Søren Frank Jensen

Nikolaus Selnecker's *Psalterbuch*, 1563–1623

Lutheran Psalm Interpretation between Public and Private Devotion



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Markus Friedrich, Jürgen Sarnowsky
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Søren Frank Jensen

Nikolaus Selnecker's *Psalterbuch*, 1563–1623

Lutheran Psalm Interpretation between Public and Private Devotion

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Preface

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Hamburg, September 2025
Søren Frank Jensen

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Abbreviations

TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie. Ed. by Gerhard Müller et al. 36 vols. Berlin, New York 1976–2004
USTC	The Universal Short Title Catalogue. University of St Andrews. www.ustc.ac.uk
VD16	Das Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts. www.vd16.de
VD17	Das Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts. www.vd17.de
WA	D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar 1883–1993
WA DB	D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Die Deutsche Bibel. Weimar 1906–1961

A Note on the Text

I have followed the orthography and spelling of the editions cited. References are to the specific editions listed in the bibliography. I have not harmonized variations in orthography and spelling between editions, and I generally avoid marking irregularities with *sic* or other interventions.

1 Introduction

This study compares seven editions of the *Psalterbuch*, a vernacular interpretation of the biblical Psalms by Nikolaus Selnecker (1530–1592).[1] It tracks the modifications and transformations of the *Psalterbuch* across a period of sixty years, from 1563 to 1623, and shows how the work was continually reframed and reshaped in response to shifting historical conditions and in dialogue with other works of devotional literature. In his interpretation of Psalm 1, Selnecker emphasizes the need for Christians to remain in constant contact with the word of God. The more, he explains, one engages with it, the more doctrine, consolation, and strength one discovers within it.[2] In the present work, I examine the diverse strategies by which Selnecker sought to make this word accessible in the editions of the *Psalterbuch*.

The study was developed at the Centre for Privacy Studies, whose case- and source-based approach to early modern privacy was formulated by Mette Birkedal Bruun.[3] Rather than attempting to reach a stable definition of the concept or a robust distinction between a public and a private sphere, this perspective high-

1 This research was funded by the Danish National Research Foundation (DNRF138) and the Carlsberg Foundation (CF24-0492).

2 Nikolaus Selnecker: Das Erst Bůch des Psalters Dauidis/ Nemlich/ die ersten Fůnffzig Psalmen/ ordentlichen nach einander/ dem gemeinen Mann/ vnd Frommen/ einfältigen Christen zu gut/ vnd in dieser elenden zeit zu Trost vnd Vnterricht/ außgeleget vnd geprediget/ Durch M. Nicolaum Selneccerum, Noribergensem, Churfůrstlichen Såchischen Hofpredigern. Nürnberg 1563, VD16 S 5637, fol. v^{r}: "Dann je mehr man mit dem Wort Gottes vmbgeht/ je mehr lehr/ trost vn[d] krafft findt man darin[n]".

3 Mette Birkedal Bruun: Towards an Approach to Early Modern Privacy: The Retirement of the Great Condé. In: Early Modern Privacy. Sources and Approaches. Ed. by Michaël Green, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun. Leiden 2022 (Intersections 78), pp. 12–60 (p. 18). Bruun's approach builds on earlier historical works such as Lena Cowen Orlin: Locating Privacy in Tudor London. Oxford 2008. Orlin's detailed case-based study explores the possibilities of privacy through legal and municipal records. In contrast, Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby offers a sweeping longue durée perspective in their influential five-volume work: Histoire de la vie privée. Paris 1987–1989. For a concise overview, see David Vincent: Privacy: A Short History. Cambridge 2016.

lights privacy as a contextual phenomenon, embedded in concrete social environments and often constituted ephemerally through more or less porous thresholds. This contextual understanding shifts the emphasis from asking what privacy *is* to asking how it is articulated, negotiated, or made recognizable in particular historical situations. Privacy functions here first and foremost as an analytical lens through which the sources can be studied.[4]

Building on this approach, research from the Centre has explored early modern privacy across a range of contexts, including letter writing, urban and maritime life, and court culture.[5] For all their differences, these settings are marked by pronounced communal, communicative, or performative dimensions. Yet precisely within such social environments, "pockets of privacy" could be "carved out" through a variety of strategies, such as withdrawing from view, restricting access to particular spaces or forms of knowledge, circulating letters within restricted networks, or locating privacy in the conscience and heart.[6] Together, these studies historicize privacy by investigating the forms it took before its modern formulation as a legal right. As Lars Cyril Nørgaard asks: "What was privacy before the right to privacy? What is it, in this perspective, that we still want to protect?"[7]

4 The approach rests on two main lines of interpretation: The first focuses on language, tracing how terms derived from the Latin *privatus* acquired different meanings in specific linguistic and cultural settings. The second seeks to identify privacy when the term itself is absent. It uses heuristic zones – the soul, the body, the chamber, the home, the community, the state – to examine what Mette Birkedal Bruun describes as "the segregations and distinctions that happen in particular zones and at the thresholds between them", Bruun (n. 3), pp. 20–24 (p. 22).

5 Natacha Klein Käfer et al. (eds.): Privacy in Saxony. Perspectives on Architecture, Culture, Health, Law, and Religion. Berlin, Boston 2024; Dustin M. Neighbors, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, and Elena Woodacre (eds.): Notions of Privacy at Early Modern European Courts. Reassessing the Public and Private Divide, 1400–1800. Amsterdam 2024 (Early Modern Court Studies); Michael Green and Lars Cyril Nørgaard (eds.): Notions of Privacy in Early Modern Correspondence. Turnhout 2025 (Early European Research 22); Natacha Klein Käfer (ed.): Privacy at Sea. Practices, Spaces, and Communication in Maritime History. Cham 2023 (Global Studies in Social and Cultural Maritime History); Johannes Ljungberg and Natacha Klein Käfer (eds.): Tracing Private Conversations in Early Modern Europe. Talking in Everyday Life. Cham 2024.

6 Mette Birkedal Bruun and Natacha Klein Käfer: Pockets of Privacy in the Maritime World: An Epilogue. In: Privacy at Sea. Practices, Spaces, and Communication in Maritime History. Edited by Natacha Klein Käfer Cham 2023 (Global Studies in Social and Cultural Maritime History), pp. 375–389 (p. 376); Mette Birkedal Bruun and Natalie Körner: Tracking Privacy in Early Modern Saxony: An Epilogue. In: Privacy in Saxony. Perspectives on Architecture, Culture, Health, Law, and Religion. Ed. by Natacha Klein Käfer et al. Berlin, Boston 2024, pp. 175–185 (p. 177).

7 Lars Cyril Nørgaard: Past Privacy. In: Early Modern Privacy. Sources and Approaches. Ed. by Michaël Green, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun. Leiden 2022 (Intersections

In what follows, I approach that question through one particularly charged body of texts: Nikolaus Selnecker's interpretations of the biblical Psalms. In the aftermath of the Reformations, the inner life of believers received renewed attention as devotional ideals turned towards the private.[8] In this religious climate, the Psalms acquired a particular significance. In a letter from 1535, Martin Luther (1483–1546) describes how he reaches for his Psalter and runs to his chamber when the devil keeps him from prayer.[9] The Psalms are especially suited for praying alone, because they offer a true *gnotiseauton* – know thyself – and their readers see and express themselves more clearly in their words than in any words they can come up with on their own.[10] In the decades after Luther's death, this capacity for self-examination increasingly became a liability. Nikolaus Selnecker agrees with Luther in principle: the Psalms are in themselves sufficient to discover true Christianity. However, in the tense confessional climate in which he operated where the voice of the Psalms echoing in believers might become distorted by false teachings, the Dresden preacher cannot allow his readers to withdraw into the solace of the chamber without proper interpretative guidance.

Selnecker's concern drew on a much longer history. Many scholars have noted how, throughout the history of its Christian interpretation, the Book of Psalms displays a striking ability for moving between private and public settings. As Susan Gillingham observes, "the Psalter has [...] been a vital resource for defining both the Jewish and Christian faiths, both in public debate and in private reflection".[11] Brian E. Daley likewise stresses that in the early church the Psalms "were in constant use, both in public worship and in private prayer and meditation".[12] At the transition from medieval to early modernity, Grover A. Zinn describes how, "the Psalms show a remarkable ability to move between the public and the

78), pp. 1–11 (p. 1). For an influential formulation of privacy as a modern legal right, see Samuel D. Warren and Louis D. Brandeis: The Right to Privacy. In: Harvard Law Review 4.5 (1890), pp. 193–220.

8 François Lebrun: The Two Reformations: Communal Devotion and Personal Piety. In: Passions of the Renaissance. Ed. by Roger Chartier. Cambridge, MA 1989 (A History of Private Life 3), pp. 69–109; Mette Birkedal Bruun: Privacy in Early Modern Christianity and Beyond: Traces and Approaches. In: Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico in Trento. Annali 44.2 (2018), pp. 33–54. Bruun suggests that "the religious realm may be one of the areas best fitted for searches for early modern privacy – without forgetting that this is a form of privacy that is intensely surveyed by God and his earthly representatives", Bruun (n. 3), p. 53.

9 Martin Luther: Wie man beten sol, fur Meister Peter Balbirer. In: WA 38, p. 358.

10 Martin Luther: Vorrede. In: WA DB 10/I, pp. 99–102, 104. For Selnecker's reception of this passage, see below pp. 58–59.

11 Susan Gillingham: Psalms Through the Centuries. Vol. 1. Malden, MA 2008 (Wiley Blackwell Bible Commentaries), p. 4.

12 Brian E. Daley: Finding the Right Key. The Aims and Strategies of Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms. In: The Harp of Prophecy: Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms. Ed. by Brian E. Daley and Paul R. Kolbet. Notre Dame, IN 2015 (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity), pp. 11–28 (p. 11).

private, the corporate and the individual, the formulaic and the more spontaneous aspects of life".[13] Finally, reaching the sixteenth century, Herman J. Selderhuis underlines how "each confessional party of the Reformation treasured the Psalms as a regular facet of public worship as well as private meditation".[14]

This study examines how this movement across devotional settings was handled in specific confessional and interpretative contexts. It takes it point of departure from the approach to privacy developed at the Centre and applies it to Psalms in their early modern reception. This lens accentuates the capacity of the Psalms to voice differentiated devotional experiences: preached at court, sung at home, read in solitude, invoked in polemic, and performed in communal worship. Across the editions, Selnecker's *Psalterbuch* speaks to all of these contexts and devotional situations, but with different emphasis. The *Psalterbuch* complicates any simple binary opposition between public worship and private devotion and rather operates on a spectrum between the two. The editions privilege different types of material. Some focus on communal edification, others on individual expressions of lament and praise, and still others the author's public self-fashioning. How the *Psalterbuch* accentuates these aspects becomes visible in the textual and material differences between its editions.

In this introductory chapter, I present the *Psalterbuch* and give a short introduction to its author, Nikolaus Selnecker. Subsequently, I outline the methodology that has guided my work, before finally offering an overview of how the study is structured.

1.1 The *Psalterbuch*

In a vast ocean of sixteenth-century devotional literature, the *Psalterbuch* is at the same time thoroughly conventional and strikingly distinct. Across editions, its title pages present the work as an interpretation of the Psalms that promises consolation ("Trost") and instruction ("Vnterricht") to the common man and simpleminded pious Christian ("dem gemeinen Mann/ vnd Frommen/ einfältigen Christen").[15] These terms situate the *Psalterbuch* in the tradition of early modern devotional literature understood in the broadest sense as all those publications – sermons, postils, plenaries, catechisms, prayerbooks – that sought to inform,

13 Grover A. Zinn: Introduction. In: The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages. Ed. by Nancy van Deusen. Albany, NY 1999 (SUNY series in Medieval Studies), pp. xi–xv (p. xiii).

14 Herman J. Selderhuis: Introduction to the Psalms. In: Psalms 1–72. Ed. by Herman J. Selderhuis. Downers Grove, IL 2015 (Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament 7), pp. xlv-lvii (p. lv).

15 Selnecker: Das Erst Bůch (1563) (n. 2).

instruct, and comfort the lived Christianity of the laity whether through their own reading or through the pastoral work of trained theologians and clergy.[16] Across confessional divides countless such books left the presses in the period, but interpretations of the Psalms were particularly abundant.[17] In fact, by some accounts the Book of Psalms was the biblical book most often interpreted in the sixteenth century.[18]

The *Psalterbuch* was part of a wider trend, but it also stands out. First of all, in sheer size. The first edition came in three folio volumes totalling around 1600 pages. Such voluminous publications were costly to produce. Printing large

16 As outlined for instance by Berndt Hamm: Was ist Frömmigkeitstheologie? Überlegungen zum 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert. In: Praxis Pietatis. Beiträge zu Theologie und Frömmigkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit. Ed. by Hans-Jörg Nieden and Marcel Nieden. Stuttgart 1999, pp. 9–45 (pp. 13–15).

17 Accordingly, the Reformation has been described as a media event; Berndt Hamm: Die Reformation als Medienereignis. In: Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie 11 (1996), pp. 137–166. The role of print in the context of the Reformation has been discussed for decades. Elizabeth Eisenstein coined the idea of "typographical fixity" in her influential The Printing Press as an Agent of Change. Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe. Vol. 1. Cambridge 1979 (repr. 2005), pp. 117–118. In her view, print was a driver in the fragmentation of Latin Christendom into national territories by standardizing the vernaculars and stabilizing the production of the administrative documents needed to enforce dynastic authority. Moreover, the "preservative powers of print" gave permanence to the Renaissance and for the Reformation it "provided the stroke of magic by which an obscure theologian in Wittenberg managed to shake Saint Peter's throne"; ibid., pp. 181–182; 310. Against the fixity of print, Adrian Johns has argued that rather than a monolithic print culture with fixity as an inherent quality there were different print cultures according to particular historical contexts; The Nature of the Book. Print and Knowledge in the Making. Chicago, IL 1998, pp. 19–20. As he explains, the "first book reputed to have been printed without any errors appeared only in 1760. Before then, variety was the rule, even within single editions", ibid., p. 31. In the field of Reformation history, Bernd Moeller argued in 1979 that without the advent of printing, the Reformation would not have been possible. He pointedly summarized his argument in the thesis "Ohne Buchdruck keine Reformation"; Stadt und Buch. Bemerkungen zur Struktur der reformatorischen Bewegung in Deutschland. In: Stadtbürgertum und Adel in der Reformation: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der Reformation in England und Deutschland. Ed. by Wolfgang J. Mommsen. Stuttgart 1979 (Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Historischen Instituts London 5), pp. 25–39 (p. 30). A paradigmatic criticism of his view can be found in the work of Robert W. Scriber who argues that due to low literacy, oral and visual culture was more important than written culture; Robert Scribner: For the Sake of the Simple Folk. Popular propaganda for the German People. Cambridge 1981 (Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture 2), p. 7.

18 One indication of the perennial popularity of the Book of Psalms can be found in the number of commentaries published on the book. Gerald Hobbs counts at least ninety authors who wrote commentaries on the Psalms in the sixteenth century; Hobbs, R. Gerald: Biblical Commentaries. In: The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation. Ed. by Hans J. Hillebrand. Vol. 1. Oxford, New York 1996, pp. 167–171 (p. 168). In comparison Timothy George mentions seventy commentaries on Paul's Letter to the Romans in the same period; General Introduction. In: Psalms 1–72. Ed. by Herman J. Selderhuis. Downers Grove, IL 2015 (Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament 7), pp. xxi–xliv (p. xxix).

books meant taking on a large investment and being prepared to hold stock for a long time before an edition sold out. Moreover, they required considerable print runs to be a sustainable business for the printer.[19] There is not much evidence to support strong claims about the exact size of print runs in the sixteenth century,[20] but common estimations range between 500 and 1,000 copies.[21] In the middle of the sixteenth century, press operators were required to produce around 3,000 impressions in a day, that is 1,500 sheets of paper front and back.[22] A full day's work at a single press would produce enough pages for roughly three or four copies of the first edition of the *Psalterbuch*. To produce a 500 copy print run of its three volumes, the *Psalterbuch* would occupy a single press for around five months.

The printed catalogues from the book fairs in Frankfurt indicate that folio volumes such as the *Psalterbuch* were rare.[23] The printing of Selnecker's first edition of the *Psalterbuch* coincides with the earliest catalogue from Fall 1564, published by the bookseller Georg Willer (d. 1631). In this catalogue just two folio volumes were advertised out of over thirty German Protestant publications.[24] Of course, the catalogues offer only a very partial view of the book market.[25] The *Psalterbuch*, for instance, was not advertised until 1593.[26] A search in the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC), however, supports the sense of a general trend. Between 1563 and 1623 it currently lists 2,877 folio editions in German printed in the German territories. In comparison it has 10,772 octavo editions and no less than 28,822 quarto editions, around ten times as many as the

19 Ann M. Blair: Too Much to Know. Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age. New Haven, CT 2010, p. 52.

20 Joseph A. Dane: The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method. Toronto 2003 (Studies in Book and Print Culture), pp. 32–35.

21 Blair (n. 19), p. 52.

22 Jean-François Gilmont: Printers by the Rules. In: The Library 6.2 (1980), pp. 129–155 (pp. 143–144).

23 As Arthur der Weduwen, Andrew Pettegree and Graeme Kemp point out, these catalogues provide a corrective to the holdings of research libraries which are "not necessarily representative of the whole population of printed matter and, in consequence, overstate their contemporary importance in early modern Europe"; Arthur der Weduwen, Andrew Pettegree and Graeme Kemp: Book Trade Catalogue: From Bookselling Tool to Book Historical Source. In: Book Trade Catalogues in Early Modern Europe. Ed. by Arthur der Weduwen, Andrew Pettegree and Graeme Kemp. Leiden 2021 (Library of the Written Word 93), p. 6.

24 Bernhard Fabian (ed.): Die Messkataloge Georg Willers. Vol. 1. Hildesheim, New York 1972 (Die Messkataloge des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts 1), p. 16.

25 The ensuing catalogues already add nuance to the picture. In the Spring of 1565, one folio volume is advertised among of eighty-one German publications by Protestant theologians, but in the Fall of 1565, no less than seven folios are advertised among forty publications; Fabian: Die Messkataloge Georg Willers 1 (n. 24), pp. 29–32, 67–69.

26 Bernhard Fabian (ed.): Die Messkataloge Georg Willers. Vol. 5. Hildesheim, New York 2001 (Die Messkataloge des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts 5), pp. 147–148.

folio editions.[27] There were many interpretations of the Book of Psalms, but few as bulky as the *Psalterbuch*.

Secondly, the composite character of the *Psalterbuch* attracts attention. It is a complex object of study because its apparent unity is destabilized not only by its many editions, but also its content. The editions have different dedications and illustrations, and along with the continual revision of the work, material such as prayers, an index and, after his death in 1592, a funeral sermon for Selnecker is included. To further complicate its status as one coherent work, Selnecker employs a variety of literary genres and speaks in a range of voices in it.[28] The greater part of the *Psalterbuch* consists of verse-by-verse homiletic interpretations of each Psalm, but they are continually interspersed by prayers, poems, hymns, and versifications of Psalms, and throughout the commentary, Selnecker ventures into various forms of catechetical material.[29]

This alerts us to the fact that sixteenth-century biblical interpretation came in wide range of forms, which makes it difficult to treat exegetical developments in generalized accounts.[30] The preoccupation of post-Reformation theologians with biblical exegesis in general and the Psalms in particular has not yet received the

27 USTC with the filters: "Germany"; "German"; "1563–1623" (accessed 30 June 2023).

28 In this it was not unique either. Timothy Wengert, for instance, has characterized Melanchthon's In Psalmos aliquot Davidos (VD16 M3468) as a "peculiar smattering of psalm translations [...], versification [...] and commentary"; The Biblical Commentaries of Philipp Melanchthon. In: Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560) and the Commentary. Ed. by Timothy Wengert and M. Patrick Graham. Sheffield 1997, pp. 106–148 (p. 119).

29 On these genres, see especially Ferdinand van Ingen and Cornelia Niekus Moore (eds.): Gebetsliteratur der frühen Neuzeit als Hausfrömmigkeit. Funktionen und Formen in Deutschland und den Niederlanden. Wiesbaden 2001 (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 92); Lee Palmer Wandel: Reading Catechisms, Teaching Religion. Leiden 2016 (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 250/11); Robert James Bast: Honor Your Fathers: Catechisms and the Emergence of a Patriarchal Ideology in Germany 1400–1600. Leiden 1997 (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions 63); John M. Frymire: The Primacy of the Postils: Catholics, Protestants, and the Dissemination of Ideas in Early Modern Germany. Leiden 2009 (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions 147); Christopher Boyd Brown: Singing the Gospel. Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation. Cambridge, MA 2005.

30 For instance, Kenneth Hagen has explained how the term 'commentarius' implies nothing more than a work on scripture; see his What Did the Term 'Commentarius' Mean to Sixteenth-Century Theologians? In: Théorie et pratique de l'exégèse. Actes du Troisième Collogue International sur l'Histoire de l'Exégèse Biblique au XVIe siècle. Ed. by Irena Backus and Francis M. Higman. Geneva 1990 (Etudes de Philologie et d'Histoire 43), pp. 13–38 (p. 15). Ernst Koch notes the diversity specifically in relation to interpretations of the Psalms; Schöne Gottesdienste. Beobachtungen an Psalmenauslegungen des 17. Jahrhunderts". In: Hermeneutica Sacra. Studien zur Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. Ed. by Torbjörn Johansson, Robert Kolb, and Johann Anselm Steiger. Göttingen 2010 (Historia Hermeneutica 9), pp. 147–259 (p. 248).

scholarly attention it deserves.[31] Scholarship has long tended to privilege the systematic treatises of university theologians, while devotional and practical genres such as sermons, prayerbooks, and catechisms have largely been relegated to the margins of scholarship.[32] As a result, the practice of interpretation has remained in the shadow of its theoretical articulation, and what Anselm Steiger and Kenneth Appold have noted about the seventeenth century also holds true for the period when the *Psalterbuch* was published: the practical application of principles of Lutheran exegesis remains underexplored.[33] Selnecker's *Psalterbuch* offers a rich source for the investigation of sixteenth-century Lutheran Psalm interpretation in practice. This study builds on the growing body of scholarship dedicated to this theme and contributes to this line of scholarly conversation by focusing on a single work in its different editions.

It has always been difficult to pin down exactly how many editions and print runs there were of Selnecker's *Psalterbuch.* Even in the 1623 edition, the title page and the ensuing dedication give different numbers: the former counts five editions, while in the latter Nicolai Selnecker (1574–1619) states that his father's

31 Important work has been done. See for example Johann Anselm Steiger: Philologia Sacra. Zur Exegese der Heiligen Schrift im Protestantismus des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts. Neukirchen-Vluyn 2011 (Biblisch-Theologische Studien 117). See also the chapter on the hermeneutics of Selnecker's contemporaries, Matthias Flacius Illyricus (1520–1575) and Martin Chemnitz (1522–1586); Bernt T. Oftestad: Further Development of Reformation Hermeneutics. In: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of its Interpretation. Vol. 2. Ed. by Magne Sæbø. Göttingen 2008, pp. 602–616. For somewhat older literature, see Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson (eds.): Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation. Essays Presented to David C. Steinmetz in Honor of His Sixtieth Birthday. Grand Rapids, MI, 1996; and David C. Steinmetz (ed.): The Bible in the Sixteenth Century. Durham, NC 1990 (Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies 11).

32 Robert Kolb: Introduction. In: Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550–1675. Ed. by Robert Kolb. Leiden 2008 (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 11), pp. 1–14 (p. 9); for a broader survey that underlines the historiographical turn towards lived religion, contrasting it with the scholarly tradition up to the 1980s that prioritized 'great thinkers' and their texts, see Kaspar Von Greyerz: Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800. Trans. by Thomas Dunlap. New York 2007, pp. 3–24 (pp. 17–18).

33 Kenneth Appold encourages future studies of "die philologischen Arbeiten, die Kommentare, Disputationsreihen sowie Beispiele der 'angewandten' Exegese in den Predigten, Meditationen und erbaulichen Schriften"; Orthodoxie als Konsensbildung. Das theologische Disputationswesen an der Universität Wittenberg zwischen 1570 und 1710. Tübingen 2004 (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 127), p. 123 n. 148. Along similar lines, Johann Anselm Steiger explains that while Orthodox dogmatics have seen growing interest, "the broad field of the history of scriptural exegesis in the age of Orthodoxy remains almost completely untouched"; Johann Anselm Steiger: The Development of the Reformation Legacy: Hermeneutics and Interpretation of the Sacred Scripture in the Age of Orthodoxy. In: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of its Interpretation. Vol. 2. Ed. by Magne Sæbø. Göttingen 2008, 691–757 (p. 699).

work is now being printed for the third time.[34] In the eighteenth century Karl Goedeke counted a total of nine editions, but he omitted the six-volume edition printed in Dresden in 1585, and he also cites two editions, one from 1589 and another from 1621, that I have been unable to track down in any library or early modern book fair catalogue.[35]

34 The title page states: "Jtzo aber auffs newe [...] zum fünfften mal in Druck verfertiget"; Nikolaus Selnecker: Der Gantze Psalter Davids/ Zu Trost vnd Vnterricht frommen Christen außgeleget Durch NICOLAUM SELNECCERUM, Der H. Schrifft Doctorn, vnd gewesenen Superintendenten zu Leipzig/ Vom Autore, noch für seinem Seligen Ende selbst vnersehen/ gebessert vnd gemehret/ vnd mit sonderlichen schönen Gebetlein auff ein jeden Psalm fleissig zugerichtet/ Jtzo aber auffs newe mit einer Vorrede Herrn Nicolai Selnecceri, gewesenen Vesperpredigers zu S. Thomas in Leipzig/ neben der Leichpredigt des Autroris zum fünfften mal in Druck verfertiget. Leipzig 1623. Copy consulted: Stadtbibliothek Braunschweig, shelfmark C 218 Z. S4. In the dedication, Nicolai writes: "Also sind viel frommer Hertzen erfunden/ welche/ [...] haben sie bey mir instendig angelaget dran zu seyn/ daß der gross Psalter Selnecceri wiederumb möchte auffgeleget vnd publiciret/ vnd auffs newe/ vnd zwar zum dritten mal dem Druck vntergeben werden"; ibid. sig. [a6^{r}] "Vorrede".

35 Karl Goedeke: Grundriss zur Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung. Vol. 2. Dresden 1886; repr. Berlin 2011, §126 (p. 173). Neither of the two editions are listed in the catalogues from the Frankfurt and Leipzig book fairs from 1589 and 1621, but this is no decisive evidence against their existence as only the editions from 1593 and 1623 are advertised in the catalogues; Bernhard Fabian (ed.): Die Messkataloge Georg Willers. Vol. IV. Hildesheim, New York 1978 (Die Messkataloge des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts 4), pp. 115–231; Catalogus universalis, hoc est designatio omnium librorum, qui hisce nundinis vernalibus Francofurtensibus & Lipsiensibus anno 1621. vel novi vel emendatiores & auctiores prodierunt. Leipzig 1621; Catalogus universalis, hoc est designatio omnium librorum, qui hisce nundinis autumnalibus Francofurtensibus & Lipsiensibus anno 1621. vel novi vel emendatiores & auctiores prodierunt. Leipzig 1621. According to Goedeke, the edition from 1589 was printed in Helmstedt. Christoph Reske only lists a single printer in Helmstedt active in 1589, Jakob Lucius, who served as printer for the newly established University of Helmstedt from 1579–1597; Christoph Reske: Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet. Auf der Grundlage des gleichnamigen Werks von Josef Benzing. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag ^{2}2015 (Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen 51), p. 396. VD16 lists one publication written by Selnecker and printed by Lucius, a funeral sermon from 1592; Nikolaus Selnecker: Eine Christliche Leichpredigt/ Bey der Begrebnus des Weyland Ehrnvesten [...] Herrn Eckart Luebbern/ Buergermeistern der alten Stad Hildeßheim [...]. Helmstedt 1592, VD16 S 5482. Lucius also printed a disputation in 1598 to which Selnecker contributed material; Daniel Hofmann: Propositiones de Deo, et Christi tum persona tum officio. Helmstedt 1598, VD16 H 4184. In the context of such limited activity, an edition of the Psalterbuch from Helmstedt in 1589 seems to me unlikely, though not at all impossible. In the Psalterbuch from 1623, Nicolai Selnecker writes the first part of the dedication, but because of his death, his widow Maria Treube (1579–1629) takes over. She dates her dedication 24 March 1623; Selnecker: Der Gantze Psalter Davids (1623) (n. 34), sig. [a6^{v}]. However, her husband, Nicolai Selnecker, had already died in 1619. As other cases show, dates in dedications could be revised, for instance in the 1565 edition of the Psalterbuch, where Selnecker's original dedication from 1563 was given a new date matching the time of publication; compare Selnecker: Der gantze Psalter des Königlichen Propheten Dauids/ außgelegt/ vnd in drey Bücher getheylt. Das Erste Buch/ Nemlich/ die ersten fünffzig Psalmen/ [...] geprediget/ vnd in Druck gegeben. Nürnberg 1565, sig. [*5^{v}] and Selnecker: Das Erst Bůch (1563) (n. 2), sig. [♣5^{v}]. It is possible that