The Reformation in Upper Lusatia: Pragmatism and Toleration, c. 1520-1635

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Upper Lusatia was part of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Today it is largely part of Saxony and forms the eastern-most part of Germany. There is **hardly any research** on Upper Lusatia in English, and no recent study of the Reformation there.

The **Reformation** is widely seen as one of the central events of the sixteenth century. In many cases it led to violence and religious conflict. Not in Upper Lusatia. Here the Reformation was dominated by **cross-confessional exchange and peaceful co-existence**. The Catholic Johan Leisentrit, for example, published a hymn book with many Lutheran songs.

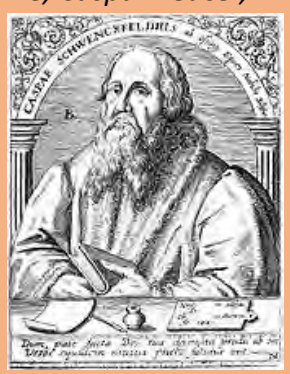
My research is based on extensive **archival work** and considers theological treatises, letters, town records and visual and architectural sources.

My research so far points to **religious negotiation** through contracts between Lutherans and Catholics and highly pragmatic arrangements for church use, for example the use of a single church by Lutherans and Catholics (*Simultankirche*).

Future research will highlight how other religious groups, for example followers of Caspar Schwenckfeld, fitted into the Reformation in Upper Lusatia. Another focus will be a comparison with other parts of East-Central Europe, such as Silesia.

One of the first maps of Saxony and Lusatia, made by Bartholomeus Scultetus in the late sixteenth century.

Faces of the Upper Lusatian Reformation (from left): Johann Leisentrit, Jakob Böhme, Caspar Peucer, Philip Melanchthon, Caspar Schwenckfeld



Select Bibliography: Joachim Bahlcke (ed.), *Die Oberlausitz im frühneuzeitlichen Mitteleuropa* (Stuttgart, 2009), Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Harvard, 2009), David Luebke, *Hometown Religion. Regimes of Coexistence in Early Modern Westphalia* (Charlottesville, 2016).