>1619</sup> Even this seemingly unproblematic initiative did not happen without friction. It turned out that the allotted sum was not enough to meet the demand of the city's poor. On 20 October, the magistrate again wrote the 32 men and told them to collect 500 Riksdaler more and distribute them among the poor and needy.<sup>1620</sup> The newspaper *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidende* reported on 17 October that the magistrate handed out «approximately 1000 Rdlr.». This sum was corrected in the next issue of the paper, published on the same day that the magistrate decided that more money was needed (20 October): «Since the last issue of this newspaper has incorrectly reported what the magistrate of the city has arranged with regards to the distribution of money to the city's poor, we can now with certainty report that the magistrate, on behalf of the city, has distributed 1500 Rdlr. among the poor and homeless of the burgherly and civil estate.»<sup>1621</sup> The anonymous eyewitness to the centenary (see chapter 4) was not convinced by this act of charity:

[...] the magistrate and the 32 men gave to the city's poor (as it was said, whether it is true, I do not know) 1500 Rdlr. NB. It is a poor sort of alms, to give the innards of a stolen cow to the poor; sat Sapienti.<sup>1622</sup>

We cannot know whether or not this critical attitude was widespread. These problems were in any case mere trifles compared with the disappointment the magistrate must have felt when the government failed to deliver on the promise of new privileges and the confirmation of old ones. In order to understand the significance of the promise, and the frustration induced by the government's failure to deliver, we must take a short look at the original privileges of Copenhagen and the story of their origins.

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<sup>1619</sup> KSA. Rådstueskriverens kontor. MC 257: 138.

<sup>1620</sup> KSA. Rådstueskriverens kontor. MC 257: 148.

<sup>1621</sup> «Da det i forrige Nummer af disse Tidender er blevet uretellig tilført, hvad denne Stads Magistrat til dette Jubilæum, i Henseende til Penges Uddeeling iblant Fattige, have foranstaltet: Saa kan man nu med Vished melde, at Magistraten paa Stadens Vegne, haver ved de 32 Mænd ladet uddeele 1500 Rdlr. iblant fattige og Huusarme af den borgerlige og Civile Stand.» *Kjøbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidende, October 20th 1760*; In the archives of the municipal administration, there are lists of hundreds of names of the recipients of these alms. See KSA. Kæmmerens Arkiv. 320.

<sup>1622</sup> Suhm 1794: 67.

## Privileges old and new

In the official mythology, the representatives of all three estates had offered the king hereditary right to the throne and absolute power as a sign of gratitude to the king for his bravery and personal sacrifices during the war against the Swedes. As we have seen, the reality of the situation had been more complex and contentious than this. In the case of the burghers of Copenhagen, the political maneuvering at the Estates General had been motivated in large part by a desire to secure the city's new privileges. When the Swedish army approached Copenhagen for the first time in February 1658, the burghers took advantage of the desperate situation and demanded new privileges in return for their contributions to the defense of the city. The king and the Council of the Realm agreed and promised that new privileges would be granted as soon as the military threat had been overcome. After the immediate danger had passed with the signing of the Roskilde peace in 1658, nothing happened, although the burghers did not fail to remind the king of his promises. In June of 1658, they presented the king with a list of demands, which included, among other things, staple rights for Copenhagen, tax exemptions, the right to own land with noble privileges and the creation of an elected city council. The king and the Council of the Realm initially ignored this list of demands, but the second Swedish attack in the autumn of 1658 brought the demands to the fore yet again. As a reward for its promises to assist in the defense and supply of Copenhagen, they gave the burghers a temporary confirmation of the privileges they had demanded earlier in the year. These privileges were finally awarded to the city on 24 March 1659, granting Copenhagen staple rights, freedom from tax and the quartering of troops, the right to be heard in matters pertaining to the kingdom as a whole and the right to constitute a body of 32 elected men to govern the city alongside the royally appointed magistrate. The most radical break with the past, however, was the granting of noble privileges to the burghers of the city, who were now granted equal rights as the nobility with regards to ownership of land and equal access to positions in the royal administration.<sup>1623</sup>

After the war against Sweden ended, the burghers of Copenhagen feared that they would lose their newly acquired privileges, since everything seemed to return quickly back to the old status quo. They repeatedly demanded that their privileges be realized, they felt ignored and sidestepped during the peace negotiations and, worst of all, they were told that their privileges would have to be subject to new negotiations at the upcoming Estates General. This entailed a very real possibility that the

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<sup>1623</sup> Christensen 1911: 23-28.

nobility and the other Danish towns would protest against the city's new privileges, and that they would consequently be revoked. According to Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen, this threat provoked desperation among the burghers of Copenhagen and motivated them to take a leading role in offering hereditary right to the Danish crown to Frederick III.<sup>1624</sup> After the introduction of absolutism, all the estates' old rights and privileges were revoked and Frederick III reserved the right to grant them new privileges as he pleased.

Copenhagen received its new privileges on 24 June 1661. Villads Christensen points out that these new privileges were adjusted both in form and content to the new political regime of royal absolutism. Whereas the privileges of 1659 had the form of the result of a negotiation between two parties, the privileges of 1661 were rhetorically staged as a royal favour: «Any trace of a negotiation and agreement between two independent parties are wiped out. What remains is one that gives, and one that receives.»<sup>1625</sup> With regards to content, the burghers of Copenhagen lost two significant privileges that they had been awarded in 1659: the right to consent to new customs and excise duties and the right to be consulted in important matters of state. These losses were a reflection of the monarch's newly won absolute power, which meant that he would not deign to share power with any of his subjects. The latter privilege was instead replaced by a vague promise that the burghers of Copenhagen could «deliberate and give its vote» if the king should at some point decide to assemble the estates. Since this never happened in the next two hundred years, this was also an empty promise. The city's burghers kept, however, their noble privileges. Copenhagen was declared a free city, it was given freedom from state taxes and the billeting of troops in peacetime, staple rights and the right to constitute a body of elected men to represent the interests of the burgers.<sup>1626</sup>

Copenhagen's privileges had great symbolic importance as the most concrete manifestation of the bond between the absolute monarch and his residential city that had been forged during the war against Sweden and the introduction of absolutism. In his political testament (1683), king Christian V reminded his successors of the importance of maintaining this alliance by ensuring that Copenhagen's privileges be «resolutely conserved and maintained» so that the burghers of the city could be «encouraged to humble faithfulness, eagerness and devotion towards the royal house.»<sup>1627</sup> In

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<sup>1624</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2010: 40-41.

<sup>1625</sup> «Ethvert Spor af en Forhandling og Overenskomst mellem to selvstændige Parter er udslettet. Tilbage er kun blevet en, som giver, og en, som modtager.» Christensen 1911: 37.

<sup>1626</sup> Christensen 1911: 38.

<sup>1627</sup> «[H]vorforre Wore Kongelige Arfve Successorer bør at lade sig være, samme Woris Kongelige Residentz Stads Flor oc welstand recommenderit, at de Privilegier [...] worder dennem uryggelig conserverit oc wed liige holdt, paa det de der

practice, however, the absolute monarchs did not respect most of the privileges. According to Oluf Nielsen, «the circumstances of the times entailed that the great promises were not honoured, and only a few points of lesser importance were realized.»<sup>1628</sup> As already mentioned, the city's right to deliberate and give its vote in important matters of state (§1) was an empty promise, since the estates were never summoned again. The access to high government offices (§7) lost some of its exclusivity, as the same opportunity was in practice available to all burghers after the introduction of absolutism. The freedom from quartering of troops in peacetime (§6) was never realized: the burghers had to support a large garrison of troops in the city almost continuously from the early 1660s and onwards. The promise of freedom from taxes (§6) was broken already in 1664, when the burghers had to contribute to princess Anna Sophie's dowry, and new taxes followed continuously in its wake. Copenhagen's staple rights (§3) lost much of their significance in 1682, when many other towns on Zealand were given similar rights.<sup>1629</sup> The king had also granted the city land in Roskilde fief, the Bistrup estate, half of which went to the maintenance of the city and half to pay the wages of the magistrate (§9, §10). Even this privilege came under attack when the king's powerful minister Johan Ludvig Holstein, who owned a neighbouring estate, managed to acquire part of the land in the 1740s.<sup>1630</sup> Finally, the body of elected men that represented the interests of the burghers (§ 2), the 32 men, had an unclear mandate and were frequently ignored and sidestepped by the royally appointed magistrate and by the Crown.<sup>1631</sup>

In the mid-eighteenth century, Copenhagen was indeed a privileged city, in the sense that it received special treatment as the king's residential city. The court was situated there, as well as all the colleges and organs of the central government, the headquarters of the navy and the only university in Denmark and Norway. The government's mercantilist economic policies led to the establishment of trading companies that were given monopolies on all trade with Denmark's colonies. Almost all of these companies were situated in Copenhagen and owned by some of the city's wealthiest merchants. In addition, the majority of the kingdoms' state-subsidised factories were located in the city.<sup>1632</sup> Nonetheless, the unkept promises in the city's privileges were never forgotten: in the course of the century following the introduction of absolutism, the city's elected men repeatedly invoked the

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wed jo lenger, jo meer kunde opmuntris til allerunderdanigste troe, ifver oc Devotion imod det Kongelige Hues» Worsaae 1860: 30; Olden-Jørgensen 2011b: 48.

<sup>1628</sup> «Tidsomstændighederne medførte, at de store Løfter ikke blev indfrieede og kun nogle enkelte punkter af mindre Betydning blev førte ud til Virkelighed.» Nielsen 1889: 101; See also Jensen 1982: 81.

<sup>1629</sup> Nielsen 1889: 101-122; Dahl 1943: 72.

<sup>1630</sup> Jensen 1982: 84.

<sup>1631</sup> Jensen 1982: 93; Bech 1981: 96, 158.

<sup>1632</sup> Bregnsbo 2007.

privileges of 1661 and claimed that they had been not been respected.<sup>1633</sup> They had also surfaced before in the context of centennial commemoration. In the Honour Temple that the magistrate erected for the dynastic tercentenary in 1749, the reign of Frederick III was remembered with a reference to the restitution of royal absolutism («IMPERIUM ABSOLVTVM ET HAEREDITARIVM RESTITVTVM»), and the liberation of and bestowing of noble privileges to Copenhagen («HAFNIA OBSIDIONE LIBERATA ET PRIVILEGIIS NOBILITATA»)<sup>1634</sup>.

The centenary in 1760 provided an apt opportunity for the magistrate to remind the king of the city's privileges of 1661 and to ask for new ones. In fact, the king himself solicited their request: on 25 September 1760, Frederick V approached the president of the magistrate during a hunting trip to discuss the upcoming jubilee. The king informed Volrath von der Lüche that he intended to grant the residential city of Copenhagen a special royal mercy as a remembrance of the faithful service demonstrated by their forefathers in bringing about the introduction of absolutism in 1660. Von der Lüche was so surprised by the king's proposal that he was at first unable to answer him properly, but the two agreed that the magistrate would assemble to discuss the matter and submit a proposal to the king as soon as possible. When the president had composed himself and sat down to write a letter to the magistrate to inform them of the news, he already knew what he wanted their proposal to contain. He told the magistrate that they should not ask the king for money, but for «Freyheiten», that is, privileges.<sup>1635</sup>

The informal setting of the meeting, von der Lüche's great surprise and the short amount of time before the jubilee all suggest that the king might have come up with the idea himself in a moment of inspiration.<sup>1636</sup> Others might have advised him to greater caution, since the question of Copenhagen's privileges was a politically sensitive issue. Only a few months before the jubilee, the king's chief legal advisor Henrik Stampe had in fact counselled the Crown to treat the city's privileges with great care. Like all Stampe's statements, this one was a response to a concrete legal matter with wider ramifications. The question at hand was whether Copenhagen's noble privileges extended only to residents of Copenhagen, or whether they also pertained to burghers who moved elsewhere or to their descendants. Stampe opened his statement with the confession that he had

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<sup>1633</sup> Bruun 1901: 29; Dahl 1943: 72.

<sup>1634</sup> Berling 1749: 17.

<sup>1635</sup> KSA. Københavns Magistrats Arkiv. Rådstueskriverens Kontor. MC 257: 123. («Pro Memoria»).

<sup>1636</sup> The king also stated that he wanted to do something for the female burghers («das weibliche Geschlecht»), namely to allow some of the burghers' daughters to be entered into the noble damsel's foundations (Jomfruklostrene). Von der Lüche, however, saw this as an unlikely proposition, since the foundations were all run by the nobility. This unrealistic idea makes it even more likely that the king had not properly looked into the matter beforehand. KSA. Københavns Magistrats Arkiv. Rådstueskriverens Kontor. MC 257: 123. («Pro Memoria»).

«always been afraid of the questions that arise with regards to the noble privileges granted to the burghers of Copenhagen.» His wariness was based on a combination of factors: one the one hand, the very special historical situation in which the privileges had been granted and, on the other hand, the character of the privileges themselves. He wrote:

[Copenhagen's privileges of 24 June 1661] are so solemnly given, at such a special occasion and on the basis of such an important preceding merit, that it would be unfortunate if something should happen that could have the slightest appearance of reducing them. On the other hand, these privileges are partly created according to the circumstances as they were in those times and before [Christian V's Law of 1683] was issued, and partly written in such general and vague terms that can be interpreted in more than one way, which can invite interpretations that can lead to confusion and discontent.<sup>1637</sup>

The essence of Stampe's statement was that the privileges' close association with the memory of the politically significant events of 1661 circumscribed the government's space of manouver when dealing with them. On the basis of this standpoint, he advised that the government should try to avoid «explaining these privileges» and avoid answering the general questions they raised, but only make statements about how the privileges should be interpreted in concrete cases.<sup>1638</sup> The king's invitation to the magistrate to submit a proposal for the centenary opened a window of opportunity for the magistrate to renegotiate the privileges, precisely at the moment when the kingdoms celebrated the memory of the introduction of absolutism. In light of Stampe's recommendations, this seems like a risky move. It should be added that the burghers in the market towns of the kingdom already considered the residential city's privileged position to be detrimental to the growth of trade in the provinces.<sup>1639</sup> Additional privileges could easily come to be regarded as a further centralization and monopolization of trade to the capital of the kingdoms.

The magistrate was quick to grasp the advantageous possibilities that arose with the king's invitation. On 30 September, they submitted a proposal to the king, via Adam Gottlob Moltke. In the introductory remarks, the magistrate stated that they did not want to propose something that would «fall to onorous for Your Majesty's coffers in the present times, since this is already dedicated

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<sup>1637</sup> «De Kiøbenhavnske Borgere og Indvaanere den 24 Junii 1661 [...] Privilegier, ere saa høitideligen givne, ved saa mærkværdig en Anledning og en foregaaende saa vigtig Fortieneste, saa det var ilde om noget skulde hænde, som maatte have allerminde Skin af at gjøre Skaar derudi. Derimod ere disse Privilegier tildeels indrettede efter Omstændighederne, saadanne, som de paa de Tider vare, og førend Loven udkom, tildeels ere de forfattede i meget almindelige og ubestemte Udtryk, som paa mere end een Maade kunne fortolkes, og undertiden taale en Forklaring, som kunde give Leilighed til een og anden Forvirring og Fortrædelighed.» Stampe 1795: 104-105.

<sup>1638</sup> Stampe 1795: 105.

<sup>1639</sup> Møller 2007: 237.



to the kings gloire, the general good and the security of the country.» Instead, they claimed that they, together with the 32 men, had come up with suggestions that would promote the common good of the inhabitants of Copenhagen, in accordance with the king's intention.<sup>1640</sup> The proposal consisted of eight points. In the first point, the magistrate asked the king to confirm the privileges of 1661. In point two, they referred to the 7<sup>th</sup> paragraph of the privileges of 1661, which stated that the burghers and their descendents had the same access as the nobility to *officia* and *honores*, offices and honorary titles, provided they were capable and had proved their merit. The magistrate now asked for an extension of the privilege, which gave «the children of the magistrate, the 32 men and other considerable burghers» the same access as the nobility to be admitted to Sorø Academy and the cadet schools of the navy and army. In point three, they asked that the Bistrup estate in Roskilde that the king had granted the city in 1661 should not be changed or reduced. In point four, they requested that no one but merchants could enjoy the right to store goods without paying customs («Oplagsfrihed»), and that civil and military officials be excluded from wholesale and retail trade. They asked in point five that Copenhagen be granted a monopoly on the trade on Iceland and Finnmark in Norway, «as it has been since ancient times [...]». In point six, they asked that the customs rules for goods leaving the city by land be returned to how they had been before 1748. In that year, the king had cut a customs compensation because some of Copenhagen's wine merchants had colluded with the customs officers in a customs fraud.<sup>1641</sup> According to the magistrate, the city's trade had suffered because of this, «in violation of the privileges.» In the seventh point, the magistrate asked for the right to import foreign cereals to Copenhagen. The reason for this, they wrote, was that the price on cereals was too high, which «is particularly pressing for the industries and the common man.»<sup>1642</sup> This was a request for dispensation from the corn monopoly introduced by Christian VI in 1735, which forbid the import of foreign cereals to Denmark and the south of Norway. The law was intended to counter the agricultural crisis in Denmark in the 1730s and 1740s, and was primarily beneficial to Danish landowners. It was unpopular among the consumers in the urban burgher class, however, who benefited from the lower prices on imported corn.<sup>1643</sup> Finally, the magistrate asked the king to suspend consumption taxes on «living animals, cereals, victuals,

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<sup>1640</sup> «digesaa nödig ville vi proponere naged som skulde falde Deres Maytts Casse alt for onoreuse for nærværende Tiid, da denne til Kongens Gloire og Landets almindelige Beste og Sikkerhed udenlands nok som med Udgifter er besværges.» KSA. Københavns Magistrats Arkiv. Rådstueskriverens Kontor. MC 257: 123.

<sup>1641</sup> The merchants had shipped water through the city gates instead of wine, and shared the compensation of the customs payment (two thirds of the sum) with the customs officers.

<sup>1642</sup> «som meest trycker Fabriquerne og den almindelige Mand.»

<sup>1643</sup> Feldbæk 1982: 149; Bech 1981: 77-78.

firewood and fodder» entering the city gates by land for a month, following the first day of the jubilee. This, wrote the magistrate would give the «common man» great joy.<sup>1644</sup>

The majority of the magistrate's suggestions were requests for material advantages that, if granted, would have involved tangible economic benefits for the city's merchant community. Two of the suggestions were of a more symbolical nature, namely point two, which gave the sons of the burgher elite access to the noble academy at Sorø, and point eight, which gave the ordinary people cheaper prices for their necessities for a month. The monarch's response came only a few days before the jubilee. On 14 October 1760, Frederick V informed the magistrate that he had granted them one of the requests they had submitted. From now on, the sons of the magistrate, the 32 men and other «children of respectable burghers» were allowed to study at the noble academy at Sorø, on the condition that the king had been informed and had given his resolution in advance. Regarding the rest of the magistrate's suggestions, the king stated that he would «take the same under closer consideration.»<sup>1645</sup>

This, then, was the entire scope of the «eclatant royal mercy» that the king had wanted to show his capital. One cannot help but suspect that the magistrate and the 32 men felt a pang of disappointment when they received news of the decision. Flemming Dahl notes that the only point on the magistrates' wish list that was realized was «quite minor» («ganske underordnet»), while Carl Bruun is even more critical: «All the rest of the posts were passed over in silence, and the inhabitants of Copenhagen thus achieved nothing.»<sup>1646</sup> The magistrate seems to have nourished hopes of achieving something more, since they persisted for a few weeks with trying to persuade the administration of the wisdom of their suggestions. On 29 October 1760, they sent a memorandum to Hans Ahlefeld, first deputy of finances, in which they further explained and justified points 6 and 7 from the list of 30 September. They even added one further request, which clearly shows that they had not lost hope of achieving something tangible: the magistrate asked for the hunting rights at the Bistrup estates, since they had been granted to the city with full noble privileges in 1661.<sup>1647</sup> But their attempts were to no avail: the window of opportunity had passed and the magistrate did not achieve any new benefits for the city and its merchants.

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<sup>1644</sup> «Og hvad sig de övrige udi berörte Eders allerunderdanigste Forestilling ommelte Poster er Angaaende; da ville vi lade samme tage under nærmere Overveyende.» KSA. Københavns Magistrats Arkiv. Rådstueskriverens Kontor. MC 257: 123.

<sup>1645</sup> KSA. Københavns Magistrats Arkiv. Rådstueskriverens kontors arkiv. MC 424: 73.

<sup>1646</sup> «Alle de øvrige Poster bleve forbigaaede med Taushed, og Kjøbenhavns Indbyggere opnaaede saaledes intet.» Bruun 1901: 35; Dahl 1943: 74.

<sup>1647</sup> KSA. Københavns Magistrats Arkiv. Rådstueskriverens kontors arkiv. MC 257: 161.

Frederick V granted the city one final gift in connection with the jubilee, which was precisely what the magistrate had said that it did not need, namely a sum of money. The king gave the magistrate 4000 riksdaler to use for the benefit of the inhabitants of his residential city. In August of 1761, the magistrate decided to use the sum to establish what they called the «Legate in memory of the absolute government» («Legatum til Enevolds Regieringens Erindring»). Every year on 16 October, a portion of the yearly interest of the king's gift would go to ten deserving poor of the city's inhabitants, who would receive 20 riksdaler each. Every member of the magistrate selected one person each, who would receive the yearly sum for life.<sup>1648</sup> The legate proved to have a remarkably long life. The yearly sums were still being handed out to ten poor citizens of Copenhagen (mostly widows of artisans and tradesmen) as late as the end of the nineteenth century, many decades after absolutism had been abolished in Denmark-Norway.

## Concluding remarks

In 1760, the people of Denmark-Norway celebrated that they had voluntarily given their monarchs absolute power one hundred years before. The fundamental purpose of the centenary was to promote the notion that this change in the form of government had been an unconditional blessing for the kingdoms. Before the introduction of absolutism, so this story went, Denmark-Norway was severely shaken, dangerously weakened and terminally threatened by foreign invasion and domestic disagreement. Because their power had been limited by their royal charters and they had had to rule together with the Danish high aristocracy, the pre-absolutist Oldenburg monarchs had not been able to take the necessary measures to protect their own people and improve the conditions of the kingdoms. The introduction of absolutism, however, had freed the hands of the virtuous kings, ushering in a golden century of liberty, security, peace and justice. The blessed change had taken place in the reign of the Danish David, Frederick III, whose selfless courage and steadfastness had earned him the love and gratitude of the estates. In reward, they had offered the king and his successors hereditary right to the throne and absolute power for all eternity.

As I argued in the first part of this chapter, more or less the same narrative had been promoted actively by the absolute monarchy and its loyal servants from almost immediately after the event itself had taken place, in the form of printed relations and official acts, commemorative medals, occasional poetry and thanksgiving sermons. After about half a century, the introduction of

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<sup>1648</sup> KSA. Jubellegetets arkiv. Regnskapsbog for Jubellegetet.

absolutism also began to be treated in Danish national histories, most notably in the works of Ludvig Holberg. The publication of the Royal Law in 1709, and its repeated republication in the decades that followed, also contributed to an increased public awareness of the most important political event in recent history. By 1760, the ground had therefore been thoroughly vetted and prepared for the grandiose celebration of the first hundred years of absolute monarchy. Unlike the object of commemoration eleven years before, the coronation of Christian I in 1449, the introduction of absolutism was an event that was already firmly established in cultural memory.

The centenary reaffirmed and promoted the traditional narrative about the voluntary and unforced nature of the conferral of absolute power to king Frederick III. Even though a full century had passed since 1660 and «neither the children nor the grandchildren of those who lived then [were] alive anymore» (Langebek), the legitimacy of the political revolution still rested on the convenient fiction of the passive king and the unanimous decision of the estates. The very choice of date for the centenary encouraged this interpretation: absolutism had not actually been introduced on 16 October 1660, nor in fact in 1660 at all. The only decision that could be said to have been made voluntarily by the estates was to give the king hereditary power. In selecting 16 October 1660 as the moment of genesis, the royal government continued the tradition of conflating hereditary right with absolute power and presenting them as products of the same voluntary agreement of the estates. The clergy and other servants and supporters of the royal regime followed the lead, making the peaceful, consensual and harmonious nature of the political change a major point in their historical accounts.

The clergy broadcast the notion that the introduction of absolutism was a work of divine providence. There was indeed a place for human agency in the story, and central actors such as Hans Svane, Hans Nansen and king Frederick III himself were widely praised during the jubilee. But God was the wheel that had driven the entire machinery. It was the Lord who had used the Swedish enemy as an instrument to humble the king, prepare him for greatness, and create the conditions that paved the way for absolutism. God had moved the hearts of the estates to give hereditary right to the throne and absolute power to Frederick III and his successors. And it was God that had ensured that the Estates General in the autumn of 1660 had taken place without any discord and bloodshed. I have stressed the ubiquity of such arguments during the jubilee in order to demonstrate the lingering strength of religious conceptions of the absolute monarchy in the mid-eighteenth century. It has been argued in Danish and Norwegian historiography that the legitimacy of the absolute monarchy in the eighteenth century was increasingly based on contractual ideas derived from natural law. The notion that the Danish absolute monarchy based its legitimacy primarily on the notion of a contract

between ruler and ruled was proposed with strength by Knud Fabricius, who argued that the religious rhetoric in the Royal Law of 1665 was nothing more than an «aesthetical flower». According to Fabricius, the account of the introduction of absolutism in its preface was based on the principle «mediate a deo, immediate a populo», meaning that God's intervention was merely «half-hidden», working through the actions of human beings. Fabricius' posits as a contrast the bishop Hans Wandal, who in his lectures on monarchy at the University of Copenhagen in the 1660s did not say a word about the estates' conferral of power, presenting the king's authority as immediately given to him by the Lord.<sup>1649</sup>

The question, however, is whether it is entirely correct to interpret the preface to the Royal Law as *actually* or *essentially* an expression of natural law-based contractual theory that was merely clothed in or decorated with religious rhetoric. Does it not make more sense to suppose that the interpretation of the text depended on the eye of the beholder? For a writer like Ludvig Holberg, who played a central role in introducing and popularizing Samuel Pufendorf's formulation of natural law in Denmark-Norway, the Danish estates' voluntary conferral of absolute power on the king was a textbook example of a contract between ruler and subjects, and the legitimacy of the contract rested on its voluntary nature.<sup>1650</sup> For Holberg, in other words, the deity did not enter into the equation. For the Danish and Norwegian clergy, however, the legitimacy of the change of government was first and foremost based on the fact that it had been directed and controlled by God himself. That the Lord had used the representatives of the people to carry out his work seems quite secondary in this respect, compared to the notion that God had «moved their hearts» to do it. In the eyes of the clergy it could actually be historically proven that the Danish absolute monarchs were kings by divine right, and they found their evidence in the miraculous way the events had played out in 1660. Gerhard Treschow, for instance, claimed that the kings could be called «God's kings and his anointed» because God himself had chosen them, had mercy on them and blessed them. To become convinced of this, he wrote, one had only to «look to history to see what happened when the absolute government was given to our Danish kings, and we shall verily see God's finger, and that God was the one who miraculously drove this great work».<sup>1651</sup>

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<sup>1649</sup> Fabricius 1920: 279, 309.

<sup>1650</sup> Olden-Jørgensen 2012: 124-126.

<sup>1651</sup> «Og saaledes kand da i sær vore Eenevolds Konger kaldes Guds Konger og hands salvede, fordi Gud selv har satt og beskikket dem, benaadet og velsignet dem, og i saa maade givet os dem ikke i Vrede, men i Naade, for nu dismeere at blive overbevist derom, saa lader os kaste et Øye i Historien, for at see, hvorledes det gik til, da Eenevoldsregimentet blev overgivet til vore Danske Konger, og vi skal kiendelig see Guds Finger, og at Gud var den som forunderlig drev dette

It makes little sense to speak of the religious rhetoric in the Royal Law as merely «an aesthetical flower» in a culture where the belief in divine providence still remained an important and vital way of interpreting the events taking place in this world. It is certainly true that the religious legitimation of the absolute monarchy declined in importance in the course of the eighteenth century—this can be witnessed, for instance, in Nicolay Abildgaard’s paintings for the Knight’s Hall in Christiansborg castle, which were characterized by a marked absence of religious imagery.<sup>1652</sup> A burgeoning desacralization of the absolute monarchy can also clearly be seen in theoretical discussions about the monarchy in the late eighteenth century, which were often conducted in completely secular terms. The tendency can already be observed in 1760: in his jubilee speech, Jens Schelderup Sneedorff hardly paid more than lip service to the role of divine providence. At the same time, clergymen continued to speak to their congregation about the divine sanction of the absolute monarchy. If divine right monarchy became increasingly seen as «outdated and often absurd» (Seip) in the course of the eighteenth century, the change had definitely not yet occurred in 1760.

The vicar Niels Bjørn Tødsleuf ended his jubilee sermon in 1760 with stating that he and his congregation had celebrated many jubilees, but that only the very youngest among them were likely to experience any more jubilees in their lifetime.<sup>1653</sup> As it turned out, Tødsleuf was correct: the centenary in 1760 was the last major jubilee that was celebrated in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. There were a few minor events, such as the bicentenary of the student college *Kommunitetet* (1769) and the tercentenary of the University of Copenhagen (1779), but these were only celebrated at the institutions in question, and not in the kingdoms as a whole. The Norwegian author Conradine Dunker was born in 1780, in the midst of what was to become a 57-year long period without any centennial commemoration in the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway. In her memoirs (written in the 1850s), Dunker relates how a conversation with her private French tutor Ehlert turned to the topic of jubilees (Ehlert was her tutor from age seven to eleven, so the conversation would have taken place sometime during the years 1787-91). According to Dunker, she had gone to ask her mother if she had experienced any jubilees. Her mother replied that she had experienced one, the centenary of the introduction of absolutism in 1760, but that she had been only five years old at

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store Verk.» Gerhard Treschow, *Takoffer til Gud, for den Behag hand har viist sig at have i Vore Eneevolds Konger som hand har satt og givet os, forestillet i en Prædiken [...] paa Jubel=Festens første Dag d: 16 Oct: 1760 og holdt for Bircherüds Meenighed*, [7]

<sup>1652</sup> Kragelund 1999: 257.

<sup>1653</sup> «Vi have oplevet mange Jubelfæster, neppe bliver nogen meere at opleve for os her i dette Liv, uden det skulle være for de alleryngste iblandt os.» Niels Bjørn Tødsleuf, *Prædiken over Psalm: XVIII vers: 50, 51 Til Erindring om den for et hundrede Aar siden Ved den Kongelige Regjering indførte Eneevolds Magt og Herredømme holdet d: 16 Octobris 1760 for Gjörlov og Bracchendrup Meenigheder i Löve Herred af Niels Bjørn Tødsleuf*, [13].

the time so she did not have much to say about it. Conradine began to calculate the years to find out whether she would herself live to see the bicentenary for the same event, whereupon her mother told her that she would perhaps live long enough, but that there would probably not be any more jubilees for the introduction of absolutism in the kingdoms. In her memoirs, Dunker goes on to relate how she did not experience a jubilee herself before the Reformation tercentenary in 1817, and not a «real» jubilee before the bicentenary of the town Christiania in 1824.<sup>1654</sup> A girl born twenty years after the jubilee in 1760, in other words, did not experience the celebration of a centenary before she was thirty-seven years old, and even her mother could barely remember the last jubilee.

Preferrably, I would have liked to be able to explain why there were no more national centenaries later in the century, but I have not managed to find a satisfactory explanation in contemporary sources. I can therefore only propose what I believe is the most probable theory. One reason could be that the last centenary had been a relative failure, as the celebrations in Copenhagen had been marred by bad weather and a negative atmosphere. Although bad experiences from the centenary in 1760 may have contributed to a longer period without any jubilees, I believe a more weighty reason lies elsewhere: the latter half of the eighteenth century simply lacked anniversaries that were worthy of celebrations on a national scale. Most of the important landmarks events in the history of the Protestant Reformation that had previously been commemorated in Lutheran Germany and Denmark-Norway had taken place in the first half of the sixteenth century. Some Protestant cities and territories had indeed commemorated the centenary of the signing of the Formula of Concord in the seventeenth century.<sup>1655</sup> This was out of the question in Denmark-Norway where king Frederick II had chosen not to subscribe to it and in fact expressly forbidden the Book of Concord in his kingdoms.<sup>1656</sup> Several Reformation tercentenaries were indeed arranged in Denmark and Norway in the first half of the nineteenth century, which shows that the long halt in the celebration of Reformation centenaries was probably caused by the relative lack of landmark events in the history of Lutheranism in the end of the sixteenth century.

If the Danish government had searched in their almanacs for political events to commemorate, the prospects would have been even less promising. The Royal Law (1665), would probably have been one of the most likely candidates. It was a document that had been written

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<sup>1654</sup> Her point was that she had seen neither «jubel» (jubilation) nor «fest» (festivities) during the Reformation tercentenary, whereas the Christiania bicentenary had been a joyous occasion, with illuminations and much popular enthusiasm. See Dunker, Ullmann & Steffens 1909: 354-357.

<sup>1655</sup> Schönstadt 1982: 61; Zika 2003: 202; Flügel 2005: 104-122.

<sup>1656</sup> Grønder-Hansen 2013: 177.

without consulting any representatives of the people, however, and had also been kept a secret from the population for 44 years. In addition, the domestic situation in 1765 did not encourage any celebration. Financial difficulties in the wake of the Seven Years War had led the government to impose a new tax, *Ekstraskatten*, that was hugely unpopular. In Norway, the popular dissatisfaction with the tax culminated in a popular uprising in Bergen on 18-19 April.<sup>1657</sup> If the government had wanted to organize a centenary in 1765, these events would probably have dissuaded them. Since Frederick V became fatally ill in the autumn of the same year, a celebration would in any case have been called off. There was also few events to commemorate in the reign of Christian V (r.1670-1699), who had spent many years of his reign unsuccessfully trying to win back lost territory from Sweden. The Danish and Norwegian Law (1685/1687) could potentially have been commemorated with a centenary, although the promulgation of a Law Code would maybe not have been considered sufficiently appealing. In addition, it would not have been possible to celebrate a centenary in Denmark and Norway at the same time, since the two countries had received the new law codes in different years. This left the reigns of king John (r.1481/1483-1513) and king Frederick II (r.1559-1588), neither of whom had done anything remarkable or memorable enough to merit the celebration of a centenary. The conclusion is therefore that the absence of centenaries were probably caused by the coincidental lack of events worthy of commemoration in the late eighteenth century, rather than a loss of interest in centennial commemoration on the part of the government.

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<sup>1657</sup> Slettebo 2012.



## Chapter 8: Conclusion

The first aim of the thesis was to analyse the narratives about the past that were transmitted to the population in Denmark-Norway during the four centenaries celebrated in the first half of the eighteenth century. The analysis has focused on two stages in this process of communication. In the first stage, the main question was how the government in Copenhagen designed the centenaries. Particular emphasis has been placed on the preparatory discussions that clarified precisely which historical event the centenaries should celebrate. The analysis of these deliberations has provided an insight into the royal government's intentions with the jubilees, what aspects of the past the kings and their advisors wanted to highlight, and what they wanted to condemn to the shadows. The official instructions, prayers and medals have been read as officially sanctioned definitions of key events in the history of the kingdoms. In the second stage, the main question was how the Lutheran clergy in the two kingdoms interpreted the official instructions fashioned by the central government, and how they chose to present the history of the kingdoms to their congregations. The clergy were important intermediaries between the government and ordinary subjects and consequently also played a key role in the transmission of information about the past in the context of the jubilees. Although the sources poses some methodological challenges with regards to the correspondence between the sermon as performance and text (chapter 4), the analysis of approximately 200 sermons nonetheless brings us closer to an understanding of what the population were actually told about the past during the jubilees. The analysis of the historical narratives in the sermons has also given a fairly comprehensive overview of how the clergy as a group interpreted important religious and political events in the history of the kingdoms. In this respect, the study has also furthered expanded our knowledge of the ideological profile of the Lutheran clergy in Denmark, a topic that has received increased attention by Danish and Norwegian scholar in later years. Previous studies have focused on the clergy's «views and ideas on society and government»<sup>1658</sup>, on «Lutheran conceptions of politics»<sup>1659</sup> and their «views on political power [and] the relations between government and people».<sup>1660</sup> In this study, the emphasis has been on a topic that is closely related, namely the clergy's understanding of the past.

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<sup>1658</sup> Bregnsbo 1997a.

<sup>1659</sup> Bregnsbo & Ihalainen 2011.

<sup>1660</sup> Viken 2014: 15.

The second aim was to investigate the historical development of centennial commemoration in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway. The question of continuity and change in the underlying assumptions and the practices of centennial commemoration has been addressed at various points in the thesis. It has first of all highlighted how the concept of centennial commemoration originated and how it became established in Denmark-Norway in the period. Second, it has traced the continuous expansion of centennial commemoration to novel aspects of the past, a process that saw a transfer of the centenary from strictly Lutheran confessional topics to objects of commemoration such as the foundation of copper mines and royal dynasties. Finally, it has charted the changes in the practices of centennial commemoration, a process of accumulation that saw the gradual transformation of the centenary from a religious celebration centred exclusively on church and academy, to a more hybrid form that included more profane elements such as firework shows and theatre performances.

In what follows, I shall present in more detail the findings that the study has brought to light. The discussion is organized according to the two main aims of the study: I shall first present the messages that the centenaries conveyed and then how the centenary developed in the period. The conclusion ends with some suggested areas for future study.

### **The history of the kingdoms according to the royal government**

In the concluding remarks following each chapter I have discussed how the specific concerns and preoccupations at the time of celebration influenced the centenaries. It is also possible, however, to discern some fairly consistent patterns in the grand narratives that the centenaries were designed to propagate, ideas about and evaluations of the past that remained fairly stable throughout the period.

We notice first of all that the year that marked the beginning of the commemorative chronology was 1449, which was the year the first Oldenburg monarch Christian I was crowned king of Denmark. Apart from a few scattered references to the medieval kings of Norway during the tercentenary in 1749, there was rarely any mention of the pre-Oldenburg history of the kingdoms, except for derogatory and critical remarks about the medieval Catholic Church. In the few cases where a more distant past was mentioned in positive terms, it served the purpose of underlining the august and ancient lineage of the royal dynasty. The Norwegian jurist Hans Paus, for instance, published a genealogy in 1749 that demonstrated that king Frederick V and queen Louise were both

the direct descendants of the «first absolute monarch of Norway, king Harald Fairhair».<sup>1661</sup> A few others referred to the eight-century Saxon prince Widukind as the dynastic forefather of the Oldenburgs, also to underline the respectable age and heroic ancestry of the royal dynasty.<sup>1662</sup> In the great majority of sermons and jubilee publications, however, the year 1449 was presented as the beginning of a golden age in the kingdoms. The general absence of positive references to an even older past was of course a consequence of the government's decisions regarding the historical events it wanted to commemorate, but this explanation only raises the new question of why the absolute monarchy did not attempt to capitalize on heroic events and glorious royal achievements in an even remoter past. I believe that the most likely explanation for this is a combination of three factors.

First of all, the commemoration of any historical event or figure before the personal union between the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway in 1380 would only have been directly relevant for one of the two kingdoms. As I shall discuss in more detail below, it was a consistent pattern in the mnemopolitical considerations of the regime to stress the exact identity of the history of the two kingdoms, even in cases where such an identity did not actually exist. All the jubilees in the eighteenth century were designed to be Danish-Norwegian, celebrated at the same time and for the same reason in both kingdoms. From the perspective of the government, celebrations of separate historical jubilees would have encouraged unwelcome attention to the historical differences between the two kingdoms.

Second, the powerful legacy of anti-Catholicism or anti-papism in Denmark-Norway reduced the political utility of the medieval past and rendered the celebration of pre-Lutheran events and persons problematic. The centenary had originated as an Evangelical form of celebration and remained strongly associated with the concept of religious worship and thanksgiving throughout the period discussed here. The celebration of the deeds of the medieval Catholic or heathen rulers of Denmark or Norway could therefore easily have led to dissonance between the topic of commemoration, on the one hand, and the form and ostensible purpose of celebration, on the other. A visible manifestation of this dilemma is the Lutheran clergy's treatment of the Catholic ancestor of the Oldenburg dynasty, Christian I. In 1717 and 1736, the pre-Reformation centuries had been treated as a Babylonian captivity and an Egyptian slavery.<sup>1663</sup> In 1749, as we have seen, the imperative

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<sup>1661</sup> «Slægt-Register hvorved vises at [...] Begge Deres Kongelige Majestæter Nedstamme fra den første Norges Enevolds Konge, Kong Harald Haarfager [...]» Paus 1749.

<sup>1662</sup> Hempel 1749; Hof 1749: c3r.

<sup>1663</sup> In a jubilee poem from 1736, the landowner Daniel Kellinghusen described how Christian I had gone to Rome in 1474 to kiss the feet of Pope Sixtus and to buy letters of indulgences to assuage his conscience. Such comments would have unthinkable during the tercentenary in 1749. Kellinghusen 1736 :a2v.

to praise all the twelve kings of the royal dynasty led many ministers, as well as the historian Jakob Langebek, to find signs of proto-Protestantism in the reigns of the first Oldenburg kings. If the commemoration of pre-Reformation history had been completely unproblematic, these exercises would hardly have been necessary.

Finally, all of the jubilees that were celebrated in the eighteenth century took place before the onset of the intensified historiographical and cultural interest in the remote past of the Nordic kingdoms that began in full in Denmark-Norway only in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The public awareness of and interest in Old Norse history and mythology grew in tandem with the publication of works by late-eighteenth century historians such as Gerhard Schøning, Peter Frederik Suhm and Tyge Rothe that idealized the ancient history of the kingdoms. According to historian Rasmus Glenthøj, the military defeats in 1801 and 1807 led Danish and Norwegian intellectuals to intensify their cultivation of the image of the ancient Nordic past as a golden age of heroism and liberty.<sup>1664</sup> Although the underlying rationale for the growing interest in the history of the ancient and medieval north followed different trajectories in the two countries after the separation in 1814, intellectuals in both Denmark and Norway continued to promote the notion of a national golden age in the remote past.<sup>1665</sup> It is therefore symptomatic that the first jubilee to celebrate an event in the early medieval period, the millennial commemoration in Denmark of Harald Klak's baptism in 826, took place as late as 1826. In the short jubilee history he wrote for the education of the common man, the Zealand bishop Friederich Münter expressed ambivalence towards the form of Christianity that had been introduced in 826, and claimed that it had become more and more polluted by human inventions and superstition in the centuries that followed. It was still far superior, however, to the heathendom that it replaced.<sup>1666</sup> Münter ended his short history with emphasizing the dynastic continuity between the present king Frederick VI and the first Christian king Harald Klak. The same blood runs in the veins of the kings of Denmark, wrote Münter, «and the Scylding [Skjoldungen] Frederick VI is related to Harald Klak, who gave the example, and Knud the Great, who completed the work».<sup>1667</sup> Frederick VI's grandfather Frederick V and their Oldenburg predecessors were of course also reckoned to be related by blood to the old Danish and Norwegian monarchs, although the precise nature of the kinship was not firmly established in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>1668</sup> The

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<sup>1664</sup> Glenthøj 2012: 253-254.

<sup>1665</sup> Glenthøj 2012: 251-267; Evju 2013: 311-316.

<sup>1666</sup> Münter 1826: 4.

<sup>1667</sup> Münter 1826: 89.

<sup>1668</sup> Ludvig Holberg did not discuss the blood relations between the Oldenburg kings and the old Danish royal dynasty in any detail, but simply stated that Christian was of an old royal lineage, since «his mother Hedevig, Duke Adolph's sister,

royal government in the eighteenth century, however, made no efforts to emphasize the continuity by initiating the celebration of a centenary to commemorate any of their more distant ancestors. The 300-year era of Oldenburg rule was prioritized, and constituted the chronological boundary of public commemoration in our period.

While the ascendancy of the Oldenburg dynasty was defined as the initial starting point of a golden age in the history of the kingdoms, the most significant historical ruptures were nonetheless the Protestant Reformation (1536/37) and the introduction of absolutism (1660/61). Both of these royal revolutions had restructured the political system and the social and cultural fabric of the two kingdoms in ways that the advent of a new royal dynasty had not. The Reformation was not only a religious change with enormous and long-term ramifications for the spiritual life of the population, it also represented the downfall of the institution that had posed the greatest political challenge to monarchical power in the two kingdoms, the Catholic Church. This was particularly true in the kingdom of Norway, where the late medieval Church had managed to achieve a much larger degree of autonomy from the Crown than in Denmark.<sup>1669</sup> The introduction of absolutism had removed the final obstacle in the way of unlimited royal power, the noble Council of the Realm that had ruled together with the monarchs for centuries. In the wake of this political change followed an unhitherto unprecedented elevation of the power and status of the monarch in Danish-Norwegian political culture.

In our context, it is important to note that both revolutions restructured the cultural memory and were accompanied by the construction of powerful and suggestive mythologies. In the case of the Reformation, Danish and Norwegian Lutheran theologians shared the same view of the pre-Reformation past as their confessional brethren in Germany: they perceived the Middle Ages as a period of spiritual darkness when the greedy and power-hungry Pope and his corrupt Catholic clergy had duped the faithful into believing the most coarse, false and dangerous human inventions, such as the doctrine of purgatory, the worship of saints and the practice of buying letters of indulgences. Instead of taking care of the spiritual welfare of the people, the clergy had behaved like worldly prelates. After God awakened the German monk Martin Luther to be his faithful instrument, the light of the Gospels could again shine freely for the faithful. The earliest generations of Lutheran reformers had believed that they lived in the end of days, and read their own confessional struggle

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was king Waldemar III's niece's daughter». Holberg's genealogical remark followed that of Arild Huitfeldt, in his history of Christian's reign. Later in the eighteenth century, however, other writers began questioning the accuracy of this kinship, suggesting alternative genealogies. Holberg 1732: 638; Huitfeldt 1977: 4.

<sup>1669</sup> Albrechtsen 1997: 240-244.

and contemporary events in eschatological terms. The hermeneutical method of figural or typological interpretation provided them with the tools that allowed them to interpret the history of the church all the way up into their own times in light of the Holy Bible. The result of these readings was a view of history where the Pope in Rome represented the historical fulfilment of the Anti-Christ who was prophesized in the Book of Revelation, the Catholic Church the fulfilment of the Whore of Babylon and the Holy Roman Empire the fulfilment of the Fourth Monarchy in the Book of Daniel.<sup>1670</sup>

While the eschatological urgency of this tradition had lost much of its power by the eighteenth century, it retained its importance as a method of historical interpretation and provided an arsenal of rhetorical figures, images and symbols that could be used to interpret the Catholic past.<sup>1671</sup> In the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway, the Catholic Church was further discredited by the Catholic bishops' refusal to elect the Lutheran prince Christian to the Danish throne after the death of Frederick I, a refusal that would contribute to the outbreak of the Count's War. The bishops were therefore not only held responsible for having kept the kingdoms in a state of spiritual darkness, but also for causing the mayhem and anarchy of the civil war. The political and religious establishment after 1536/37 pursued a policy of actively discrediting, belittling and demonizing the Catholic past. The best example of this is the transformation of All Saint's Day into an annual day of remembrance for the Reformation in the wake of the centenary in 1617. Every year on 1 November, the congregation were told that their forefathers had lived in a time of «Papist imprisonment and darkness». There are also grounds to speak of an official policy of deliberate forgetting: Øystein Rian argues that the loss of sources to the medieval past was particularly severe in Norway, and argues that the loss was caused by a combination of negligence and active destruction on the part of the Danish government in the decades after the Reformation.<sup>1672</sup>

In the case of the introduction of absolutism, the apotheosis of the absolute monarchs in the decades following the revolution in 1660/61 had an equally powerful effect on cultural memory. As we have seen, the royal regime almost immediately constructed an official mythology about how and why the constitutional change had taken place. Much like the post-Reformation political and religious establishment had painted the medieval past with dark brushstrokes, the introduction of absolutism allowed the royal regime to denigrate and devalue the era when the king had ruled together with the high nobility. The estates' conferral of power to Frederick III was not only claimed

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<sup>1670</sup> Schönstadt 1978.

<sup>1671</sup> For the disappearance of typological interpretations of Protestant history in the eighteenth century, see Cordes 2006: 130-134.

<sup>1672</sup> Rian 2013: 82-83.

to be voluntary, but also highly necessary for the survival of the kingdoms. Thankfully, God had intervened and moved the hearts of the estates to make the decision.

The introduction of absolutism did not only set clear boundaries for how one should speak and write about the very recent past: it also induced a re-evaluation of the more remote history of the kingdoms. Already before the introduction of absolutism, the Oldenburg monarchs had cultivated the myth that both the kingdoms had been hereditary kingdoms since time immemorial. In the early seventeenth century, the monarchy had used this as an historical argument to support it in its power struggles against the aristocracy. After 1660, however, the idea became official ideology. Starting with the royal historiographer Vitus Bering in the 1660s, Danish and Norwegian historians searched for historical evidence to support the assertion that both kingdoms had always been hereditary, and that the Danish high aristocracy's political power in the century-and-a-half before 1660 was an historical anomaly. The introduction of absolutism had, moreover, the effect of elevating the status of the monarch in Danish-Norwegian political culture. The deference demanded by the monarchs also had a retrospective effect: all the kings of the Oldenburg dynasty would now have to be treated carefully and respectfully in historical accounts. The essence of this change is pithily formulated by Ludvig Holberg in one of his epistles (1750): «Those who have written before the Sovereignty act more like apologists for the nobility than historians; and those who have written since seems to rather have wanted to write songs of praise for the kings than truthful histories.»<sup>1673</sup>

By the time of the jubilees in the eighteenth century, Danish-Norwegian cultural memory had thus already been profoundly shaped by the two royal revolutions of 1536/37 and 1660/61, and the Evangelical and absolutist readings of the past to which they had given rise had become the fundamental and unquestionable framework of all legitimate historical interpretation in Denmark-Norway. In the case of the jubilees in 1736 and 1760, the absolute monarchy and its servants could therefore build on established traditions about the Danish Reformation and the introduction of absolutism. But the two royal revolutions could also affect the ways in which other aspects of the past were represented. As we saw in chapter five, the choice of date for the bicentenary in 1736 was dictated by a desire to emphasize the role of the king's ancestor Christian III in implementing the Reformation and also to draw attention to the structural parallels and the historical continuity between the Reformation and the introduction of absolutism. The Danish Reformation was seen, in other words, through the prism of royal absolutism. In similar fashion, the tercentenary of the royal

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<sup>1673</sup> «De, som have skrevet for Souverainiteten, *agere* heller *Apologister* for Adelen end Historie-skrivere; og de, som have skrevet siden, synes heller at have villet forfatte Lov-Sange over Kongerne, end oprigtige Historier». Holberg 1749: 99.

dynasty was celebrated in memory of Christian Is coronation in 1449, rather than his election the year before. One of the central reasons for this decision, as it was clearly expressed by the royal archivist Hans Gram, was to avoid commemorating a date that was associated with the institutions of elective monarchy and the power of the late medieval Danish nobility. Again, the absolute monarchy projected its own priorities onto the past, concealing those elements of recorded history that were not considered appropriate or appealing.

### Norwegian amnesia

Another way in which current political concerns dictated the remembrance of the past was the almost complete absence of references to the political history of the kingdom of Norway. Norway had been in a union of crowns with Denmark since 1380, but until 1536 the kingdom had had political institutions of its own. In his royal charter of 1536, Christian III abolished the Norwegian Council of the Realm and threatened to make Norway a province of Denmark. After Norwegian resistance had surrendered, however, it became instead politically opportune for Christian III to uphold Norway's status as a separate kingdom. Norway therefore remained a kingdom, albeit without the right to elect its own kings.<sup>1674</sup> When the Danish Council of the Realm was abolished with the introduction of absolutism in 1660, the two kingdoms became formally equal union partners under the absolute monarchs. The equality between the two kingdoms were consistently flaunted by servants of the regime in the eighteenth century, often expressed with the phrase «the twin kingdoms» («Tvillingrigerne»). With the jubilees in the eighteenth century, it can be observed how this ideology of national equality shaped the official representations of the Norwegian past: the royal government consistently made it out to appear as if every important political or religious change had happened in both kingdoms at the same time, for the same reasons, and with the same degree of popular acceptance.

The first time such an operation took place was in 1736, when Johann Ludvig von Holstein asserted that the decisions made at the Estates General in Copenhagen on 30 October 1536 had had equal validity in both kingdoms, and that the jubilee could consequently be celebrated on the same day in both kingdoms. With the stroke of a pen, archbishop Olav Engelbrektsson's resistance against Christian III and the abolition of the Norwegian Council of the Realm was written out of the story.

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<sup>1674</sup> Rian 1997: 21-26.



Denmark's Reformation became Norway's Reformation. This sleight of hand was not remarked upon by anyone in 1736, which is hardly surprising. The complete lack of interest in the way that the Evangelical faith had been introduced in Norway was probably in part a consequence of anti-Catholicism shared by both the government and the Danish-Norwegian clergy.<sup>1675</sup> From the perspective of the royal government, the abolition of the Norwegian Council of the Realm in 1536 was also an unequivocal blessing that had preceded the equally fortunate abolition of the Danish Council in 1660. The Norwegian government's decision to celebrate the Reformation tercentenary in 1837, however, shows how the events that took place in 1536/37 would later become troublesome or even offensive for Norwegian national identity. Anti-catholicism did indeed remain strong in Norway in the nineteenth century, but it was now paired with an equally powerful national sentiment, which could only mean that the Reformation in 1537 became a deeply ambiguous event. While the Reformation had indeed introduced the light of the Gospels in Norway and ended the darkness of the papacy, it had also led to the loss of national independence and the deliberate destruction of precious cultural treasures and sources to Norwegian medieval history.

The political history of the kingdom of Norway was once more deliberately left out of the picture in 1749, when the royal government decided to celebrate the tercentenary of the Oldenburg dynasty on 28 October, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Christian Is coronation in Copenhagen. On this date, Christian was elected and crowned in Denmark, but he had yet to be crowned in Norway. In November of 1449, the Norwegian archbishop Aslak Bolt in Trondheim had instead crowned the Swedish pretender Carl Knudsson, and Christian's accession to the Norwegian crown was not secured before 1450. The controversies surrounding Christian's election was a disputed subject in Scandinavian historiography in the eighteenth century, and was one small part of a long-running and heated quarrel between Swedish and Danish-Norwegian historians about the legacy of the Union of Kalmar. In his recommendation that the jubilee be celebrated in the autumn of 1749, Hans Gram made it appear as if the controversy had been resolved already in the summer of 1449. In this way, the historical record of Norwegian resistance to Danish rule was replaced by a narrative of a shared Danish-Norwegian enthusiasm for the first king from the house of Oldenburg.

Finally, the design of the centenary in 1760 led to an equally one-dimensional presentation of the political history of the Norwegian kingdom. In this case, the official account of the introduction of absolutism in Norway followed the established narrative about the introduction of absolutism in Denmark with logical necessity. The Norwegian estates had not been involved at all at the Estates

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<sup>1675</sup> Rian 2014: 445.

General in Copenhagen in October 1660. Instead, they were required to sign the Sovereignty Act at the homage ceremony in Akershus in August of 1661. Technically speaking, the absolute monarchy had not been introduced in Norway before this formal act had taken place. In the official version that had emerged almost immediately after the introduction of absolutism, however, hereditary monarchy became synonymous with absolutism, and the Danish estates' decision to confer hereditary rights to the Danish crown on Frederik III and his successors was portrayed as a voluntary conferral of absolute power to the king. The allegedly voluntary nature of this decision was the reason why the government preferred to celebrate the annulment of Frederick's charter on 16 October 1660, rather than the more forced signing of the Sovereignty Act in 1661. Consequently, the events taking place in Norway in 1661 were subsumed under the events that had taken place in Denmark in 1660.

### **In memory of divine providence: clerical interpretations of the past**

The main title of the thesis is *In Memory of Divine Providence*. The reason for this title is the central importance of providential thinking in eighteenth-century public commemoration. A striking feature of the centenaries is the almost all-pervasive providentialism that shaped eighteenth-century Danes and Norwegians' perceptions of past, present and future. Denmark-Norway remained a profoundly religious culture in the middle of the eighteenth century. Direct divine intervention in human affairs was not merely an abstract proposition or something that had only happened to the ancient people of Israel, it was a tangible reality that could be observed in everyday life. It was particularly observable, moreover, in the lives of the Danish-Norwegian monarchs. Even Ludvig Holberg, who was generally sceptical of the notion that God used fire, disease and war to punish sinful humans, did not exclude the possibility in his writings that God at least intervened directly to govern the fate of the kings.<sup>1676</sup> Almost every one of the absolute monarchs since Frederick III were thought to have been saved by the Lord in some form of dramatic circumstances, and these deliverances were widely publicized and commemorated. The current king's great grandfather Christian V, for instance, had almost died in a shipwreck when he and his brother prince George were caught in a hard storm in Baltic Sea that had lasted for five days. The ship had allegedly lost all its sails and all its anchors except one, which had saved them. The little anchor was later gilded and displayed in the Royal

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<sup>1676</sup> For Holberg's attitudes to providentialism, see Sejersted 2014.

Arsenal («Tøjhuset») as a remembrance of God's providence.<sup>1677</sup> As Christian Jenssen reminded his parishioners in his jubilee sermon in 1760, Frederick V himself had been saved by «the fatherly hand of the Lord's providence» at Amager near Copenhagen on 6 August 1750, when the testing of a new cannon went horribly wrong and an accidental blast killed most of those around him, but not the king himself.<sup>1678</sup> According to Charlotta Dorothea Biehl, the king's first remark to the agitated bystanders after the explosion was «Be calm, my children, the Almighty has protected me, I am healthy and well.»<sup>1679</sup> Frederick's survival was later celebrated with national thanksgiving services.<sup>1680</sup> Since everything that happened in this world was part of the divine plan, from the smallest personal experience to the most pivotal events in national history, the celebration of a wedding anniversary, a professional anniversary or the establishment of a copper mine all had the same basic rationale as the celebration of a centenary in memory of the Reformation: they all commemorated «the ways of God's providence».<sup>1681</sup>

The belief in God's protective interventions found a variety of expressions in the context of centennial commemoration. A striking feature shared by all the jubilees, for instance, was the insistence on the peaceful and consensual nature of the great turning points in the history of Denmark-Norway. These events were widely acclaimed for having taken place without bloodshed or violence. The first time this argument appeared was in the thanksgiving prayer for the Reformation bicentenary in 1717, in which bishop Worm claimed that the Reformation had been remarkably peaceful in Denmark-Norway compared with other Protestant territories. The exact same argument appeared in Andreas Hojer's short history for the bicentenary in 1736, in which he claimed that the great event had taken place without any bloodshed, whereas similar changes in countries resulted in

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<sup>1677</sup> «[...] samme Anker blev forgyldt og giemmes endnu til Amindelse af denne Guds besynderlige Velgierning.» Gerhard Treschow, *Takoffer til Gud, for den Behag hand har viist sig at have i Vore Eenevolds Konger som hand har satt og givet os, forestillet i en Prædiken [...] paa Jubel=Festens første Dag d: 16 Oct: 1760 og holdt for Bircheröds Meenighed*, Landsarkivet for Sjælland m.m. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel- og ordinationsprædikener 1760. EA-001, D1-69: [11]; The anchor was accompanied by a verse written by Thomas Kingo. See Lüsberg 1917: 45; Baden 1832: 144; Rørdam 1877-80: 629-630.

<sup>1678</sup> Christian Jenssen, *Det tilbørlige Forhold for Guds Godhed af Jubel Dagen, som en Dag Herren har gjort*, Landsarkivet for Sjælland m.m. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel- og ordinationsprædikener 1760. EA-001, D1-69: [28]; See also Gerhard Treschow, *Takoffer til Gud, for den Behag hand har viist sig at have i Vore Eenevolds Konger som hand har satt og givet os, forestillet i en Prædiken [...] paa Jubel=Festens første Dag d: 16 Oct: 1760 og holdt for Bircheröds Meenighed*, Landsarkivet for Sjælland m.m. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel- og ordinationsprædikener 1760. EA-001, D1-69: [12]; Jens Westengaard, *Kongens Taksigelse til Gud for Guds Velgierninger mod Ham og Hands forestillet for Meenigheden i Sværdborg i en Prædiken over Psalmen den 16de, 50de og 51te Vers Paa Jubel og Taksigelses Fasten d 16de October 1760*, Landsarkivet for Sjælland m.m. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel- og ordinationsprædikener 1760. EA-001, D1-69: [15]; C. Steenbuch, *Jubel Prædikken over Texten Psalmen XVIII v holden i Rønne Kirke paa Bornholm d: 16 Octobris Ao 1760*, Landsarkivet for Sjælland m.m. Sjælland Stifts Bispeembede. Jubel- og ordinationsprædikener 1760. EA-001, D1-69: [19].

<sup>1679</sup> Bobé 1909: 29-30.

<sup>1680</sup> The king also ordered the clothes he had worn on that day to be kept as a remembrance of the event. Erichsen (ed.) 1999: 147, 149.

<sup>1681</sup> Treschow 1753: er.

«streams of blood». In 1760, the introduction of absolutism was described as unique in European history for having occurred without conspiracy, bloodshed or violence.

All of the jubilees, moreover, conveyed powerful narratives of divine election centred on the role of the Danish monarchs as intermediaries between God and people. The model for this relationship was provided by the biblical stories about the monarchs of Israel and Judah, particularly the story of the pious, humble and divinely appointed king David. Certain structural similarities between these Old Testament narratives and corresponding episodes in Danish history stimulated the clergy to make explicit comparisons that enhanced the identity between the fates of the Jewish monarchs and their modern Danish counterparts. Christian III became a Danish Josiah exterminating the abominations in the Danish Judah, while Frederick III became a tormented Danish David pursued by his powerful enemies but ultimately saved by his strong faith in God. Some of these analogies were solicited by the regime through explicit signals in the church prayers and selected Bible verses (such as the image of Christian III/Christian VI as Josiah), while others seem to have been made by the clergy on their own accord, such as the widespread analogy between Samuel's anointment of the shepherd David and the election of Christian I to the Danish throne. In both cases, the conclusions inevitably drawn from these interpretative procedures made a strong case for Danish-Norwegian exceptionalism. Ever since the Oldenburg monarchs had acceded to the thrones of Denmark and Norway, claimed the clergy, the kingdoms had always been saved in times of distress, had never lacked a male heir on the throne and had never strayed from the pure faith.

The major contribution of the clergy during the jubilees was their interpretative authority as experts of biblical exegesis. In the examples mentioned so far, they very much performed the task that was expected of them. An underlying assumption in this study, however, is that the clergymen inevitably put their own personal stamp on the officially crafted narratives and shaped them according to their own interests, preoccupations and competencies. To put it simply, no two sermons presented the same interpretation of the past. Some ministers were clearly very knowledgeable about Danish-Norwegian history and wrote extended historical narratives, while others barely mentioned the event that was the object of commemoration. It is another question altogether, however, whether or not individual clergymen could on occasion stray from the official script and make claims that contradicted or undermined the government's intention with the jubilees.

In general, the clergy were very cautious and politically correct in the way they presented the history of the kingdoms to their congregations (or readers). In fact, the only directly subservient text I have come across from any of the jubilees is the fictional letter printed in Laurent Angliviel la

Beaumelle's journal *La Spectatrice Danoise*. Apart from this ironical and critical piece, the Danish-Norwegian jubilee texts were characterized by loud and all-pervasive praise of the monarch and the authorities. The Lutheran ministers are no exception: I have found no examples of clergymen using the pulpit to explicitly criticize or chastize the government, such as is known from other countries in the period.<sup>1682</sup> This is largely what one could expect from the Danish-Norwegian clergy, based on what we know from previous studies that have affirmed the conservative role of the clergy.<sup>1683</sup>

There is one partial exception to this rule: the bicentenary in 1736 did see some clergymen construct historical narratives that to a certain degree differed from the triumphant rhetoric that was produced in Copenhagen. From the perspective of some Pietist ministers in the diocese of Akershus, the Reformation had not been completed in 1536, and abominations no less dangerous than those of the papacy still lived on in the kingdoms. While some of these Pietist ministers primarily directed their criticism towards the individual member of their congregations, a few went one step further and suggested that the entire Danish-Norwegian church was in need of further reform. If not in direct opposition to the grand narrative designed by the king and his advisors, this assertion seemed at least to contradict some of the main tenets of the jubilee. At the same time, the reform activities of king Christian VI around the time of the jubilee seemed to imply the same thing, namely that the Danish-Norwegian church was still in an imperfect state. Rather than categorizing the Pietist sermons as politically subversive, it is therefore probably more correct to say that they heavily emphasized the king's policies (church reform) at the expense of the dominant message of the jubilee (continuity and tradition).

## The evolution of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century

After the celebration of the first Reformation centenary in Denmark-Norway in 1617, there was a long hiatus that lasted for exactly one hundred years, followed by four centenaries in the 43-year period from 1717 to 1760 (six if we include the local centenaries in Kongsberg and Røros, seven if we also include the thanksgiving day for the Augsburg Confession in 1730). While these numbers does not bear comparison with the plethora of centenaries celebrated in our own times, «the Era of

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<sup>1682</sup> See Flügel 2005: 152-153.

<sup>1683</sup> Øystein Idsø Viken: «Prestane si oppbygging av regimet var gjennomgripande. Det motsette, regimekritikk, har ikkje lati seg påvisa.» Viken 2014: 435; Michael Bregnsbo: «Præsterne var gennem hele perioden enevældens repræsentanter og talsmænd ude i sognene, systemets mænd.» Bregnsbo 1997a: 327-328.

Commemoration (Pierre Nora), they nonetheless indicate a quite significant intensification of the practice of centennial commemoration.<sup>1684</sup> In chapter two, I pointed out that the increase of centennial commemorations was remarked upon by contemporaries, notably by members of the clergy, one of whom in fact described the eighteenth century as the «jubilee century» («Seculum Jubilæum»).

In a longer perspective, the development of the centenary in this relatively short period is significant. What happened in the course of the first half of the eighteenth century was first of all that the cultural practice of commemorating important historical events with the celebration of jubilees became established and normalized in Denmark-Norway. Not only did the frequency of centenaries markedly increase in the period, but there were also an increase in the categories of events that were marked for celebration. As our period began, the jubilee could still be perceived as a form of celebration that was reserved for the commemoration of events in the history of the Lutheran church.<sup>1685</sup> At the end of our period, nationwide jubilees had been celebrated in memory of the church, the royal dynasty and absolutism. During the same period, jubilee celebrations also began to spread to the private sphere. There are some recorded instances of Danes and Norwegians in the eighteenth century celebrating wedding anniversaries and professional jubilees («Embeds Jubilæum»)<sup>1686</sup> Later in the century, in 1791, Borch's College (Collegium Mediceum) in Copenhagen celebrated its centenary, which is the first recorded instance in Denmark of a private institution celebrating its centenary.<sup>1687</sup> Although the total amount of public and private centennial or semicentennial celebrations in the period may not be so impressive, the events that did take place are still clear enough signs that people were becoming familiarized with the concept of the jubilee and began to see its relevance for different areas of life. Further evidence of this tendency is the scattered examples of retrospective projections of the jubilee tradition back into periods when it had not yet become normal to celebrate such events. The clergyman Gerhard Treschow, for instance, expressed wonder that he had not been able to find any evidence of a jubilee having been celebrated to mark

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<sup>1684</sup> Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen has pointed out that the Danish jubilees «should in no way be compared with the recent upsurge of almost fetishistic global memorialisation since the 1970s, as emphasized, among others, by Pierre Nora.» Johannsen 2013: 212-213; See also Nora 1998.

<sup>1685</sup> As witnessed in bishop Worm's recommendations for the celebration of the bicentenary for the Danish Reformation: «Jubilees are usually celebrated either on the day the Evangelical light first began to be revealed [...] or on the day our Evangelical Confession, [...] saw the light of day [...]». Christen Worm, «Jubel Fest pleier at holdes», *Reformationsjubilæet 1736. Udkast af J. L. Holstein, skrivelser av Chr. Worm* (Ledreborg 406 folio).

<sup>1686</sup> For the former, see Brasen 1729; Treschow 1753: c2r; For the latter, see Muus 1768; For both, see Brun 1951: 1951.

<sup>1687</sup> Galster 1931: 18-19.

the fiftieth anniversary of Christian IV as Danish monarch.<sup>1688</sup> In a similar fashion, the German author Christian Hempel wrongly assumed that centenaries had previously been celebrated in Denmark-Norway in memory of the Oldenburg dynasty in the years 1549 and 1649, and that the dynastic tercentenary in 1749 was therefore a continuation of an established tradition.<sup>1689</sup> In both of these cases, eighteenth-century observers accustomed to the phenomenon of the jubilee either searched for traces of or presupposed the existence of events in the past that had actually not yet come into existence.

A second important tendency that may be traced in the history of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway in this period is the gradual transformation of the objects of commemoration. There was a clear movement away from the celebration of events in church history, to the celebration of events in political history. As we have seen, centenaries went from celebrating the deeds of Martin Luther and the Augsburg Confession to celebrating events in the political history of the kingdoms of Denmark-Norway. The Reformation bicentenary in 1736 again marks an important moment of transition in this respect, since the date 30 October 1536 was carefully selected for its political implications rather than for purely religious reasons. From a modern perspective, however, the dynastic tercentenary in 1749 seems to represent the clearest break with the idea of the centenary as a religious form of commemoration. This event is also an example of Denmark-Norway being in the very forefront of the development of centennial commemoration, since the Hohenzollern tercentenary in 1715 is the only recorded example of a dynastic jubilee preceding the Oldenburg jubilee. The coronation of the Catholic monarch Christian I in 1449 is a type of event that seems to have little to do with what had been the underlying theme of all previous jubilees, namely the spread of the divine light of the Gospels. In 1760, the topic of commemoration was likewise an important event in the political history of the kingdoms.

A similar movement is evident if we consider the initiators of commemoration: the jubilees increasingly came to be initiated and defined by the worldly authorities, rather than leading members of the ecclesiastical establishment. The centenary in 1617, the bicentenary in 1717 and the thanksgiving day in 1730 had all been initiated and defined by Danish theologians. The bicentenary in 1736 therefore marks an important change of affairs: for the first time, the impulse to

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<sup>1688</sup> «Ja jeg forunder mig ræt over, at, da vores store Kong Christian IV blev Semiseularis og Jubel=Regent, man dog ikke i Historierne finder det ringeste om, at nogen Jubel=Høytid blev holdet, at vi end ikke have en Oration eller Vers til Erindring derom.» Treschow 1753: c2r.

<sup>1689</sup> Hempel 1749: 9-10; For a more recent example of the tendency to assume that jubilees have always been celebrated, see J.Oskar Andersen's discussion of why there was no centenary in memory of the Danish Reformation in 1636, in Andersen 1935: 18-21.

commemorate seems to have come from the king himself and one of his leading advisors, Johan Ludvig von Holstein, rather than from a bishop or a professor of theology. Not only that, but the advice from the bishop of Zealand with regards to the choice of date and the exact purpose of the bicentenary was completely sidestepped and ignored. Although it was a celebration of an important event in the history of the church, von Holstein managed to define the bicentenary in such a way that it emphasized the political dimensions of the Danish Reformation and its historical continuity with the introduction of absolutism. The important task of writing the short history of the Reformation that was read from the pulpits during the jubilee was given to the historian and jurist Andreas Hojer, rather than to a clergyman. In 1749, there is no sign at all of any theologian participating in defining the object of the commemoration: the task of choosing a suitable date for the tercentenary was instead delegated to the historians Gram and Langebek, and the politician von Holstein once again wrote the final recommendation to the king. In 1760, the sources are unfortunately lacking for the preparatory phase.

One could label these developments as a process of *secularization*, or perhaps, as Winfried Müller has suggested, a *profanation* of centennial commemoration, but neither terms are completely satisfactory in this case. Although the later centenaries commemorated events in the political history of Denmark-Norway, they were still cast as religious events in a way that seems to emphasize continuity rather than change. I have found no evidence of contemporaries perceiving the innovation of commemorating the genesis of the royal dynasty or the introduction of absolutism with church services and prayers as in any way untoward or problematic. In fact, a foreign observer emphasized precisely the Danish-Norwegian dynastic tercentenary in 1749 as a prime example of a pure and godly Evangelical jubilee: in his rather polemical «historical-theological dissertation» on the Evangelical-Lutheran and papal jubilees (1749), the theologian Phillipp Hane described the Danish dynastic tercentenary as the model of a true Evangelical jubilee. The royal decrees and announcements were perfect examples of a true Evangelical church service, since they took the godly king David as their model, and the prayer and collect were equally satisfactory, since they consistently placed the spiritual before the worldly.<sup>1690</sup> As we saw in chapter six, the Danish-Norwegian clergy also seem to have had no qualms about representing the election of Christian I as an unqualified divine blessing, and comparing it with the election of the shepherd David to the throne of Israel.

The jubilee originated as a religious form of celebration, the purpose of which was to give thanks to the Lord for the blessings he had shown his believers in the past. For eighteenth-century

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<sup>1690</sup> [Hane] 1749: 317-318.



Lutherans, the essential purpose of the Protestant jubilees was to remember and to give thanks for the Lord's blessings towards his true believers. The same rationale also applied, of course, to the annual thanksgiving days and prayers that had been part of the church year since the seventeenth century. It made little sense to differentiate between the spiritual and worldly history of the kingdoms, since both showed visible signs of divine providence at work in the affairs of man. In kingdoms such as Denmark-Norway, moreover, where the Reformation and the introduction of absolutism had given the king absolute power to decide over the affairs of the church, the history of the royal government could not in any case be detached from the history of the church. There were indeed no perceptible changes in the rationale for celebrating the centenaries in the course of this period. Divine intervention was consistently posited as the true and fundamental cause of all worldly events, and the Danish kings were presented as his chosen instruments on earth, whether the topic at hand was the Reformation or the introduction of absolutism. Despite the fact that centenaries no longer exclusively commemorated the Protestant Reformation, and despite the additional fact that the repertoire of celebration increasingly came to include more profane festive elements such as theatrical productions, operas and fireworks shows, I therefore hesitate to use terms such as secularization or profanation. The centenary was originally a religious commemoration, and remained so throughout the period investigated here.

The Danish-Norwegian jubilees nonetheless represent quite early instances of the decoupling of the centenary from the history of the Lutheran church and the Augsburg Confession. In his account of the history of the historical jubilee, Winfried Müller claims that the German monarchies «discovered» the centenary in the course of the nineteenth century and began to use it for purposes of political legitimation.<sup>1691</sup> In the case of Denmark-Norway, however, we find an instance of a monarchy that «discovered» the potential of the centenary as a technique for inculcating notions in the population about its own legitimacy as early as the mid-eighteenth century. Although there was much continuity both in the form of the jubilee and in the ostensible rationales for celebrating them throughout the period, and although contemporaries may not have perceived any particular changes taking place, the decision to celebrate political events such as the introduction of absolutism or the coronation of the first Oldenburg monarch can nonetheless be seen as significant innovations, pointing ahead towards the use of centennial commemoration to promote nationalist agendas in the nineteenth century. Even in this case, however, examples can be found that challenge the notion that the use of centenaries to glorify events from national history represents a linear path to modernity:

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<sup>1691</sup> Müller 2004: 37-38.

the first Swedish centenary in 1621 combined thanksgiving for the Swedish Reformation with more nationally oriented motives, promoting the image of Gustav Vasa as both a reformer and a liberator from Danish tyranny.

### Centennial commemoration in the nineteenth century: continuity or change?

If we venture beyond the period treated in this thesis, the questions of continuity and change in the history of centennial commemoration in Denmark-Norway become even more complex. On the one hand, political revolutions in Denmark and Norway brought about concomitant revolutions in how the incidents and people of the past were interpreted and valorised. The kingdom of Norway is a case in point. In 1814, Frederik VI of Denmark-Norway was forced to hand the kingdom of Norway over to Sweden according to the Treaty of Kiel, ending the more than four hundred year old union between the Danish and Norwegian kingdoms. The long period of Danish rule and the years of absolute monarchy were certainly not forgotten after the union with Sweden and the creation of the constitution in 1814, but they were no longer highlighted for commemoration. A short entry in a parish register from the Norwegian parish of Gausdal gives a quiet but powerful testimony of how the events in 1814 had led to a loss of positive identification with one of the central political events in the shared Danish-Norwegian past. On 16 October 1760, the parish minister Andreas Pihl had written a short notice about a solemn commemorative service that had taken place in his church on that day: «16 October: Jubilee in the main church as a godly remembrance of the absolute power and dominion that was introduced by the royal government a 100 years ago.» Many decades later, however, someone added a short comment in the margin: «which became Norway's misfortune in the year 1814.»<sup>1692</sup> What had once been celebrated as a key moment in the history of the kingdoms was now subject to derisory comments. As we have seen, the celebration of the tercentenary of the Norwegian Reformation was celebrated on a different date than the bicentenary one hundred years before, a date (and year) that was not tainted by associations with Norway's loss of independence. The ideological framework for the interpretation of the past had in other words changed radically after Norwegian independence in 1814.

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<sup>1692</sup> «Den 16 Oct: Jubelfæst i Hovedkirken til een gudelig Erindring om den for 100 Aar siden ved dend Kongl. Regjering indførte Eeenevolds Magt og Herredømme.» In the margin: «som just blev Norges Ulykke i Aaret 1814.» Digitalarkivet. Oppland Fylke, Gausdal, Ministerialbok nr. 3 (1758-1809), Kronologisk liste 1760, side 24.

In another sense, however, there is a strong element of continuity as the tradition of celebrating centenaries continued unabated into the new century. In Norway, there were large, nationwide centenaries in memory of the Protestant Reformation (1817), the Augsburg Confession (1830) the Norwegian Reformation (1837) and Martin Luther's birth (1883).<sup>1693</sup> There was also a semicentenary (1864) in memory of the Norwegian Constitution, and a semicentenary to commemorate the union with Sweden in the same year.<sup>1694</sup> A series of centenaries were also celebrated in Denmark, where there was a tercentenary for the Reformation (1817), a millennial jubilee for the introduction of Christianity in Denmark (1826) and a tercentenary for the Danish Reformation (1836). There were also plans for a quadricentenary for the Oldenburg dynasty (1848).<sup>1695</sup> As had been the established practice in the eighteenth century, the Lutheran state church continued to play a central role in the celebration of all of these events. In fact, many aspects of public memory culture in the two countries seem to have remained the same as before 1814. New practices and new actors appeared alongside the old, but almost none of the latter were discarded. In some cases, at least, this continuity was entirely explicit and conscious: the organizers of these events searched the government archives to find information about how centenaries had been celebrated in the previous century. The Norwegian jubilee committee in 1817, for instance, began their second meeting with considering the «ceremonial» from the bicentenary in Copenhagen in 1717. According to Olaf Kolsrud, this group of ministers, clergymen and professors discussed the «bell ringing, cannonades, herolds, basoons, processions and medals» in Copenhagen a hundred years before to find out what they could use for their own tercentenary.<sup>1696</sup> The programme they came up with strongly resembles the bicentenary in 1717.<sup>1697</sup>

During the preliminary preparations for the quadricentenary of the Oldenburg dynasty in 1848, the Danish monarch Christian VIII likewise referred explicitly to the previous event in 1749. The king gave the medallist Krohn a copy of the jubilee medal from 1749 depicting the twelve kings of the royal dynasty and asked for a similar medal for the quadricentenary. According to the historian C.F. Wegener who was involved in the planning, the king had wanted to make the jubilee an occasion to introduce a new and modern («tidssvarende») constitution. He therefore specified that he

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<sup>1693</sup> Kolsrud 1917: 250.

<sup>1694</sup> Rørosgård 2010.

<sup>1695</sup> Kolsrud 1917: 254; Münter 1826; Wegener 1856; Wegener 1872: xiii; There was, however, no semicentenary for the Danish constitution in 1899. See Warring 2004: 84.

<sup>1696</sup> Kolsrud 1917: 255.

<sup>1697</sup> The programme is printed in Kolsrud 1917: 296-309.

wanted his portrait to be surrounded by «emblems of constitutional government».<sup>1698</sup> The jubilee was never realized due to the outbreak of the First Schleswig War, but Wegener's description of bishop J.P. Mynster's plans for the church celebrations suggest that they would likely have become quite similar in form and tone to the tercentenary in 1749.<sup>1699</sup>

Another example of deliberate continuity is found in the mining town of Røros, where the centenary that had been celebrated in 1744 in memory of the discovery of copper was revived in 1844, and repeated in 1894 and 1946 (two years too late because of World War II).<sup>1700</sup> On each occasion, the organizers self-consciously referred to the first jubilee and stressed the continuity and vitality of the local tradition of centennial commemoration. Original objects from the centenary in 1744 were displayed, and various elements of this first event was repeated or reconstructed. In 1844, for instance, the chaplain Lauritz Aschenberg repeated the slogan from 1744 after his sermon: «Golden times, jubilee year/ God gives, as long as the world stands.» In 1946, the actor and theatre director Magnus Falkberget even read Peter Abildgaard's sermon from 1744 on national radio.<sup>1701</sup> For some of the participants in these events, the historical continuity from the eighteenth century was considered as an unequivocally positive and natural thing—it was a living tradition that bound the people of Røros to the generations that had lived there before them. In 1894, the vicar Thaulow stressed the beauty of the traditions in his sermon: «It is a tradition with Røros work's jubilees—and I would say that it is a beautiful tradition that it is a joy to see being kept alive with honour—to gather for a thanksgiving service in the house of the Lord».<sup>1702</sup> Others were less enthused, however: the radical newspaper *Fjeld-Lom* wrote that the copper works were run by a conservative consortium from the conservative town Trondheim and that therefore, as one could expect, the jubilee was celebrated «in real, good old-fashioned taste, just like we still lived in the era of the Oldenburgs».<sup>1703</sup>

The continuous existence of a tradition of centennial commemoration in the two countries in the nineteenth century helps explain why even the semicentenary of a completely new category of event, the creation of the Norwegian Constitution of 1814, contained elements that bear a strong

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<sup>1698</sup> «Jeg vilde dog gjerne ved mit Portrait have anbragt Emblemer paa constitutionel Forfatning;[...]». Wegener 1856: v.

<sup>1699</sup> One of Mynster's suggested verses, Psalm 18, 50-51, had even been used for the morning service in one of the jubilees in the previous century (in 1760). Wegener 1856: xi.

<sup>1700</sup> Øisang 1946: 218, 266-270; Kvikne 1946.

<sup>1701</sup> Kvikne 1946: 32.

<sup>1702</sup> «Det er en tradisjon ved Røros verks jubelfester—og jeg vil si en vakker tradisjon, som det er en glede å se fremdeles holdesi hevd og ære—dette å samles ti takkegudstjeneste i Herrens Hus.» Øisang 1946: 266-267.

<sup>1703</sup> «Som et gammelt stokkonservativt konsortium, styrt av den med all kongelig yndest og bevrågenhet utstyrte stokkonservative sosietet fra den konservative Kjømannsgate i den konservative by Trondhjem, ble da også verkets jubelhøytidelighet på Røros—som man kunne vente—feiret i ekte god gammeldags smak, omtrent som vi enda levde i Oldenborgernes tid». Quoted in Øisang 1946: 266.

resemblance to the centenaries in the previous century. The idea of celebrating a semicentenary to commemorate the constitution originally came from a group of politicians and intellectuals, who suggested that the fiftieth anniversary should take place at Eidsvoll where the Constitution had been written in 1814. The Department of the Interior decided, however, that such an important event should be arranged in the entire country.<sup>1704</sup> The main setting for the national celebrations would be the local churches all over Norway, since the Department of the Interior considered it to be appropriate that «we, on the fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of a free constitution in the kingdom, gather in the churches of the country to thank the Lord for the favours with which he has blessed the country in the time that has passed and pray for his merciful protection over the same in the days to come [...]».<sup>1705</sup> Just like it had been done more than a hundred years before, the Norwegian clergy were instructed to base their sermons on one of David's psalms, namely Psalm 67 («God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine upon us; Selah»), followed by the singing of one of two psalms, one of which was «O store Gud vi love Dig», the Ambrosian Hymn that had been sung during thanksgiving services for centuries.<sup>1706</sup> Later in the year, the joint Swedish-Norwegian government decided that both the Norwegian and the Swedish populations should also celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the union between the two kingdoms with special services.

The centenaries celebrated in the nineteenth century are outside of the chronological boundaries of this study. There were almost certainly also more official centennial or semicentennial commemorations than those that I have managed to find, especially if one also includes those celebrating individuals and institutions. I have only briefly mentioned some of these events here, in order to point out what I consider to be a promising field of future research. For as far as I can tell, the strong element of continuity in the practice of centennial commemoration in the Scandinavian countries has not been noticed before, let alone studied to any degree. A partial exception is the church historians who have long been aware of a continuous tradition of centenaries commemorating the Reformation. Some scholars have indeed studied series of specific categories of centenaries to uncover how perceptions of Luther or other historical persons or events have changed through the centuries.<sup>1707</sup> Others, notably Lutheran theologians, have used the occasion of a new

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<sup>1704</sup> Angell 2013: 3.

<sup>1705</sup> «[Departementet] maa ansee det passende at man paa Halvthundreaarsdagen efter Indførelsen af en fri Forfatning i Riget samles i Landets Kirker for at takke Herren for de Velgierninger hvormed Han i den forløbne Tid har velsignet Landet og nedbede Hans naadige Beskjermelse over samme i de kommende Dage [...]». Collett & Kierulf (ed.) 1864: 314.

<sup>1706</sup> Collett & Kierulf (ed.) 1864: 314.

<sup>1707</sup> For instance Lenhammar 1993; Aurelius 1994.

Reformation jubilee to look back on earlier centenaries, placing their own celebrations in a longer tradition.<sup>1708</sup> No one, however, have yet examined the historical relationship between the early modern jubilees and the new types of centenaries that were celebrated in the nineteenth century, in the age of nationalism and democratization.

A point of interest in this regard is the apparently undiminished role of the church as the primary arena of centennial commemoration. In Norway, at least, the local clergyman remained an important intermediary between the government and the still predominantly rural population. Although the political system changed radically and abruptly in 1814, there was thus a strong element of continuity when it came to the way the state communicated with its own citizens. Norwegian historian Svein Ivar Angell argues that the decision to celebrate the semicentenary in 1864 in all the churches in Norway was motivated both by a desire to strengthen the national community, and to cement the position of the state religion. But he points out that the decision also had a practical side: the churches were still the only existant assembly houses in many rural areas in Norway. For the same reason, the church remained a central arena when Norway celebrated the centenary of the Constitution in 1914. In fact, it was not before the sesquicentenary in 1964 that the church began to lose its dominant position in this respect, although commemorative church services were indeed still a part of the celebrations. In addition to a burgeoning secularization of Norwegian society, Angell sees the appearance of rival mass media such as radio and television as an important reason for this shift.<sup>1709</sup>

There is good reason to assume that the lingering importance of the pulpit as «mass medium» in the nineteenth century also had a certain conservative effect on the messages that were conveyed to the general public during the centenaries, the ways in which the past was interpreted and explained for the population. In his study of Norwegian sermons in the long eighteenth century, Øystein Viken argues that there was a discursive latency in the preaching in the period, caused among other things by genre demands, social conventions and institutional stability. The church was supposed to be a stabilizing factor in local society, and new theological developments or changes in styles of preaching were prevented and corrected unless they adapted to existing practices and ingrained habits. The discursive latency also affected political discourse. Throughout the period Viken has studied (1720-1814), the monarchs remained kings of divine right, they were all along claimed to be the earthly

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<sup>1708</sup> See Kolsrud 1917; Nedergaard 1936.

<sup>1709</sup> I am grateful to my colleague Svein Ivar Angell for making me aware of this event, and for generously sharing his unpublished paper on Norwegian constitutional jubilees. Angell 2013.

representatives of the Almighty, and they were consistently compared with David and Solomon and their people with Israel.<sup>1710</sup>

A hitherto unanswered question is which aspects of this tradition survived the shift from absolute to constitutional monarchy in Norway, as well as how the role of the clergy as the local representative of the political authorities was modified to accommodate a new political culture. Viken's study ends with the abolition of the absolute monarchy in Norway in 1814, which means that he does not examine the political dimension of preaching across the constitutional divide. I have elsewhere argued that political preaching in the year 1814 itself was characterized by a ideological polyphony, at least in part caused by generational differences. Some of the clergymen whose sermons from 1814 have survived were born around mid-century, and had been parish ministers for decades under the absolute monarchy. The 72-year old vicar Cristopher Munthe Leganger, for instance, who delivered the sermon in Eidsvoll church at the opening of the constitutional assembly, was widely criticized by eyewitnesses for subserviently praising prince Christian Frederik and arguing the merits of absolute monarchy. Younger ministers, on the other hand, were familiar with ideas about constitutional monarchy and popular sovereignty and accordingly framed their sermons in more modern political terminology.<sup>1711</sup> Norwegian historian Trond Bjerkås has studied what he calls the «revolutionary rhetoric» in the so-called *Eidsvoll addresses*, which were written as part of the elections for the constitutional assembly in 1814. Many of these texts were written by parish ministers, who used them to express their loyalty to prince Christian Frederik and a desire for national independence and freedom from «the foreign yoke». Bjerkås points out that these clergymen expressed the idea of national independence in a religious language that drew on a «well-established rhetorical tradition», only transferred to a new political context. Just like they had done in the eighteenth century, writes Bjerkås, the clergy continued to interpret the religious community and the national community as two sides of the same coin, describing the national community as a modern Israel with a special relationship with the deity. The main difference was that it was now Norway, rather than Denmark-Norway, that represented the fatherland. Bjerkås therefore suggests that «one of the sources of Norwegian nationalism is found in the religious paternalism of the absolute monarchy» and argues that the clergy should be seen as a crucial factor in the emergence and spread of national identity in the nineteenth century.<sup>1712</sup>

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<sup>1710</sup> Viken 2014: 443-445.

<sup>1711</sup> Slettebø 2014b.

<sup>1712</sup> Bjerkås 2014: 118-119.

One example that indicates that traditional patterns of political thought might have survived fairly late into the nineteenth century is the jubilee sermon delivered by bishop Jens Lauritzen Arup in Eidsvoll church in 1864. Arup, who was born before the start of the Napoleonic Wars and the end of the Dano-Norwegian union, described the semicentenary as a day of remembrance of «God's miraculous governance of our people and our country». He described the Norwegians in 1814 as a «small and isolated people», in danger of going under from hunger and war. In this dark situation, the people's representatives had gathered at Eidsvoll to protect the fatherland, and had shown themselves more capable and wise than anyone would have expected. Although these men deserved honour and gratitude, the event was really the work of the Lord, who had also protected the people for 50 years.<sup>1713</sup> There is a striking similarity here to how the Danish-Norwegian clergy had interpreted the history of the kingdoms a hundred years before. Although the absolute monarchs of the Oldenburg dynasty had now been replaced by the elected representatives of the people in the role as the Lord's instruments on earth, and although Arup praised «freedom and self-government» rather than obedience and subservience to the ruler, the fundamental mode of historical interpretation was more or less the same. Moments of crisis and deliverance in national history could still be interpreted as manifestations of God's plan.<sup>1714</sup> The providential interpretation of history that had been so pervasive in the eighteenth century seems to have lived on, in a slightly modified but clearly recognizable form, well into the nineteenth century.

The central role played by the church in the celebration of the post-1814 centenaries offers a potentially rewarding opportunity to further examine the impact of the clergy's religious traditionalism on the emergence of Norwegian nationalism and the development of Norwegian national identity in the nineteenth century. Increased attention to the continuity and cultural stability of centennial commemoration could also represent a stimulating challenge to the notion that the centenary itself is an «invented tradition» and a novel product of modernity. The centenary was not invented in the age of nationalism to inculcate national values in the population—it was rather a religious celebration invented in the age of confessionalization that lived on into the nineteenth century, when political elites discovered its potential as a instrument of popular mobilization.

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<sup>1713</sup> *Morgenbladet*. *Thorsdagen den 19de Mai* 1864.

<sup>1714</sup> See also Theodor Christian Bernhof's sermon: «Ja takke Herren, for hver den, som har lært at see Guds Finger i Slægternes Levnedsløb, er det Ugudelighedens, Gudsforladhedens Sprog at tale om heldigt Træf og Tilfældets Spil, naar det gjælder, hvad de 112 paa Eidsvolds bragte istand, disse, paa nogle Fremragende nær, maaske langt mere med redelig Villie for det borgerlige Vel, end med Aandens og Kundskabernes rige Gaver udstyrede Udsendinge fra et fattigt og i mange Maader forsømt Folk. Og naar det gjælder hiint Carl Johans Storverk, Norges og Sveriges Forening, da skal den overfladiske Tale om politis Statskløgt, Frygt for at drive et Folk til fortvivlet Nødverge som første og sidste Grund ikke faa Lov at skjule for os det guddommelige Forsyns Styrelse, der ligger paa Bunden af det hele.» Bernhof 1865: 16.



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Gössel, Heinrich Otto von. 1748. *Jubelrede von den hohen Wohltaten, welche Die Allerdurchlauchtigsten und Großmächtigsten Könige von Dännemarck Norwegen sc. aus dem Hause Oldenburg Ihren Unterthanen erwiesen haben; zum feyerlichen Gedächtniß, der Ihrem vortrefflichen Abherrn, Dem Glorwürdigsten König Christian dem Ersten, den 28sten September 1448. zu Wyburg geleisteten Huldigung: auf der Königlichen Georg Augustus Universität, vor dem versammelten Academischen Senat und einer zahlreichen Menge von Zuhörern, den 28. September 1748.* Göttingen: Johann Friedrich Hager.

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Gram, Hans. 1747. «Om Kong Christiern den Andens forehafte Religions Reformation i Danmarck: samt flere til høybemeldte Konges og den Danske Kirkehistorie henhørende Materier» in *Skrifter, som udi Det Kiøbenhavnske Selskab af Lærdoms og Videnskabers Elskere ere fremlagte og oplæste i Aaret 1747. Tredie Deel.* Kjøbenhavn: Det Kongelige Waysenhusets Bogtrykkerie.

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Hempel, Christian Friedrich. 1749. *Die Dritte Jubel=Feyer Des Glorreichsten Königl. Dänischen Hauses Oldenburgisches Stamms, den 28. Octobr 1749; Wobey Desselben sonderbahrsten Vorzüge. Aus der Historie, Genealogie, Geographie, und Staats-Wissenschaft, Mit Ehrfurchts=voller Devotion in einige Erweugung gezogen worden.* Halle: Johann Andreas Bauern.

Hersleb, Peder. 1749. *Rigernes Almindelige Jubel=Glæde, over GUDs besynderlige Under=Tegn og Naade mod Den Kongelige Oldenborgske Stamme, som udi Tre Hundrede Aar har siddet paa Thronen, Betraget i en Prædiken paa den store Jubel=Festes første Dag, den 28 Octobris 1749. i den Kongelige CHRISTLANBORGS Slots=Kirke til Høymesse; Tillige med en kort Jubel=Tale paa Festens tredie Dag ved en ny Kirkes Grundlæggelse saa og En Fortale, om Jubel=Festens høytidelig Helligholdelse, Altsammen efter Allernaadigst Kongelig Befaling holdet, forfattet og til Trykken hengivet af P. HERSLEB, Biskop over Siellands Stift.* Kiøbenhavn: E.H. Berling.

Hersleb, Peder Lorentz. 1750. *Undersaaternes Jubel=Fryd Over Herrens besynderlige Miskundhed og Sandhed, der nu i Tredhundrede Aar har vedvaret imod Det Kongelige Oldenborgiske Huus, af hvilket Man defter Mand bestandig har siddet paa Thronen, udi en Prædiken over Texten til Høymesse af Ps. 89, 2-6. paa den anordnede Jubel=Festes første Dag den 28 October 1749 forestillet af Peder Lorentz Hersleb, Siæle-Sorger for Brøndsby og Rødaure Meenigheder i Siellands Stift.* Kiøbenhavn.

Hille, G. 1873-1874. «Grev Adam Gottlob Moltkes Plan for Frederik den Femtes Regering» in *Historisk Tidsskrift, Fjerde række. Fjerde Bind.* Kjøbenhavn.

Hiørring, Anders Matthisøn. 1661. *Leyers POLITIE Det er: Hvad Skick oc Ordning udi Kiøbenhaffn er holden fra den 11. Augusti 1658. der Beyleringen begyndtis indtil den 11. Feb. 1661. Næst Beskriffvelse Aff Guds Ord hvor udi en god Politie bestaar. Observeret og sammenskreffvet Aff Anders Matthi=Søn Hiørring/ Guds Ords Tienere for de Fattige udi Kiøbenhaffn.* Kiøbenhaffn: Daniel Eichhorn.



Hof, Ole Hannibal. 1749. *En Tale Paa Jubel=Fæsten/ hvilken/ efter vores nu af den Oldenborgske Stamme Tolvte regierende Allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre Kong FRIDERICH den Femte/ Er allernaadigst til Guds Ære/ og den Rigerne beviiste Guds Naades taknemmelige Erindring, at de haver udi 300 Aar været Velsignede med Regjering ved Kongerne af den Oldenborgske Stamme, bleven befalet at celebreres i begge Rigerne den 28de Oct. Ao. 1749. Da denne Jubel=Prædiken blev holden i Totens Hoved=Kirke/ Og den Allernaadigst anordnede Text af Davids 89 Psalms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 og 6 Vers forklaret af OLE HANNIBAL HOF, Proust udi Totens og Walders Provstie og Sogne=Præst over Totens Præstegjeld. [?].*

[Hojer, Andreas]. 1736. *Kort Forestilling Af De store Velgierninger, Som GUD ved den for To hundrede Aar siden Ao. 1536 skeede offentlige REFORMATION og Antagelse Af Den sande Evangeliske Lærdom, disse Riger og Lande I det Timelige saa vel som fornemmeligst i det Aandelige har ladet vederfare.* Kiøbenhavn: Trykt udi Hans Kongl. Majests. og Universitets Bogtrykkerie, af Johan Jørgen Høpffner.

Hojer, Andreas. 1749. *Bey dem Allerhöchstverordneten froben Jubelfest wegen der Erhebung des glorreichsten Königlichen Dänischen Hauses Oldenburg auf den Thron aller nordischen Reiche und Lande/ und Höchstdesselben dreyhundertjähriger Erhaltung in allem blühenden Flor und Glorie, welches A. 1749 den 28, 29 und 30 October Auf Allernädigsten Befehl Des Allerdurchlauchtigsten Großmächtigsten Königs und Herrn, Königs Friederich des Fünften, Königs zu Dännemarck und Norwegen/ der Wenden und Gothen/ Herzogs zu Schleswig/ Holstein, Stormarn und Ditmarschen/ Grafen zu Oldenburg und Delmenborst &c. &c./ unsers Allernädigsten Erb=Königs und Herrn, in allen Dero Königreichen und Landen gefeyert ward, wollte einige historische Anmerckungen von den hohen Nahmen Christian und Friederich, welche alle Könige aus diesem Allerdurchlauchtigsten Erbause ausser Johannes in einer merckwürdigen Abwechselung geführet haben, wie auch nebst den Zunahmen, so einigen Höchstderselben sind beygelegt worden, dem Geehrtesten Leser mittheilen, und zugleich zu Anhörung deres auf Allernädigsten Befehl am 29 und 30 October Vormittags Schlag neun Uhr in dem grossen Saal des Waisenhauses zu haltenden Jubelreden, alle Hobe und Vornehme Standespersonen, wie auch alle Gönner und Liebhaber der Wissenschaften unterthänig und gehorsamt einladen Andreas Hojer/ Rector an der Dom=Schule hieselbst.* Schleswig: Pet. Hinr. Holwein/Königl. Buchdr.

Holberg, Ludvig. 1711. *Introduction Til de fornemste Europæiske Rigers Historier, Fortsat Indtil disse sidste Tider, Med et tilstræckeligt Register.* Kiøbenhavn: Johann Jacob Bornheinrich.

Holberg, Ludvig. 1732/1733/1735. *Dannemarckes Riges Historie.* B.1-3. København.

Holberg, Ludvig. 1739. *Adskillige store Heltes og berømmelige Mænds, sær Orientaliske og Indianske sammenlignende Historier og Bedrifter efter PLUTARCHI Maade. Tomus I/Tomus II.* Kiøbenhavn: Johan Jørgen Høpffner.

Holberg, Ludvig. 1749. *Lud. Holbergs Epistler, Tomus IV.* Kiøbenhavn: Trykt paa Autors Bekostning.

Holberg, Ludvig. 1754. *Baron Lud. Holbergs Epistler, Befattende Adskillige historiske, politiske, metaphysiske, moralske, philosophiske, Item Skiemtsomme Materier. Tomus V.* Kiøbenhavn: Trykt paa Otto Christ. Wentzels Bekostning.

Holberg, Ludvig. 1758. *Jean de France Eller Hans Frandsen COMOEDIE Udi 5 ACTER. 2.* Opptrykk. [Kjøpenhaffn]: [J.J. Høpffner].

Holmboe, Otho. 1749. *En Christelig Opmuntring til at holde en hellig og glædelig Jubel-Fast med priisende Læber, og hellige Hierter for Herrens Miskundhed, Sandhed og underlige Gierninger/ som han haver beviist imod*

*disse Riiger Dannemark og Norge under de Allernaadigste Oldenburgske KONGERS høistpriselige Regiering udi Tre hundrede Aar, forestillet Agershuus Slots Meenighed. Christiania.*

Hortleder, Johannes Andreas. 1716. *MEMORABILIA BRANDENBURGICA oder Brandenburgische Denckwürdigkeiten So sich Unter der Höchst=löblichen Regierung Des Glorwürdigsten und Heldenmüthigsten Friderich Wilhelms, Königlichen Majestät in Preußen und Chur=Fürstl. Durchlauchtigkeit zu Brandenburg &c. Im Monath December 1715. kurz nach einander dadurch zugetragen/ Daß der Feldzug in Pommern/ welchem Ihre Königl. Majestät in hoher Person beygewohnet/ mit vollem Siege und Ehren geendiget/ und kurz darauf das dritte Jubel=Fest der Chur und Marck Brandenburg bey der ieszigen Königl. Familie und Geschlechte eingefallen; Wie davon bey dem öffentlichen Gottes-Dienste auf denen verordneten Festen/ davon das Jubel=Fest den andern Heil. Wehnachts=Feyertag 1715. das Sieges=Fest aber den Sonntag nach dem Neuen Jahre 1716. celebriret worden/ in zwey Solennenen Fest=Predigten aus allerunterthänigster Schuldigkeit gehandelt/ auch seinen Zubörern als Brandenburgischen Unterthanen Ihre Schuldigkeit angewiesen JOHANNES ANDREAS HORTLEDER/ Prediger in Göritz und darzu gehörigen Filialen Läjsig und Oetscher. Franckfurt an der Oder: Joh. Gottfried Conradi.*

Huitfeldt, Arild. 1976 [1595]. *Danmarks Riges Krønike. Christian III's Historie.* København: Rosenkilde og Bagger.

Huitfeldt, Arild. 1976. *Danmarks Riges Krønike. Christian II's Historie.* København: Rosenkilde og Bagger

Huitfeldt, Arild. 1977 [1599]. *Danmarks Riges Krønike. Christian I's Historie.* København: Rosenkilde og Bagger.

Hwiid, Matthias. 1749. *Jubel=Prædiken, til Erindring for de Nærværende og de efterfølgende Slægter om GUDS uskatterlige Naade mod disse tvende Riger, I at opholde Den Glorvædigste Kongelige Oldenburgiske Stamme paa den Danske Throne i Tre Hundrede Aar, holden i Holmens Kirke til Høymesse, d- 28. Octobris Ao. 1749. Og ved Trykken udgivet af Matthias Hwiid.* København.

Hwiid, Matthias. 1750. *Jubel=Predigt Dem iesztlebenden und denen zukünftigen Geschlechtern zur Erinnerung der unschätzbaren Gnade GOTTES gegen die beyden Königreiche Dännemarck und Norwegen in dreyhundertjähriger Erhaltung Des Glorwürdigsten Königlichen Oldenburgischen Stammes auf dem Dänischen Throne, Gehalten in Dänischer Sprache in der Kirche am Holm in Copenhagen zur Haupt=Predigt, den 28 Oct. A. 1749. und dem Druck übergeben von M.Matthias Hwiid.* Copenhagen und Leipzig: Friedrich Christian Pelt.

Høyberg, Wille. 1746. *Ære-Stötte og Jbukommelses-Tegn Da Den Stormægtigste og Allernaadigste MONARCH KONG CHRISTLAN DEN SIETTE Konge til Danmark og Norge &c. &c. Nedsteeg af sin Jordiske Throne til at antage den Himmelske Krone D. 6te Augusti Anno 1746. Til et ævig Minde opreyst og optegnet Ved den Høyst Sl. KONGES Begravelse Udi ROESKILDE d. 4de Octob. I allerdybeste Underdanighed Af den Gloerværdigste Herres Allerringeste Tiener Wille Høyberg.* København: J.C. Groth.

Joachim, Johann Friedrich. 1761. *Historische Nachricht, von der, im Königreiche Dännemark im Jahr 1660 eingeführten Souverainität.* Halle im Magdeburgischen.

Juncker, Christian. 1706. *Das Guldene und Silberne Ehren=Gedächtniß Des Theuren Gottes=Lehrers D. MARTINI LVHTERI. In welchen dessen Leben/Tod/Familie und Reliquien/Benebst Den vornehmsten Geschichten Der Evangelischen Reformation/ Wie auch Der Evangelischen Jubel=Feyern/umständlich*

beschrieben/und auf eine sonderbar anmuthige Art/aus mehr als Zwey hundert Medaillen oder Schau-Münzen und Bildnissen von rarer Curiosität/mit Auserlesenen Anmerckungen/erkläret werden. Franckfurt und Leipzig: Johann Andrea Endters sel. Sohn und Erben.

Kapp, Johann Erhard. 1730. *Ausführliche Beschreibung Des ersten grossen Evangelischen Augspurgischen Confessions=Jubel=Fests, Wie solches vor hundert Jahren An. 1630. den 25.26.27.Junii im Chur=Fürstenthum Sachsen und andern Sächsischen Landen hoch-eyerlich begangen worden ist, worinnen die angestellten Solennitäten weitläufftig erzehlet, auch alle hieher gehörigen Acta Publica, als Instructiones, Anordnungen und Intimationes, ingleichen Programmata, Carmina Sacularia, nebst zweyen Orationibus Jubilæis &c. und Erhard Lauterbachs Miraculis Augustanæ Confessionis gantz eingerückt zu befinden, aus denen Jubel=Predigten aber die Dispositiones, und aus andern Schrifften Auszüge gegeben, auch die bey dieser Solennität geschlagenen Jubel=Münzen in Kupffer vorgestellt und beschrieben werden; Bey Herannahung des andern Jubel=Fests zum Unterricht und Erbauung ans Licht gestellt.* Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Gleditschens sel. Sohn.

Kellinghusen, Daniel. 1736. *Dannemarks Større Jubel=Glæde Over det JUBILÆUM, Som første Gang af Vor Allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre Kong CHRISTIAN den Siette Høypriselige blev anordnet Anno 1736 d. 30 Octobr. at helligholdes i disse Riger og Lande, til gudelig Amindelse For Evangelii Lærdoms offentlige Antagelse Og at Bispernes og Prælaternes Pavelige Regimenter saavel i det Geistlige som i det Verdslige aldeles blev afskaffet For Toe Hundrede Aar siden Anno 1536 d. 30 October Udi Kong CHRISTIAN den Tredies Høyberømmelige Regierings=Tiid, Eftertænk med Hiertens Devotion paa Jubel=Festens Første Dag.* Kiøbenhavn: Trykt udi Hans Kongl. Majests. priv. Bogtrykkerie.

Kinck, Peder. 1749. *Jubel-Tale Paa Den Allernaadigst anordnede Jubel=Fæst den 28 Octobr. 1749. For ENEBACH Meenighed Eenfoldigen fremsat Af P. Kinck. Provst i Romerige og Sognepræst for Enebach Præstegjeld.* [?].

[?]. 1749. *Kiøbenhavnske Danske Post=Tidender.* [No. 86. Af 27 October–No. 101. Af 19. Decembr. Kiøbenhavn.

[?]. 1760. *Kiøbenhavnske Danske Post=Tidender.* [No. 83. Fredagen den 17de October–No. 100. Mandagen, den 15de December. Kiøbenhavn.

[?]. 1750. *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Tidender om Lærde og Curieuse Sager for Aar 1750. Med et fuldstændig Register.* Kiøbenhavn: Ludolph Henrich Lillie.

[?]. 1760. *Kiøbenhavns Kongelig Allernaadigst bevilgede Adresse=Contoirs Efterretninger.* [No. 80. Mandagen den 13. October– No.92. Mandagen den 24 November]. Kiøbenhavn.

Klemming, Gustaf, Edvard (ed.) 1866. *Svenska Medeltidens Rim-Krönikor. Andra Delen. Nya eller Karls-Krönikan.* Stockholm: P.A. Norstedts & Söner.

[Klopstock, Friedrich Gottlieb]. 1770. «Ode auf das Jubelfest der Souveränität in Dänemark» in Johann Andreas Cramer (ed.) *Der nordische Aufseher.* Leipzig: Verlag der Heinstußischen Buchhandlung.

Koehler, Johann David. 1749. *Johann David Köblers, P.P.O. im Jahr 1749. wöchentlich heraus gegebener Historischer Münz=Belustigung Ein und Zwanziger Theil, darinnen allerhand merckwürdige und rare Thaler, Ducaten, Schaustücken, und andere sonderbare Gold= und Silber=Münzen, von mancherley Altr, zusammen LXI.*

*Stücke, accurat in Kupffer gestochen, beschrieben, und aus der Historie umständlich erkläret werden; Nebst der achtzehenden Fortsetzung des Entwurffs von einer vollständigen Thaler=COLLECTION in der Vorrede.* Nürnberg: Andreas Bieling.

Kofod, Axel. 1934. *Præsten i Ørbæk Rasmus Pedersen Winthers Beretning om sin Slægt og sit Liv.* København.

Kongsberg, Niels. 1749. *JUBEL-Prædiken/ Som efter Kongel. Aller=naadigste Befaling er anordnet/ at holdes udi Dannemark og Norge den 28de Octobr. 1749. Gud besynderlig til største Ære, der udi 300de Aar har opholdet Konge efter Konge av den Oldenburgiske Stamme/ Blev til Aftensang i eenfoldig Korthed, forestilled Menigheden i den Kongel. Berg=Stad Kongsberg av Niels Kongsberg, Provst over det Kongsbergiske Provstie og Sogne Præst for Berg stadens Menighed. [?].*

Kothert, Cristoph. 1749. *Samling Af de Malerier, Emblemata og ræpresentationer, som allerunderdanigst bleven forestillede I Bergen d. 28, 29, og 30 Oct. 1749. I den Fryde=fulde Jubel=Fest Formedelst den Høylovlige Oldenburgiske Stammes allerhøystpriseligste Regiering i disse Riger og Lande udi Trehundrede Aar.* Bergen: Cristoph Kothert.

Kraft, Jens. 1749. *Rigernes u=skatterlige Lyksalighed under den høypriselige Oldenburgiske Stammes Regiering, bragt til den ynskeligste Fuldkommenhed under Voris Stormægtigste, Allernaadigst MONARCH FRIDERICH den Femte, Blev bevist ved en Jubel Tale holden paa Sorøe Ridderlige Academie den 29 October 1749.* Kjøbenhavn: Gabriel Christian Rothe Universitets Boghandler.

Kreyberg, David. 1766. *Trøst for Landets Børn udi deres billige Bedrøvelse over Landets Faders Død, fremsat udi en Klage=Prædiken over den i Livet Stormægtigste Monarch, men i Døden høystsalige Konge, Kong Friderich den Femte, holdet i Nørbye Kirke den 18de Martii 1766.* Kiøbenhavn: P.H. Höecke.

Krog, Thomas Georg. 1773. *Samtaler imellem En gammel Præst og En gammel Bonde, om Fest=Dagenes Afskaffelse, om Jule=Høytiden, om Præste=Klæder, om Mæsser, om Ægteskabs Friebed, om Extra=Skatten, Med andre tilhørende og deraf anledigede Materier.* Bergen.

La Beaumelle, Laurent Angliviel de. 1749. *La Spectatrice Danoise, ou l'Aspasie Moderne, ouvrage Hebdomadaire.* Tome I. Copenhague.

Lange, Joachim. 1717. *Wobl-verdientes Ehren-Gedächtniß des theuren Mannes GOTTEs D. MARTINI LUTHERI, und der Evangelischen REFORMATION, in Wiederholung der von demselben gereinigten und fleißigst getriebenen Apostolischen lehre Vom Glauben und guten Wercken: Nebst einem ausführlichen Vorbericht Von dem vor hundert Jahren gehaltenen ersten Jubel-Feste/ Und den damals deßhalb inn- und ausserhalb der Evangelischen Universitäten edirten vielen Schriften: Als eine Vorbereitung zu dem instehenden andern Iubilæo; Auß schuldiger Danckbarkeit gegen GOTT für die unschätzbare Wohltat der REFORMATION, Und zur gemeinen Erbauung/sonderlich der studirenden Jugend auf der Königl. Preus. Friedrichs-Universität/gestiftet von IOACHIMO Langen/S. Theol. Professore Ord. Halle*

Lange, Ole. 1749. *Billig Aarsag Til Nordens Jubel=Fest, Af Den Stormægtigste og Allermildeste Nordens Monarch Friderich den Femte, Arve-Konge og Eenevolds Herre til Danmark og Norge, de Venders og Gothers, Hertug til Slesvig, Holsteen, Stormarn og Ditmarsken, Greve udi Oldenborg og Delmenhorst sc. Allernaadigst anordnet Den 28. og følgende Octobris 1749. Forestillet udi et eenfoldigt Vers, som i allerdybeste Underdanighed nedlægges for Min Allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre, Deres Kongelige Majestæts allerunderdanigste troe-*

*pligtskyldigste Arve=Undersaat og Tiener, og hos Gud u=afladelige Forbeder Ole Lange. Sogne=Præst til Urskoung Præstegjeld.* Kjøbenhavn: Johan Jørgen Høpffner.

[Langebek, Jacob]. 1738. «Eine kurtze Nachricht von der im Jahr 1736 in Dennemarck und Norwegen gehaltenen Jubel=Feyer» in *Dänische Bibliothec oder Sammlung Von Alten und Neuen Gelehrten Sachen aus Dännemarck. Erstes Stück.* Copenhagen und Leipzig: Hieronymi Christiani Paulli Wittwe.

Langebek, Jacob. 1749. *Stamme-Faderens for det Kongelige Oldenborgske Hus KONING Christian den Førstes udodelige Ihukommelse fornyet udi en Jubel-Tale, holden den 15. Novem, 1749. paa Charlottenborg i det Kongl Danske Selskab til det Nordiske Sprogs og Historiens Forbedring af Jacob Langebek, D.K.M. Archivarius i det Geheime Archiv, Medlem i Videnskabers Collegium, og Forstander i det Kongl. Danske Selskab.* Kjøbenhavn: Cristoph Georg Glasing.

Langebek, Jacob. 1881. «Udkast til Souverainitets Historien af J. Langebek. Meddelt af J. H. Bang» in *Indbydelsesskrift til den offentlige Examen i Sorø Akademis Skole i Juni og Juli 1881.* Sorø: F. Häusers Bogtrykkeri.

[?] 1749. *Le Nouvelliste Suisse, Historique, Politique, Litteraire et Amusant. Novembre 1749.* Neuchatel.

Leganger, Hans. 1749. *Dannemarckes og Norges Glæde over det Gode Som Gud haver bevist dem udi Tre hundrede Aar, at den Kongelige Throne udi saa lang Tid er bleven besiddet, og Regieringen ført af Aller=Naadigste Konger af den Oldenborgske Stamme Fremstilled paa JUBEL-Festen hvilken den nu af samme Stamme Regierende Tolvte Aller=Naadigste Arve=Konge og Herre KONGE FRIDERIC den Femte Haver/ til GUDs Ære/ og den Velsignelses Erindring af Undersaatterne, Aller=Naadigst anordnet at celebreres i begge Riger den 28de Octobris Aar 1749. Da den Aller=Naadigst foresatte TEXT af Davids 89de Psalmes e 6 første vers Blev enfoldigst forklæred udi Eidsvolds Kirke af HANS LEGANGER, Provst for Øvre Rommerigets Provstie og Sogne-Præst til Eidsvolds Præstegjeld.* [?].

Leigh, Morten. 1749. *Det Nordiske Zions Lyksalighed og Lovsang efter Hans Kongelige Majestæts Allernaadigste Befalning paa den Almindelig JUBEL-Fest den 28 Octobr Aar 1749 af Psalm 89. v.1-6 fremstillet for Elverums Menighed udi Østerdalen under Aggershus Stift.* Christiania

Lemvigh, Søren. 1750. *Landets Jubel=Sang og Jubel=Haab, paa Jubel=Fæsten den 28 Octobr. 1749, Forestillet I en Prædiken over Texten Ps. LXXXIX. v. I til 6. af Mag. Søren Lemvigh, Sogne-Præst for Gladfaxe og Herløf Menigheder i Siælland.* Kiøbenhavn: Cristoph Georg Glasing.

Lochner, Johann Hieronymus. 1744. *Samlung Merkwürdiger MEDAILLEN Achtes Jahr 1744. In welcher wöchentlich Ein curieuses Gepräg, meistens von modernen Medaillen, ausgesuchet, und nicht nur fleisig in Kupfer vorgestellt, sondern auch durch eine historische Erläuterung hinlänglich erkläret, nun aber so wol mit gewöhnlichen Registern, als einer Vorrede Von dem Leben und verfertigten Medaillen des berühmten Königl. Englischen Ober Graveur und Medailleur Johann Crockers, an das Licht gegeben worden, durch Johann Hieronymus Lochner.* Nürnberg: Peter Conrad Monath.

[Löscher, Ernst Valentin]. 1719. *Unschuldige Nachrichten Von Alten und Neuen Theologischen Sachen, Büchern/Controversien/Veränderungen, Anmerckungen, Vorschlägen, u.d.g. Zur geheiligten Übung in gewissen Ordnungen verfertigt Von Einigen Dienern des Göttlichen Wortes. Auff das Jahr 1719.* Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Braun.

*Lov, indeholdende Fundats for det Kongelige Norske Frederiks Universitet i Christiania.* 1824. Christiania: Chr. Grøndahl.

Lindhardt, Peder. 1986. *Kirke-ritualet og pietismen: biskop Peder Herslebs betænkning over Danmarks og Norges Kirke-Ritual af 1685.* København: Akademisk Forlag.

Lund, Johann Michael. 1785. *Forsøg til Beskrivelse over Øvre=Tellemarken i Norge.* Kiøbenhavn: Joh. Rud. Thiele.

Lunge, Jesper. 1746. «Guds Huus, Kongens Huus, og hver Mands Huus, Deres Sorg over Høyst-Salig og Høyløvlig Ihukommelse i Livet Stormægtigste Monarch og Herre, Herr Christian den VIte, Konge til Danmark og Norde de Venders og Gothers, Hertug i Slesvig, Holstein, Stormarn og Ditmersken, Greve i Oldenborg og Delmenhorst. I allerdybeste Ydmydghed offeret ved Denne Høyst=Salige Herres Liig-Procession og Jordefærd, som skeede den 4. Oct. 1746» [...]» in *Det høystbedrovede Danmarks Sørge-Digt eller Samling af udvalgte Vers, ypperlige Inscriptioner, og andre deslige Sørge-Skrifter som over Høyst-Salig og Høyløvlig Ihukommelse Kong CHRISTIAN den VI . Siden det høye Døds-Fald indtil den Høye Kongelige Begravelse ere udkomne.* Kjøbenhavn: Johan Cristoph Groth.

Luplau, L.F. 1836. *Historie om Reformationens Indførelse i Danmark, eller en kort og sandfærdig Underviisning om, hvorledes Pavens falske Christendom blev afskaffet her i Landet nu for netop 300 Aar siden, og derimod den sande evangelisk-lutherske Christendom blev indført, optegnet til Ære for Jubelaaret 1836 for christelige Borgere og Bønder i Dannemark.* Kjøbenhavn: J.W. Qvist, Bog- og Nodetrykker.

Manderup, Otto Greve af Rantzau. 1753. *Den Kongelige Oldenborgske Stammes udødelige Ihukommelse, Fornyet udi en Jubel=Tale, holden den 10 Novembr. 1749. i det Kongelige Danske Videnskabers Selskab.* Kiøbenhavn: C.G. Glasings Efterleverske.

Marcussen, Mogens Christian Marqvard. 1766. «Jubel-Prædiken den 28. November 1749» in *Samling af offentlige Sørge- og Glæde-Taler, holdte efter Kongelig Allernaadigst Befaling for Ronsted og Rosted Meenigheder i Aarhus Stift af MOGENS CHRISTIAN MARQVARD MARCUSSEN Sognepræst sammets.* Aalborg: Joh. P. Holtberg.

[?] 1749. *Mercure Historique et Politique, Contenant l'Etat présent de l'Europe, ce qui se passe dans toutes les Cours, les Intérêts des Princes, & généralement tout ce qu'il y a de plus curieux pour le Mois de Juillet 1749. Le tout accompagné de Réflexions Politiques sur chaque Etat.* Tome CXXVII. La Haye: Frederic-Henri Scheurleer.

Molesworth, Robert. 1694. *An Account of Denmark, as It was in the Year 1692.* London.

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Mossin, Hans. 1750. *Korte Betænkninger over Jubel Texten til Høymesse Psalmen LXXXIX. v. 1-6. Anordnet Til en bellig Erindring og Taksigelse For Guds besynderlige Naade mod disse Tvende Riger I at vedligeholde Den Kongelige Oldenborgiske Stamme paa den Danske Throne i tre hundrede Aar. Forfattede af Hans Mossin.* Kiøbenhavn: Niels Hansen Møller.

Münter, Friedrich. 1826. *Om Kong Harald Klaks Daab og den Christelige Kirkes Begyndelse i Danmark. Et Skrivt for den danske Borger og Landmand, udgivet i Følge Kongelig allernaadigst Befaling.* Kiøbenhavn: Directeur Jens Hostrup Schultz, Kongelig og Universitetsbogtrykker.

Muus, Jacob. 1768. *ALOE SEMI-SECULARIS. Jubel=Prædiken Anno 1766. den 30 Nov. Første Advents=Søndag Gud til Ære og Tak, ved hans Bistand, holden udi Steenløse=Kirke, Da det halvhundrede Embeds=Aar Lovet være Herren! vel fuldendtet af Jacob Muus, Præpositus Honorarius, og Sogne=Præst for Steenløse og Wexøe i Sædland.* Kiøbenhavn: August Friedrich Stein.

Nannestad, Frideric. 1749a. *En Christelig Prædiken Over de foreskrevne hellige Guds Ord, som findes Psalm: LXXXIX. v: 1.2.3.4.5.6. Paa Nordens Store JUBEL-FEST, D. xxviii. Octobr. Anno MDCCXXXIX. [...].* Tronhiem.

Nannestad, Frideric. 1749b. *Kort Beskrivelse hvorledes Den allernaadigst paabudne JUBEL-FEST For Den Velsignede Oldenborgske Stames 300. Aars Kongelige Regering I ubrudt Linie paa den Danske og Norske Throne Er allerunderdanigst den 28.29. og 30. Octobr. 1749. helligholdt i Tronhiem.* Trondheim.

Neuchs, Johan. 1760. *Echo af tvende Jubel=Festers Halelujah og Fryde=Sang. Den Første celebreret den 28 October og tvende følgende Dage Aar 1749. til en taknemmelig og glædelig Erindring om den Oldenborgske Stammes Regjerings Begyndelse i disse Riger for 300 Aar. Den Anden celebreret den 16 October og tvende følgende Dage Aar 1760, til en hiertelig Lov og Taksigelse til Herren, som for 100 Aar har forundt samme Høi=Kongelige Stamme Arve=Rettighed og Enevolds Herredømme til disse Landes Flor og Velsignelse.* Kiøbenhavn: Nicolaus Møller.

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Paus, Hans. 1749. *Nogle Genealogiske TABELLER hvorved Viises Hvorledes den Almægtige og Grundgode GUD haver conferet den Danske og Norske Kongelige Familie fra Rigernes første Begyndelse og lige indtil denne Dag, og i Særdeleshed velsignet og mægtig gjort Den Gudfrygtige og Viise Danske og Norske Konge, Kong CHRISTIANI den Istes Sæd, saa at høystbemelte Konge er bleven en Stamme=Fader ei allene for det Danske Kongelig Huus, men endogsaa for alle nu Florerende Christne Keiserlige, Kongelige og Churførstelige Huuse over ganske Europa Som et allerunderdanigst VIVAT udi Allerdybeste Devotion Fremført for Den Stormægtigste Monarch Kong FRIDERICH den Femte Konge Til Danmark og Norge de Venders og Gothers, Hertug til Schlesvig, Holsteen, Stormarn og Ditmarsken, Greve til Oldenborg og Delmenborst Paa Jubel=Festen den 28 Octobr. Anno 1749.* Kiøbenhavn: J.C. Groth.

Pontoppidan, Erik. 1734. *Kurzgefaste Reformation=Historie Der Dänischen Kirche/Aus bewährten Urkunden/anfangs in Dänischer Sprache zusammen getragen, Itzo, als eine Probe der zuerwartenden*

*ANNALIUM ECCLESIAE DANICÆ, Dem Teutschen Leser mitgetheilet, von Erico Pontoppidano.*  
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[Pontoppidan, Erik]. 1760a. *Patriotiske Betragtninger over Danske og Norske Mænds Borgerlige Frihed, under et arveligt og faderligt Eenevolds-Regimente. Fremlagde paa Jubel=Festen ANNO 1760.* Kiøbenhavn: Andreas Hartvig Godiche.

[Pontoppidan, Erik]. 1760b. *Discours sur la Liberté du Dannemarc, depuis l'Établissement du Pouvoir Illimité, dont le Jubilé doit être celebre le 16 Octobr. 1760. Par un Patriote.* Copenhague: De l'Imprimerie des Frères Philibert.

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*Deris Kongelige Majestæt Vor Allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre Kong Frideric den Femte Anordnede Taksigelse= og Jubel=Fast den 28de Octobr 1749.* Christiania: Jens Berg.

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[?]. 1717. *TEXTER til een almindelig Taksigelses og Bede=Dag/ Som den 5 Novemb: 1717 skal holdes over alt i Danmark og Norge/Island og Færøe: Sampt BØNNER/Som skal bruges den 31 Octobr. 1ste/5te og 7de Novembr./saalenge den af Hans Kongl. Majestet vor allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre/Kong FRIDERICH den FIERDE, GUD til Ære anordnede JUBEL=FEST varer/saavel som Psalmer/hvilke imidlertid i Kirkerne siunges.* Kiøbenhavn: Kongl. Majests og Universitets Boogtrykkerie.

[?]. 1720. *Texter og Bønner At bruge Paa den Aarlige og Almindelige Taksigelse=Fæst/ Hver 13 Januarii; For den af den Allerhøyeste Gud/ Hans Kongel. Majestæts Rige Norge beteede underlige og mægtige Frelse/ til den Allerhøyeste GUDS Ære/ Efter Hans Kongel: Majests: vores Allernaadigste Arve=Konings og Herres Konning FRIDERICH Den FJERDES Gudelige og Høy=Christelige Anordning.* København.

[?]. 1736. *TEXTER og Bønnen, Som skal forklares og bruges Til den Taksigelses og Jubel=Fest, hvilken Deres Kongelig Majestet Vor Allernaadigste Arve-Konge og Herre Konning Christian den Siette Allernaadigst haver anordnet at helligholdes den 30te Octobr. 1736. Til en Erindring om GUDS, mod disse Nordiske Riger, for To Hundrede Aar siden, beviiste Barmhiertighed, da han bortdrev det Papistiske Mørke, og igien lod optænde Sit klare Evangeliske Lys.* Kjøbenhavn: Johan Jørgen Høpfner.

[?]. 1747. *Texter og Bønner Som forklares og bruges, paa den Bede=Dag og Tak=sigelses=Fest, hvilken Hans Kongel. Majest. Vor Allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre, K. Friderich den Femte, Allernaadigst haver anordnet at holdes, Gud til Ære, her i Kiøbenhavn, den 23 Octobr. Aarligen. Til en Gudelig Erindring af den 1728, den 20de Octobris her i Staden, optændte Ildebrand, hvilken blev dæmpet bemeldte 23 Octobr.* Kiøbenhavn: J.J. Høpfner.

[?]. 1749. *Texter og Bønen Som skal forklares og bruges Til den almindelige Jubel= og Taksigelses=Fest, hvilken Hans Kongelige Majestæt, Vor Allernaadigste Arve=Konge og Herre, Kong FRIDERICH den Femte, Allernaadigst, Gud til Ære, haver anordnet, at skulle overalt helligholdes i bege Rigerne og alle Førstendømerne, den 28de Octobris 1749. og de følgende Dage, til Afmindelse og Erindring om GUDs Naade imod disse Riger, som nu i Tre Hundrede Aar, haver opholdt paa Thronen, og velsignet den Kongelige Oldenborgeske Stame fra Kong CHRISTLAN den førstes Regierings Begyndelse.* 1749. Trondhiem: J.C. Winding.

[?]. 1760. *Texter, Collect og Bøn som skal forklares og bruges paa den almindelige Jubel- og Taksigelses-Fest, hvilken Hans Kongelige Majestæt Vores Allernaadigste Eenevolds-Herre og Konge Kong Frideric den femte, Gud til Ære og sine troe Undersaatter til Opmuntring har anordnet at helligholdes den 16de Octobr. 1760. Til Erindring om den for Eet hundrede Aar siden ved den Kongelige Regiering indførte Eenevolds-Magt og Herredømme.* 1760. Trondheim

Toft, Peder. 1746. «Landets Graad Over Landets Konge, Den Stormægtigste, Høybaarne Fyrste og Herre, Kong CHRISTIAN den VIte! Konge til Danmark og Norge, de Venders og Gothers, Hertug i Schlesvig, Holstein, Stormarn og Ditmarsken, Greve udi Oldenborg og Delmenhorst. Som leverede GUD Sin Siæl, den 6te Augusti 1746 og hvis afsiælede Legeme den 4de October samme Aar bliver geleidet til det Høy-Kongelige Begravelse i Roeskilde Dom-Kirke» in *Det høystbedrovede Danmarks Sørge-Digt eller Samling af udvalgte Vers, ypperlige Inscriptioner, og andre deslige Sørge-Skrifter som over Høy-Salig og Høylovlig Ihukommelse Kong CHRISTLAN den VI. Siden det høye Døds-Fald indtil den Høye Kongelige Begravelse ere udkomne.* Kjøbenhavn: Johan Cristoph Groth.

Treschow, Gerhard. 1749. *En ret velsignet Konge-Stamme, som ikke er glemt af GUD, men Af ham rigeligen velsignet og benaadet, Som Ikke heller haver glemt GUD, men hierteligen velsignet og ærer ham. Forestillet I een Prædiken over Psalm. LXXXIX. vers.1.2.3.4.5.6. Paa Jubel-Festens Første Dag d. 28 Octobr. 1749. For Bircherøds Meenighed, Af G. TRESCHOW. Kiøbenhavn: J.J. Høpffner.*

Treschow, Gerhard. 1753. *Danske Jubel=Lærere eller Historisk Berætning Om de Lærere, Som, efter Reformationen i Dannemark og Norge, i offentlige Embeder ved Skole, Academie, og Kirken have tient i 50 Aar og derover; Afdeelt i 3 Classer [...]. Kiøbenhavn.*

Treu, C.F. 1760. *Det jubilerende Friderichsværn over Den Gud behagelige Eenevolds-Regiering, som har i hundred Aar behersked Dannemarks, og Norges Riger, udi en god Forstaaelse med den himmelske Regenter; i Kortthed forstilled Garnisons Meenigheden paa Jubel=Festen den 16de October 1760. efter giorte Opmuntring, næst foregaaende Søndag: ved Oplysning om Hvile= og Jubel=Aarenes lærereige Anordning for Israeliter; og siden noget mere udført af Stedets Lærere C.F. Treu. Christiania: Samuel Conrad Schwach.*

Trojel, Hans Thomæsøn. 1717. *Evangeliske JUBEL-Sang/ For det Efter REFORMATIONEN Ved Sl. Doct. MORTEN LUTHER Fuldendte Andet Hundrede Aar/ Til Musiqven til Høymesse i vor Frelzers Kircke I Kiøbenhavn Strax efter Epistelen Paa JUBEL-Fæsten d. 5 Novembr. 1717. Til GUDs Ære Og Meenighedens Fornøjelse Efter BEGiering forfattet Ved vor Frelzers Kirckes Da værende Sogne=Præst Hans Thomason Trojel. Kiøbenhavn: Joachim Schmidtgen.*

Trojel, Hans Thomæsøn. 1718. *Vor Frelzers Kirckis JUBEL-Aar Paa Jubel-Festens Fiire Dage 1. D.31. Octobr: den 21. Søndag efter Trinitatis. 2. D. 1. Novembr: Alle Helgens Dag/En Mandag/3. D. 5. Novembr: Fredagen/Tacksigelsens Dag/4. D. 7. Novembr: den 24. Søndag efter Trinitatis. Det Aar efter Christi Fødsel 1717. Foraarsaget Af den i GUDS Kircke Høy-Fortiente Lærer Sal: Doct: Morten Luther, Som over 28. Aar fra Reformationens Begyndelse d. 31. Octobr: 1517. Til Reformators Død d. 18. Febr: 1546. Haver forklared Religionen. Forordnet Af den i GUDs Kircke Høy=Præiseligste MONARCH Og Stormægtigste KONGE Kong FRIDERICH Den Fierde/Arfve-Konge til Dannemarck og Norge Som over 18. Aar fra sin Høylovlige Regierings Tiltrædelse D. 25. Augusti 1699. Haver forsvared Religionen. Kjøbenhavn: Johan Cristopher Brandt.*

[?] 1717. *Udførlig Beretning/hvorledes er tilgaaet paa den af Hans Kongel. Majestet/Den Stoormægtigste Enevolds=Herre/Kong FRIDERICH den Fierde/Arve=Konge til Danmark og Norge/de Venders og Gothers/Hertug udi Slesvig/Holsten/Stormarn og Dytmarsken/Græve udi Oldenborg og Delmenhorst/saa Christligst anordnede Otte Dages Jubel=Fest Fra den 31 Octobris til den 7 Novembris 1717 Formedelst GUDS sande Euangelii Lyys/Guds lood ved sit udvalde Redskab Dr. MORTEN LUTHER og hans troe Efterfølgere og Med=Arbeidere i Ordet optændes udi Hans Majestets Højlofligste Forfæderes og Hans Riger/Fyrstendome/Grævskeber og Lande for tu hundrede Aar siden/og GUD særdeles der haver ladet fri og uformorket fremturendes skinne til den Tiid/den Allerhøjeste og Allermægtigste GUD til Lof/Priis og Ære. Kiøbenhavn: Kongel. Majests. og Universit. privilegerede Bogtrykkerie.*

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