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(Review) Die katholische Konfessionalisierung

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Die katholische Konfessionalisierung: Wissenschaftliches Symposium der Gesellschaft zur Herausgabe des Corpus Catholicorum und des Vereins für Reformationgeschichte. by Wolfgang Reinhard; Heinz Schilling

Review by: Marc R. Forster

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ally did not endure. Echániz's analysis of the role of women in the military order of Santiago is a good choice to lead the volume, in part because her time frame is somewhat anterior to that of most of the other essays. She shows that the military order of Santiago, as it was originally constituted in the Middle Ages, offered women members more access to religious, economic, and social powers than convents. These unique communities of *freilas* were not cloistered, and their commanders depended directly on the master of the order and the pope rather than the local clergy. But the male governors increasingly tried to control the women, and the spaces disappeared in the systematic reform of female monasticism carried out by the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella. Perry analyzes the resistance of *moriscas*, or Muslim women who had converted to Catholicism, to assimilation by the dominant culture. She sees the *morisco* homes as bastions of resistance where women played important roles in perpetuating their Muslim religion and cultural traditions in their children. That subversive role, undertaken in domestic seclusion, was truncated by the order of the expulsion of the *moriscos* from Spain issued by Philip III in 1609. Sánchez offers yet another example of suppression. She shows how contemporary chroniclers obscured the real political influence of three powerful women at the court of Philip III by manipulating their images in print. By describing women in strictly devotional terms, they were able to absorb them into the patriarchal order and to obscure their significance in history.

The editors sought to provide order to the volume by dividing the eleven essays into three broad sections: Religion and Society, Political Realms, and Female Identity. But the difficulty of disentangling issues of faith and religious orthodoxy from politics in early modern Spain is made clear in the overlapping of the first two divisions. Some essays might have gained from being presented in pairs. For example, Perry's look at the *moriscas* (section 1) complements Sánchez's study of the political pressure exerted by three pro-Austrian female relatives of Philip III (section 2). Placed side by side, the two essays would have offered a provocative comparison of the ways in which class and religion determined how women might exert influence in Spain. Finally, I would like to point out that three of the essays collected under the last section division, Female Identity, are really about prescriptive images for women rather than any construction of female identity. Perhaps the editors did not want to repeat the title of the book in the section heading. The fourth, Vicente's look at women artisans in seventeenth-century Barcelona, is out of place in a section otherwise devoted to gender in Spanish literature. Her excellent analysis of the political and economic issues surrounding women's work, developed around a historical footnote, the "great popular riot" of women spinners in 1628, cries out for another section heading for working-class women.

Mindy Nancarrow Taggard..... University of Alabama

Die katholische Konfessionalisierung: Wissenschaftliches Symposium der Gesellschaft zur Herausgabe des Corpus Catholicorum und des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte. Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling, editors. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1995. 472 pp. DM 148.

This collection of articles comes out of a 1993 symposium held in Augsburg and organized jointly by the Catholic *Gesellschaft zur Herausgabe des Corpus Catholicorum* and the Protestant (*evangelische*) *Verein für Reformationsgeschichte*. This academic conference was the third to examine the "confessionalization thesis," following meetings on "Reformed confessionalization" and "Lutheran confessionalization." As in all such collections, the articles in this volume vary in quality and interest, but the central theme of confessionalization does

give the book a certain coherence.

The confessionalization thesis was developed independently, but almost simultaneously in 1980–81, by Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling. The proponents of this thesis (or paradigm) argue that, beginning in the middle of the sixteenth century, the Protestant and Catholic elite began a process of asserting and promoting confessional identity. Throughout Germany, states and churches worked together in this process, imposing religious uniformity, new institutions, and social discipline on an often reluctant population. Schilling and Reinhard provide extensive discussions of this thesis in this volume, and both argue for a central place for confessionalization in early modern German history. Reinhard makes the claim most strongly: “Heinz Schilling and I decided to elevate Ernst Walther Zeeden’s ‘confessional consolidation’ (*Konfessionsbildung*), now known by the richer and more complex social science term of ‘confessionalization’ (*Konfessionalisierung*), from an event in Church history to a fundamental process in the social history of the early modern period....”

Confessionalization has been used in a variety of ways in German scholarship. Reinhard argues that “... confessionalization belongs in the same historical discourse with ‘social disciplining’ and ‘modernization,’” and that it should replace absolutism as the defining concept for “social historical oriented research.” Other scholars, including many in this collection, apply confessionalization somewhat less ambitiously, using the concept to denote the development of religious identity in post-Reformation Germany.

The broad definition of confessionalization is one of its strengths. The series of three conferences indicate that, while confessional differences remain alive and well in German universities, a more ecumenical history of early modern religion is possible. The articles in this collection also reflect a growing willingness among German academics to cross the boundaries between Church history and social/political history. Furthermore, the international character of the collection (articles by sixteen Germans, four Americans, two French, and two Italians), and the impressively multilingual footnotes, most notably in the contribution by Schilling, are evidence of the opening up of German historiography of this period.

Schilling and Reinhard both recognize the need to define confessionalization more precisely. For these scholars, confessionalization is a paradigmatic, or “ideal-type” theory of historical development. As such, the theory orients, encourages, and helps focus further research. Schilling also recognizes that “if ... a research and explanatory paradigm (*Forschungs- und Erklärungsparadigma*) does not want to decay into an ideology, it is in need of self-reflection about possible oneness, deficits, ... problems.” Schilling lists a variety of such deficits, including the tendency of scholars of confessionalization to downplay both the theological and religious differences between the major confessions and the religious variety within the major confessions, especially within Catholicism. Schilling also allows that in some forms the confessionalization thesis overstates the role of the state in creating religious identity. Schilling is very committed to the idea that confessionalization is part of the modernization of early modern society, but reluctantly admits that an overemphasis on modernization and social discipline can cause blindness to “non-modern” attitudes and behaviors.

Many of the articles, using examples from Catholic Germany, expand on these criticisms. There appear to be two directions of criticism. One group of scholars come from what one might call a traditional viewpoint, arguing that Catholic reform was rarely modernizing, and that confessionalization was a religious and theological process, rather than a broad social historical development. A number of articles review the well-known process of theological clarification at the Council of Trent, and the publication and application of the council’s decrees in Catholic Germany. Martin Heckel goes in a different direction and emphasizes the “confessionalization” of constitutional conflicts in the Empire after 1555. Dietmar Willoweit,

drawing on the examples of Würzburg and Bavaria, argues that Catholic reform was essentially defensive, a reaction to Protestant gains in the early sixteenth century.

A second group of scholars examine the wider use of confessionalization. There are discussions of overseas missions (Ronnie Po-chia Hsia), suicide (H. C. Erik Midelfort), music (Marianne Danckwardt), and marriage (Heribert Smolinsky). Anne Conrad, in an interesting study of the Ursuline communities in Cologne, examines the important role of women within confessionalized Catholicism. The two French scholars (Marc Venard and Louis Châtellier) briefly examine popular religion, a subject that is insufficiently covered in the collection.

Walter Ziegler's contribution provides a final telling critique of the confessionalization thesis. Ziegler argues that, at best, confessionalization denotes an ideal process, one which rarely occurred in practice. Ziegler begins with a comparison between the early and aggressive reforms in Bavaria and the late (after 1600) confessionalization in Cologne to highlight the diversity of Catholic Germany. He goes on to argue that one part of Catholic Germany (Bavaria, Tirol, Würzburg, Lorraine, Trier) was characterized by strong states, close ties with the papacy, and malleable bishops and thus experienced an early confessionalization. Other regions (like Cologne, Bamberg, the Rhineland) experienced a different process, which Ziegler calls the "episcopal-clerical type" of confessionalization, and which he argues was not just a pale imitation of the "tridentine-roman type" reform such as occurred in Bavaria. The well-taken conclusion is that Barock (and by implication modern) German Catholicism had a variety of shadings and origins.

This collection is essential reading for all scholars of early modern Germany. It provides several interesting theoretical discussions of confessionalization, as well as a vigorous defense of the concept in Reinhard's contribution. The collection also shows the ways in which confessionalization has broadened and enlivened the study of religion in early modern Germany. Finally, several of the contributions undertake reasoned critiques of the thesis, in particular its application to Catholic Germany. It is exciting to see the ways in which a new conceptual framework can revitalize several long neglected aspects of early modern history.

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Der Franken Rom: Nürnbergs Blütezeit in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Ed. John Roger Paas. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995. 431 pp. n.p.

The subtitle will raise a few eyebrows: Nuremberg's florescence in the later seventeenth century? John Roger Paas, of course, knows early modern Nuremberg as well as anyone and has chosen his title advisedly. What baffles on first reading subsequently informs: this *Blütezeit* is distinct from the *Blütezeit* of Albrecht Dürer and the younger Holbein, Eobanus Hessus and Willibald Pirckheimer, Philip Melancthon and Hans Sachs, the glory days of the imperial free city, curator of the imperial relics, unspoken capital of the reich, regular host to the imperial reichstag. That flower withered after the Peace of Augsburg, battered by feudal wars and Counter-Reformational advances before finally being impoverished by the price of survival in the Thirty Years' War. In the past historians of high culture have too readily ignored or underrated epochs cast into shadows by the towering achievements of previous epochs. While scholarship has largely moved beyond this assumption, enough of the old bias remains in an unreflected "common sense" form; consequently, a certain amount of resistance can still be expected to a thesis like the one suggested in this title. The twenty-three articles gathered here on a wide range of cultural experience, including history, economics, art, music,