How to Preach a Protestant Sermon

A Comparison of Lutheran and Reformed Homiletics

Preaching was the central function of the Protestant minister. From the very beginning of the Reformation, proclaiming «the pure word of God» from the pulpit was the most important way of making evangelical doctrine known, and both Lutherans and Reformed redefined the functions of pastoral care to place new emphasis on preaching. Both pastors already in the parish and young men training for the ministry needed to know how to preach.

To provide the necessary guidance for these pastors, evangelical theologians produced a number of homiletics texts that prescribed how to write a Protestant sermon. Most of these preaching manuals were written by Lutherans. With only a few exceptions, Reformed theologians did not begin to produce manuals on preaching until the end of the sixteenth century. An examination of these manuals is especially helpful for understanding the confessional biases associated with the form of the sermon over the course of the sixteenth century. In the years after the Reformation, Lutheran and Reformed theologians adopted different models for their own preaching, the classical oration for the Lutherans and the patristic homily for the Reformed. The differences between these models were small enough that they were submerged over the third quarter of the sixteenth century, but they resurfaced in the 1580s and only increased over the next few decades. These differences in turn help explain why there are so few published Reformed sermons, in contrast to the abundance of Lutheran sermons from the latter sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Lutheran Homiletics

It is traditional – but also somewhat misguided – to begin any account of Lutheran preaching in the sixteenth century with a discussion of Martin Luther.

Luther's unique position as the initiator of the evangelical movement, as well as the ready availability of his sermons in the postils that were published already in the 1520s, meant that he would influence the development of preaching in Germany. But Luther never explicitly described how one should go about writing a sermon, and his preaching was a hard act to follow. Fairly early in his career Luther abandoned the style of the scholastic or thematic sermon taught within the medieval *ars praedicandi* tradition. His own sermons were *sui generis*, both more closely based on Scripture and freer in structure than the medieval thematic sermon. Luther applied the methods of humanist philology to explain the text of Scripture, and his sermons reflected his knowledge of Quintilian, but in comparison to later Lutheran preaching his sermons were little influenced by humanist fascination with classical rhetoric.[1] Writing in the early seventeenth century, the Lutheran homileticist Christopher Schleupner was reduced to describing Luther's preaching as an example of «the heroic method», in which the heavenly word was given to gifted doctors, neglecting other rules of dialectic and rhetoric. As Schleupner acknowledged, Luther's style of preaching was inimitable and simply could not be taught.[2]

The task of formulating a practical method of preaching fell to Philipp Melanchthon, who adapted the principles of classical rhetoric and humanist dialectic to evangelical preaching. Already in the first edition of his rhetoric text of 1519 Melanchthon included a brief discussion of how to write a sermon. He developed and refined his approach to preaching over the next decade, and his almost paint-by-number approach was further disseminated by friends and students who wrote their own practical «how-to» manuals for preachers.[3]

Melanchthon's homiletic theory has been examined elsewhere and there is no need to describe it fully here, but in brief, Melanchthon introduced two concepts from classical rhetoric that would become a staple of Lutheran preaching. First, Melanchthon applied the structure of a classical oration to sermons. Like an oration, a sermon was to have six parts: the exordium or introduction, the narration, the proposition and division into parts, the confir-

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[1]   J.W. O'Malley: Luther the Preacher, in: G. Dünnhaupt (ed.): The Martin Luther Quincentennial, Detroit 1984, 3-16; B. Kreitzer (ed.): The Lutheran Sermon, in: L. Taylor: Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period (History of the Sermon 2) Leiden 2001, 35-63.

[2]   Christopher Schleupner: *Tractatus de quadruplici Methodo Concionandi ...*, Leipzig 1608, 5-28.

[3]   U. Schnell: Die homiletische Theorie Philipp Melanchthons (AGTL 20), Berlin 1968; J.W. O'Malley: Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching, in: J.J. Murphy (ed.): Renaissance Eloquence. Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric, Berkeley 1983, 238-52.

mation, the refutation, and the peroration or conclusion. Second, to the traditional three genera or categories of oratory he introduced a fourth genus, the dialectic or didactic sermon, appropriate for teaching doctrine.[4] Sermons within this genus were organized according to the principles of topical dialectic, in that they first defined a term or theological commonplace drawn from the Scripture text, explained it by dividing it into parts, and then elaborated on that definition by discussing its causes. Thus a sermon on «the law» would define the law, distinguish between civil/human law and divine law, and then discuss the efficient, material, formal and final causes of divine law. Focusing on one or two central ideas, this method of sermon preparation was particularly suited to sermons based on the traditional Sunday Gospel text, for a preacher could fairly easily identify one or more *loci* from the narrative account of Christ's life.

Melanchthon's reputation and the widespread adoption of his textbooks for both rhetoric and dialectic meant that the topical style he introduced would only become more firmly anchored over time. There were various elaborations and developments of Melanchthon's basic schema, particularly in Andreas Hyperius' *On Fashioning sacred oratory*, but in essence the topical or loci method of preaching became the characteristic form taught by Lutheran homileticists through the sixteenth century.[5] Melanchthon's new *genus didascalicum* provided the standard model for the Lutheran sermon. In addition to the basic principles of dialectic, Lutheran homileticists also advocated using the tools of classical rhetoric for the exegesis of the Scripture text on which the sermon was to be based: for instance, the preacher was to identify the goal of the pericope with one of the (now four) rhetorical genera. Equally important, the preacher had to be skilled in identifying the theological common-

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4   The traditional genera were demonstrative (praising or blaming persons, things, or events), deliberative (to persuade or dissuade), and iudiciale (to accuse or defend someone in court).

5   Andreas Hyperius: *De formandis concionibus sacris*, Marburg 1553. Melanchthon's approach of adapting classical oratory to preaching was followed, with some important modifications and elaborations, by Niels Hemmingsen: *De Methodis Libri Duo*, Wittenberg 1559 (the second book of which concerns preaching), Lucas Bacmeister: *De modo concionandi*, Rostock 1570, and Andreas Pancratius: *Methodus Concionandi*, Wittenberg 1574. For more detailed discussion of these and later Lutheran works, see M. Schian: Die Homiletik des Andreas Hyperius. Ihre wissenschaftliche Bedeutung und ihr praktischer Wert, ZPrTh 18 (1896) 298-324; 19 (1897) 26-66.120-149; and M. Schian: Die lutherische Homiletik in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts, ThStKr 2 (1899) 62-94. The replacement of *praedicandi* with *concionandi*, which alluded to a public address more generally, was first made by Erasmus and reflects the impact of classical rhetoric on preaching; J.W. O'Malley: Erasmus and the History of Sacred Rhetoric: The Ecclesiastes of 1535, Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook 5 (1985) 1-29.

places contained in the text and which would be the basis of the sermon.[6] Drawing on Luther's own emphasis on the need for personal experiential piety, many of these homiletics texts also emphasized the role of prayer and meditation when studying the Scripture text.[7]

Reformed Homiletics

The roots of Reformed preaching lay elsewhere, in the *lectio continua* approach to preaching on the Scripture text introduced by Zwingli in Zurich, as well as in the model of the patristic homily. These two approaches to Scripture went hand in hand: just as the *lectio continua* followed the entire text of a book from beginning to end, the homily was a loose exposition of the sermon text under consideration, often verse by verse – a running commentary with practical application.[8] The two approaches to Scripture were even more closely associated through the Zurich *Prophezei*, in which discussion of the Old Testament text in both the original Hebrew and the Greek of the Septuagint was followed by a German sermon.[9] The introduction of practices similar to the *Prophezei* in Basel and Bern meant that the close association of lecture, commentary and sermon would permeate preaching in the Swiss churches. The esteem that the Swiss reformers had for the writings of the church fathers was another contributing factor to this development. Johannes Oecolampadius, for instance, translated and published the sermons of both Gregory Nazianzus and John Chrysostom before becoming the leader of the evangelical faction in Basel, and their influence is reflected in his own sermons.[10] In Geneva, Jean Calvin followed the same expository model for

[6]   See, for instance, Lucas Osiander: *De ratione Concionandi*, Wittenberg 1602, 7-34 (first published in 1582); Jacob Andreae: *Methodus Concionandi*, Wittenberg 1595, 31-54.

[7]   Bacmeister: *De modo concionandi* (note 5), 25r-29v; Andreae: *Methodus Concionandi* (note 6), 16-20. On the impact of Luther's view of the importance of personal spiritual experience, and especially «oratio, meditatio, tentatio», see M. Nieden: Anfechtung als Thema lutherischer Anweisungsschriften zum Theologiestudium, in: H.-J. Nieden, M. Nieden (ed.): Praxis Pietatis. Beiträge zu Theologie und Frömmigkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit, FS Wolfgang Sommer, Stuttgart 1999, 83-102; M. Nieden: Wittenberger Anweisungen zum Theologie-Studium, in: I. Dingel, G. Wartenberg (ed.): Die Theologische Fakultät Wittenberg 1502 bis 1602. Beiträge zur 500. Wiederkehr des Gründungsjahres der Leucorea (Leucorea-Studien zur Geschichte der Reformation und der Lutherischen Orthodoxie), Leipzig 2002, 133-153.

[8]   O'Malley: Erasmus and the History of Sacred Rhetoric (note 5).

[9]   F. Büsser: Reformierte Erziehung in Theorie und Praxis, in: idem: Wurzeln der Reformation in Zürich. Zum 500. Geburtstag des Reformators Huldrych Zwingli, Leiden 1985, 199-216.

[10] H.O. Old: The Homiletics of John Oecolampadius and the Sermons of the Greek

preaching as his German-speaking counterparts in the Swiss Confederation, and his supporters in Geneva were quite critical of the topical style of preaching advocated by Melanchthon.[11] The expository method preferred by the first generation of Zwinglian and Calvinist preachers was particularly well suited to explanation of doctrinal passages, where the preacher expounded on the theological arguments presented, for instance, by St. Paul in his epistles.

There was thus from the first years of the Reformation the possibility that the form of preaching could become confessionally divisive. Through the middle of the century, though, the differences remained minor. The German-speaking Swiss played a mediating role between homiletic developments in the Empire and the preference of the Francophone reformers for expository preaching. Although Heinrich Bullinger recognized that there were prejudices against topical preaching in Zurich in the 1530s, he did not hesitate to use the topical style for his *Decades*, published between 1549-51.[12] Published sermons and unpublished sermon outlines indicate that at least some of Basel's preachers had adopted the topical style of preaching by the early 1570s. These may have been influenced by the ready availability of homiletics texts published in the city that advocated the topical style, from the collection of very early brief homiletic advice published as *Formulas on the Art of Public Speaking* in 1540 to the three editions of Hyperius' homiletics text published between 1563-1579.[13]

In fact, there was at least one attempt to combine the advantages of both the topical and the expository methods of preaching. Conrad Clauser, a schoolmaster who taught first in Zurich, then in Brugg, published his *Surefire Method of Public Speaking and Preaching* in 1555. In this work he advocated the use of *loci communes* in one's preaching – citing as his authorities the example of the prophets, the apostles, and Christ himself. Clauser recognized that he

Fathers, in: Y. Congar et al. (ed.): Communio sanctorum, Mélanges offerts à Jean-Jacques von Allemen, Geneva 1982, 239-250.

[11] Th.H.L. Parker: Calvin's Preaching, Louisville 1992, 79-92; O. Millet: Sermon sur la résurrection. Quelques remarques sur l'homilétique de Calvin, BSHPF 134 (1988) 683-692.

[12] Heinrich Bullinger: Das Amt des Propheten 1532, in: idem: Schriften 1, ed. E. Campi et al., Zurich 2004, 21-23; P. Opitz: Bullinger's Decades. Instruction in Faith and Conduct, in: B. Gordon, E. Campi (ed.): Architect of Reformation. An Introduction to Heinrich Bullinger, 1504-1575 (Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought), Grand Rapids 2004, 101-116.

[13] The *de arte concionandi Formulae* (Basel 1540) included Johannes Reuchlin's *Liber congestorum de arte praedicandi*, Melanchthon's *De officiis concionatoris* and his *Brevis Discendae Theologiae ratio*, Johannes Aepinus' *De sacris concionibus formandis compendiaria formula*, and the anonymous *Ratio brevis sacrarum concionum tractandarum, a quodam docto & pio Rhapsodo, a Philippi Melanchthonis familiari, congesta* attributed to Veit Dietrich.

might be criticized for not advising his readers to stick to the text of Scripture, but he responded that his method for preaching followed a fixed order that included both an explanation of the Scripture reading and the discussion of the appropriate loci.[14] Clauser identified the explanation of the text with narration, which could itself be either historical or philosophical. His description of philosophical narration, in turn, was similar to Melanchthon's use of elementary dialectic for preaching: it consisted of definition, division, and discussion according to the four causes. Once the text had been explained, the preacher could then turn to the relevant locus drawn from the text, whether in praise or blame, as in a demonstrative oration, or exhortation for or against, as in a deliberative oration.[15]

Clauser's text was unique among published homiletics texts in its attempt to combine the expository approach to preaching favored by the Swiss with the principles of classical rhetoric and humanist dialectic that were the core of instruction in the arts faculty of the universities and of the newly-founded academies in Switzerland.[16] It had little impact in the Empire, though, where the topical method was firmly established. Moreover, by the 1580s confessional animosities had entered the picture, and Lutheran homileticists were increasingly suspicious of anything that might bear the taint of «heresy». In the homiletics text he first published in 1582, the Stuttgart court preacher Lucas Osiander warned his readers to be careful in choosing commentaries to help them understand the Scripture text, and he criticized Calvin's exegesis of specific Scripture passages, calling it inept, impious, and opening the door to Arianism.[17] Such accusations were not likely to increase the appeal of Osiander's book among Reformed preachers.

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[14] *Certa Declamandi et concionandi Methodus, ex probatiss. Graecis & Latinis autoribus, tam profanis quam sacris desumpta*, Basel 1555, a4r-v: «Haud me fugit, complures fore qui oggannient, me non exponere textum, dum non tumultuarie quicquid in buccam venerit eiaculor: quasi vero non satius sit tenere modum, quid primo, quid deinde, quid postremo sit dicendum, & ea omnia textui esse connexa, quam temere et quasi illotis manibus irruere in interpretationem textus. Ut in aedificijs primo iaciuntur fundamenta, deinde ponuntur tabulata, postremo imponitur aedificio fastigium: ita oratio habet principium, medium et finem. Initium sumendum est, sicuti in Methodo docuimus: medium occupat explanationem lectionis propositae, quasi colophon; deinde accedit locus communis.» On Clauser see P. Frei: Conradus Clauserus Tigurinus (ca. 1515-1567) (Neujahrsblatt der Gelehrten Gesellschaft in Zürich), Zurich 1997, 160.

[15] Clauser: *Certa ... concionandi Methodus* (note 14), 13-17.

[16] An undated manuscript preserved in Grenoble and attributed to Beza contains in very brief form the same idea that one should move from explanation of the text to discussion of a locus drawn from it; reprinted in: O. Fatio: Méthode et théologie. Lambert Daneau et les débuts de la scholastique réformée (Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance 147), Geneva 1976, 119*-121*.

[17] Lucas Osiander: *De Ratione Concionandi*, Wittenberg 1584, 17-23. Osiander specifi-

In fact, if Lambert Daneau's little book on exegesis and preaching is any guide, by this time Reformed preaching was developing in a different direction. Daneau, a French pastor who received his training and taught in Geneva as well as (briefly) in the Netherlands, published his *Method of Handling Holy Scripture usefully and intelligently in both Public Lectures and in Preaching* in 1579.[18] The title reflects the continuing close connection between lectures and sermons within the Reformed tradition. In his preface Daneau expanded on the similarity of the two genres, pointing to the shared task of doctors and pastors to teach God's word; the chief difference between the two offices was that the pastor was to go beyond the doctor in exhorting, rebuking and consoling his hearers. Similarly, after describing his method of handling Scripture common to lectures and sermons, Daneau pointed out that the pastor had two further tasks, to exhort his hearers regarding every point of doctrine so that they would live piously, and to explain Scripture in such a way that his audience would be able to understand it and to believe its contents.[19]

Daneau's description of his method, as well as his sample lectures/sermons reveal an important shift in how Scripture was being treated by contemporary Reformed preachers. Instead of covering a passage of several verses, Daneau looked at one verse at a time: thus his three sample sermons were based on Rom 1,17, Gal 3,13, and Eph 3,1.[20] The practice of slowing the pace at which the preacher proceeded through a book of Scripture had the practical result of virtually ending the older form of homily or expository sermon. No longer was the pastor discussing the larger context or explaining a train of thought. Instead, he now used the single verse as a springboard to expound on the theological truth he believed was contained in the verse. As Daneau explained, each verse was to be described first in terms of its rhetorical function (such as statement of argument, definition, explication or summary), then of its dialectic function or manner of argumentation (whether from authority, on the basis of distinction and division, or using any of the other topics of dialectical invention: adjuncts, antecedents, consequences, etc.). This was preparatory to the discussion of the *locus theologicus* or substance of what was taught in that

cally criticized Calvin's interpretation of Gen 3, Joh 10, and Gal 3 as expounded in his commentaries on these books.

18 I have consulted the second edition of this work, Lambert Daneau: *Methodus Sacrae Scripturae in publicis tum praelectionibus tum concionibus utiliter atque intelligenter tractandi*, Geneva 1581, available on the website of the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, http://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=drucke/alv-aa-161-8f-1.

19 Daneau: *Methodus Sacrae Scripturae* (note 18), 34.

20 There is a similar development in the lectures and sermons of Johann Jacob Grynaeus, theology professor in Basel and (from 1586) Antistes of the city's church; A.N. Burnett: Teaching the Reformation: Ministers and Their Message in Basel, 1529-1629 (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology) Oxford 2006, 137-139.183.

verse. Daneau listed ten precepts to follow in explaining the doctrine drawn from the text, including comparison with other portions of Scripture, refutation of heresies drawn from «papist doctrines», and, if the text gave opportunity, discussion of the differences between the regenerate and unregenerate.[21]

As this brief summary suggests, Daneau's *Method* focused on scriptural exegesis rather than on sermon composition. It required of its reader a deeper knowledge of both rhetoric and dialectic than was expected in contemporary Lutheran homiletics manuals, and it applied those disciplines to exegesis in a very different way than Melanchthon had.[22] Like the Lutherans, Daneau made the discussion of a theological locus the heart of his lesson, but he did not place discussion of that locus in the form of a classical oration, and in fact he seemed to assume that exegesis and preaching or teaching were essentially the same task. Daneau's method also encouraged the idea that each verse contained its own theological locus that was to be explained to one's audience whether in the lecture hall or in church.

These assumptions would show up even more clearly in the number of homiletics texts written by Reformed theologians at the turn of the century. These works also reflected another important development that had come to distinguish many Reformed theologians from their Lutheran counterparts: the widespread adoption of Ramist dialectic. One of the fundamental claims made by Peter Ramus and his followers was that the same essential method of definition and division by way of dichotomies was useful for both analysis and genesis, for the study of texts to determine their meaning and the organization and composition of texts to convey an idea. This approach fit quite naturally with the mindset reflected in Daneau's treatise that there was little difference between exegesis of Scripture and lecturing or preaching on its contents.

The English Puritan William Perkins published the first of these Reformed homiletics texts, his *Prophetic treatise, or on the sole method of sacred oratory* in 1592; the treatise was published in both Hanau and Basel a decade later. The first Reformed theologian on the Continent to publish a detailed homiletics text was the Herborn theologian Wilhelm Zepper, whose *Art of Giving and Hearing Sermons* appeared in 1598. The Heidelberg theologian Bartholomaeus Keckermann published his own work on *Ecclesiastical Rhetoric* in 1600, the professor of theology at Lausanne, Guillaume Le Buc (Bucanus) published his *Ecclesiastes* in 1602, and Amandus Polanus, who held the chair in Old Testament at Basel, published his *Institution On the Method of Sacred Orations* two years later. The Heidelberg theologian Abraham Scultetus published the last

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21   Daneau: *Methodus Sacrae Scripturae* (note 18), 12-30.
22   Cf. A.N. Burnett: The Educational Roots of Reformed Scholasticism: Dialectic and Scriptural Exegesis in the Sixteenth Century, Dutch Review of Church History 84 (2004) 299-318.

of this spate of Reformed homiletics texts, his *Practical Axioms for Preaching*, in 1610.[23] All of these works except that of Zepper were not only organized to a greater or lesser degree according to Ramist dichotomies, but they also prescribed Ramist procedures for both exegesis and sermon composition, and Zepper often lapsed into dichotomies in his discussion of preaching.

All of these homileticists assumed that their readers were well versed in classical oratory, and they adapted its principles to their own prescriptions for sermon composition. The sermon was to have an exordium and *propositio* or statement of a theme, which was to be taken directly from the Scripture text rather than from a theological locus – an explicit rejection of the approach taught by Lutheran homileticists.[24] With regard to the body of the sermon, the more traditional *confirmatio* and *refutatio* were reduced to components of the exegesis or explication of the text, which was followed by the application of that text to the hearers. This application could be either doctrinal or practical. This method was also used in theology lectures. In his published commentaries on several books of the Bible, Polanus followed the same procedure of first discussing philological problems arising from the text, then explaining the text's meaning, and finally listing several applications that could be drawn from the text. The identification of the two genres of lecture and sermon could go even further: the examples that Polanus included in his homiletics texts were actually theology lectures he had given to his students rather than sermons preached before a congregation.[25]

Comparisons

Rather than follow the development of confessionalized homiletic into the seventeenth century, I will conclude this survey of sixteenth century developments by suggesting some implications of this study for the comparative study of Protestant preaching. First, Lutheran homileticists made a greater distinction between exegesis and sermon composition than their Reformed counterparts did. For the Reformed, there seemed to be little difference be-

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[23] William Perkins: *Prophetica sive de sacra et unica concinandi ratione tractatus*, Cambridge 1592; Wilhelm Zepper: *Ars Habendi et Audiendi Conciones Sacras*, Siegen 1598; Bartholomaeus Keckermann: *Rhetoricae Ecclesiasticae, sive artis formandi et habendi conciones sacras. Libro Duo: methodice adornati per praecepta et explicationes*, Hanau 1600; Guillaume Le Buc: *Ecclesiastes: seu, de formandis sacris concionibus, in duos Tractatus tributus: quorum priore, de Methodo, posteriore de Ornatu Concionum agitur*, Geneva 1608; *Amandi Polani a Polansdorf de Concionum sacrarum Methodo institutio, in gratiam tyronum ministerij Ecclesiastici delineata*, Basel 1604; Abraham Scultetus: *Axiomata Concionandi Practica*, Heidelberg 1610.

[24] Zepper: *Ars Habendi* (note 23), 84-87; Scultetus: *Axiomata* (note 23), no. 8.

[25] Burnett: Teaching the Reformation (note 20), chaps. 6 and 7.

tween exegesis and oral presentation, whether as lecture or as sermon. As a consequence, Reformed preachers were more likely to publish their sermons, or homilies, as biblical commentaries than as vernacular sermons. Scholars looking for Reformed sermons need to keep this distinction in mind.

Second, both groups applied the tools of dialectic and rhetoric to homiletics, but they did so in different ways. Through the sixteenth century, most Lutheran homileticists did not go much beyond the basic steps of definition, division, and causality in applying dialectic either to exegesis or to sermon composition, and they placed the task of writing a sermon firmly within the discipline of rhetoric. By 1580, however, the Reformed were more deliberate in applying more advanced principles of dialectic to exegesis. Although they could not escape the influence of their training in classical rhetoric, they were much less tied to its precepts when it came to writing a sermon. The influence of Ramism only emphasized this preference for dialectic, since Ramus moved the two most important «duties» of an orator – invention and disposition – out of rhetoric and into dialectic.[26] This in turn had further implications for Reformed preaching in emphasizing the intellectual rather than the affective component of public address – and, to the modern mind at least, made them more boring than Lutheran sermons.

Third, both sides were aware of these differences in their approach to preaching, regarding their own method as superior and finding faults with the method taught by the other party. Zepper, for instance, described the two different approaches to preaching but preferred exegetical sermons based on the Scripture text to the «methodical» approach in which loci drawn from Scripture were the basis of the sermon. Likewise he criticized the proliferation of postils: many of them were of dubious merit, and even the ones that were doctrinally sound might lead those who read them at home to neglect public worship and to scorn the ministry.[27] Lutheran homileticists also condemned pastors who put no effort into sermon preparation but were content simply to read from a postil, but they defended the practice of preaching on the traditional Sunday gospel lessons as a means of better instructing the common people.[28]

In this essay, I have stressed the differences between the two styles, but there were certainly similarities as well. The Lutherans were as concerned about applying the teaching of Scripture to their audience as the Reformed

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[26] W.J. Ong, S.J.: Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason, Cambridge 1958, 275-277.

[27] Zepper: *Ars Habendi* (note 23), Book I, chap. 4, 43-53; Book II, chap. 6, 95-97.

[28] Aegidius Hunnius: *Methodus Concionandi*, Wittenberg 1595, 1r-4r; Daniel Cramer: τροπος παιδειας τηεολογικες, *hoc est modus tractandi textum scripturae, tam artificiosus quam popularis ...*, printed along with the second edition of Petrus Palladius: *Isagoge ad libros propheticos et apostolicos*, Wittenberg 1606, 332.

were, and the Reformed were just as convinced as the Lutherans that their hearers should know the essential points of doctrine. But the differences in terminology and methodology tended to make the differences more visible than the similarities, and they played into the confessional polemics of the turn of the century.

The practical consequences of this differential evolution in Lutheran and Reformed homiletics will only become clear with further study of Reformed sermons from the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In any case, though, we need to be alert to the importance of differences in form as well as to those of content in studying the evolution of Protestant preaching.

Abstract

The Protestant emphasis on proclaiming God's word resulted in the rejection of the medieval form of the sermon and the development of new styles of preaching. The two models used by Protestant preachers were the classical oration, endorsed by Philipp Melanchthon, and the patristic homily, which was a greater influence for the Swiss reformers. The differences between the two styles of preaching were relatively small during the first several decades after the Reformation, but by the 1580s they had become associated with Lutheran and Reformed preaching respectively. Reformed homiletics texts from the turn of the century reveal their tendency to identify the sermon with the theology lecture and their use of Ramist dialectic, two features which distinguished their sermons from those of their Lutheran counterparts.

Amy Nelson Burnett, Lincoln