

Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Unit

Theme: Lutheranism and the Nordic Welfare State

American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego 2019, A25-318

Olli-Pekka Vainio, University of Helsinki, Presiding

Responding: **Lee Palmer Wandel**, University of Wisconsin

Monday, Nov. 11th - 3:30 PM-5:00 PM

Convention Center-24B (Upper Level East)

In recent years, scholars, politicians, public commentators etc. have shown increasing interest in the Nordic countries as examples of well-functioning and prosperous societies. This has made it urgent to investigate the historical background of the “Nordic Model” in order to uncover the path dependencies shared by these countries. One common denominator determining the historical development of the Nordic societies is a long mono-confessional Lutheran influence beginning with the Reformation, a feature we want to explore with this session.

The influence of Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* on the understanding of the role played by Protestantism in the making of modern societies can hardly be overestimated. However, the fact that Weber build his argument almost solely on the Reformed countries is often overlooked. With this session, we want to introduce an alternative approach to the study of confessional influence on the development from early modern to modern societies focusing instead on Lutheranism.



The Danish-Norwegian absolute king, Christian V as legislator. Legislation during the early absolutism in Denmark to a high degree represented the King’s religious obligation and reflected the Ten Commandments in structure and content.

Bo Kristian Holm, Aarhus University

- *The Lutheran Transformation of the Ideal of the Benevolent Ruler as the Basis of Both Absolutism and Social Responsibility*

Nina Koefoed, Aarhus University

- *Authority and Responsibility in the Lutheran Household in the Early Danish Democracy and Welfare State*

Sasja Emilie Mathiasen Stopa, Aarhus University

- *Trusting God and His Earthly Masks: An Exploration into the Lutheran Roots of the Scandinavian High-Trust Culture*