H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Heinz Schilling, ed. *Konfessioneller Fundamentalismus.* Schriften des Historischen Kollegs Series. Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2007. ix + 320 pp. EUR 49.80 (cloth), ISBN 978-3-486-58150-8.

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Published on H-HRE (May, 2009)
Commissioned by Tryntje Helfferich

Fundamentalism as Background to the Thirty Years' War?

How useful is the term "fundamentalism" for understanding the growing antagonisms and the formation of alliances both within and outside of the Holy Roman Empire in the period leading up to the Thirty Years' War? This is the question that underlay the colloquium held in 2005 whose papers are contained in this volume. The question, as Heinz Schilling points out in his introduction and as becomes apparent from the essays themselves, is not so easily answered, not only because there is no clear definition of "fundamentalism," but also because of significant variations in the religious and political situations across Europe. For this volume, however, it serves as an organizing principle highlighting a variety of ways to approach the shifting relationship between religion and politics in the generations surrounding the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War.

The papers are grouped into four sections. The first two sections take a more theoretical approach, looking at the cultural reflections of confessional antagonism and at images of the opponent in the writings of both Protestants (chiefly Lutherans) and Catholics, while the papers in the last two sections look at specific examples of confessional fundamentalism within the Holy Roman Empire and outside of it. Bernard Roeck's essay opens the volume by presenting confessional confrontation as one of several ways by which people came to terms with the sense of crisis that characterized the late sixteenth century. As a specific example, Klaus Garber examines Martin Opitz's *Trostgedicht in Widerwärtigkeit des Krieges* (1633) as a literary response to the Thirty Years' War.

The concept of confessional fundamentalism comes out more clearly in the volume's remaining essays. Several of them highlight two significant factors that complicate the efforts to characterize confessional fundamentalism: the spectrum of opinions from moderate to extreme within each party and the differences between generations. To look first at the Catholic side, Alexander Koller's examination of papal policy between 1592 and 1623 makes it clear that although defense of the Catholic faith and restoration of the church's jurisdiction were major goals of papal policy, they were not the overriding ones. With the possible exception of Gregory XV's pontificate during the opening years of the Thirty Years' War, the policies of the curia were determined as much by the pope's responsibilities as secular ruler in Italy and by the desire of each pope to further his own family as they were by more strictly religious concerns. The same cannot be said about other European rulers, however. Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg shows how Sigismund III, with the support of Jesuit advisors and court preachers, ignored the principles of religious toleration adopted in 1573, and over the course of his long reign steadily reduced the power of and the protections granted to the Protestant elites of Poland-Lithuania. According to Robert Birely, the idea of a holy war against Protestants gained only brief support in Spain before the defeat of the Armada and in France on the eve of the Thirty Years' War, but the Jesuit preachers Adam Contzen and Wilhelm Laimormaini had more success in Munich and Vienna respectively, and the Dillingen theology professor Heinrich Wangnereck continued to reject any compromise with the Protestants up through the Peace of Westphalia.

The discussion of confessional fundamentalism in the empire focuses primarily on Protestant territories. Eike Wolgast summarizes the consistent policy of the Palatine electors from Ottheinrich through Friedrich V as the dominance of confessional over political concerns, the effort to create an alliance among the Protestant estates, and support of persecuted Protestants in France and the Netherlands. Axel Gotthard describes Electoral Saxony's position at the opposite end of the spectrum. There, political decisions were shaped by loyalty to the emperor and by the refusal to interpret imperial decisions and actions as threatening the legal protection guaranteed to

the Lutherans by the Peace of Augsburg. Gotthard notes that most princely courts in the empire lay between these two extremes, fearing Catholic aggression but unwilling to break openly with the emperor. Winfried Schulze argues that it is too simplistic to contrast the motives of politicians as chiefly religious or chiefly political, and suggests that records of political negotiations in the years before the outbreak of war show a much greater desire on both the Catholic and the Protestant side to reach a political solution than is evident from polemical works aimed at the public.

Several essays look more specifically at confessional polemics. Wolfgang Harms notes the tendency of both Catholic and Protestant pamphlet illustrations to demonize their opponents, with Martin Luther's identification of the papacy as the Antichrist recurring throughout the period of the Thirty Years' War. Volker Leppin sees the same theme in pamphlets published to mark the centenary of the Reformation, which presented the Reformation chiefly in terms of its opposition to Rome. Looking at a slightly earlier period, Thomas Kaufmann sees two changes in the anti-Jesuit propaganda published at the turn of the century: a shift of focus from theology to politics, and one in authorship from Lutheran to Reformed. Holger Gräf argues that the impact of such rhetoric can be seen in the epitaph commissioned by the widow of Count Albrecht Otto of Solms-Laubach in 1616, which mourned the count's death in battle against the "papists" and made no mention of his years of military service to the emperor.

Finally, a group of essays looks at situations where confessional fundamentalism either failed to develop or had only limited impact. Anton Schindling argues that despite conflicts with the Strasbourg cathedral chapter and the foundation of a Jesuit college in nearby Molsheim, the establishment of Lutheran Orthodoxy in Strasbourg cannot be understood as a form of confessional fundamentalism. Istvan Toth compares the Vienna Peace of 1606, which granted religious freedoms to Hungary and Siebenbürgen, to the Edict of Nantes, and concludes that the relative weakness of the Catholics in this religiously diverse area prevented the Habsburgs from whittling away the rights granted by the peace. William Monter describes Tommaso Campanella's blueprint of a universal Spanish monarchy as a blend of Machiavellianism and medieval universal empire that was out of step with the Spain of Philip III, who had abandoned the militant Catholicism of his father. Willem Frijhoff argues that Dutch Catholics did not fully realize that they had lost both political and cultural power in the Dutch Republic until the 1630s, which, in turn, forced them to create a new identity as one denomination among many within a religiously pluralist state.

Schilling notes in the introduction that there was some discussion among colloquium participants about the value of the term "fundamentalism," a term coined to describe a branch of American Protestantism in the early twentieth century and which in its current broader usage includes opposition to modernity. There is little reflection of this discussion in the essays themselves, and in practice the participants generally equate "fundamentalism" with those who viewed the defense and propagation of their own confession and/or the extirpation of those outside of it as the overriding goal of political decisions. Whether "fundamentalist" is more useful than other terms, such as "religious hard-liner," is open to question, and the alternative of "religious antagonism" proposed during the colloquium seems both more descriptive and less loaded with misleading connotations.

Although the essays vary in depth of analysis and insight, the best of them both confirm and complicate the picture of rising religious tensions in the period before the Thirty Years' War. The essays on the religiously mixed areas of Poland, Hungary, and the Dutch Republic are particularly valuable for highlighting the variety of responses to the efforts of one confession to establish hegemony. Thus while "confessional fundamentalism" may not be the most appropriate term, its use as the theme for this colloquium does indeed prove fruitful for the closer examination of the interplay of religion and politics in the first half of the seventeenth century.

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Citation: Amy Nelson Burnett. Review of Schilling, Heinz, ed, *Konfessioneller Fundamentalismus*. H-HRE, H-Net Reviews. May, 2009.
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