H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Heinz Schilling, IstvÃ¡n György TÃ³th, eds. *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe: Vol. 1, Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 412 pp. $419.75 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-521-84546-5.

Reviewed by Judith Becker (Institut für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz)

Published on H-German (February, 2008)

Culture and Church History in Early Modern Europe

This collection is the first volume of a four-volume set, *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, which is the result of the European Social Fund (ESF)-sponsored program, "Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700," chaired by Robert Muchembled and inaugurated in January 1997. The project was divided into several teams. Only the most important–and not otherwise published–communications of research team I ("Religion, cultural differentiation and cultural identities") were included in the volume, which underlines its high quality. The fourteen articles are arranged in four sections of different length. Section 1 presents two introductory essays, the first by William Monter and the second by the volume editors, Heinz Schilling and IstvÃ¡n GyÃ¶rgy TÃ³th. The volume shows clearly that central and eastern Europe have come to the fore of historical research. A whole section is dedicated to this region and some of the other articles deal with it as well. Schilling and TÃ³th emphasize in their introduction the impact of east and central European borderlands for understanding confessionalization.

In his introduction, Monter bridges the gap between early modernity and the twenty-first century. He describes early modern European cultural identity as influenced by religious identities that stressed the differences to others, not commonalities. In this claim, Monter examines not only the western Christian confessions, but also the Orthodox Church and Judaism and (to a lesser extent) Islam, as well. This approach is replicated in the volume as a whole. Monter then outlines further research. Schilling and TÃ³th introduce the specific topic of this ESF team and give an overview of the conferences and their main topics and theses. The first workshop (Budapest, 2000) focused on the east and central European borderlands and on Islam; the second (Coimbra, 2001) discussed ceremonies and images; the third (Oxford, 2002) focused on religious communication, mainly in northwestern Europe, particularly Britain.

Schilling and TÃ³th's introduction serves at the same time as path into the second part of the book, with its articles on the central European borderlands. In it, Olivier Chaline shows how the Bohemian crown lands became, after 1620, "a separate province of the Baroque world" (p. 53). Before White Mountain, there were many religious frontiers in Bohemia. After 1628, only Catholicism and

Judaism were allowed. In Bohemia, many priests were installed in places where few Catholics had lived before 1620. Still, they served mainly in towns, so that towns quickly became Catholic while the countryside stayed Protestant. Here, everything depended on the local lords. When they had been convinced to convert, their subjects had to become Catholic as well. By 1648, Bohemia was officially Catholic, after which internal conversion became the new task of the Catholic Church. The mental religious frontier, however, persisted; on this basis, the history of Bohemia is either seen as tragedy or as an adventure.

In his essay, Daniel Tollet explores the range and limits of the confessionalization paradigm for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In a first phase, Andrzej Frycz-Modrzewski attempted to implement a Melanchthonian church as a united, national, and free (non-state) church in Poland. From the late 1550s to the 1570s the nobility became more and more powerful. The growth in their power was accompanied by a religious tolerance defended by the nobility even during the Counter-Reformation. When direct action proved impossible, the Catholic Church tried to destabilize toleration by placing Catholics in key positions. At the same time, it attracted people by creating charitable confraternities, via sermons and by the "Polonisation of Catholicism" (p. 75-76), the Catholic interpretation of Polish culture. Still, Polish magnates defended religious tolerance well into the first half of the seventeenth century. Tollet closes his paper with the conclusion that Polish institutions were not simply deviations from western paradigms, but original institutions.

IstvÃ¡n GyÃ¶rgy TÃ³th examines the twofold cultural historical role of Catholic missionaries to Hungary. They preserved original culture in their reports and imported a new culture, highly influenced by Italy. TÃ³th's first topic is spoken-word propaganda. Missionaries trained in Italy but employed in different regions were challenged by the many different languages spoken in Hungary. Noblemen willingly received missionaries, since theological discussions were fashionable, and missionaries added interest to the rural society. Visual propaganda was another important issue, as missionaries brought Catholic altarpieces with them. Even more important were smaller objects: images, medals, and small booklets. These were distributed to the population, which valued the images but also attributed magical powers to the objects. Even books were sometimes taken as having healing powers. Some written debates took place, although not as many as in western Europe. Clearly, personal discussions and the small devotional objects were most prominent.

Part 3 begins with a short introduction by JosÃ© Pedro Paiva. This section focuses on public ecclesiastical ceremonies and thus seeks to add to broader research on ritual. It shows how the church used rituals to establish and assert power and how cultural exchange was expressed in rituals. Heinz Schilling's paper on architecture and ritual in European towns departs from the notion that late medieval towns were marked by a thorough interpenetration of ecclesiastical and civic institutions. Due to confessionalization, architecture and townscape changed considerably in Catholic towns and only very little in Protestant ones. Protestants did not build anew but used former ecclesiastical buildings for new, non-ecclesiastical, purposes such as social or educational institutions, whereas Catholics supported building activities. The functions of religion changed as well, both in Catholic and in Protestant towns. In Catholic towns, processions became much more frequent. Participants' social positions were shown by their places in the procession. At the same time, procession displayed the civic community as a reflection of the heavenly community. Protestant cities saw themselves as holy communities. They had to be kept holy by church discipline and by fast days. These added to the city's self-assurance by uniting all town-members in prayer, penance, and fasting.

In his essay, JosÃ© Pedro Paiva draws out a common model of solemn entries of bishops in their towns by comparing different European regions. He develops a six-stage model: an "organizational phase" with preparations; a "welcoming phase" outside the city gates, when the bishop was greeted by (town) officials; and the "reception", when the bishop dismounted, genuflected, and kissed a cross. The "procession" passed strategic points in the town, often embellished with specially-built triumphal arches. The "spiritual consecration" took place at the entrance of the cathedral and inside and included sprinkling of holy water, incense, singing, prayers, and hand kisses. The "festivities" usually continued over three days. Many associated local traditions, however, were eliminated in the process of confessionalization. Paiva finds three different traditions at the roots of these entrances: Greco-Roman triumphs, Christ's entry to Jerusalem, and the papal ceremonial. During the early modern period, entrances were domesticated and standardized and their Baroque ornamentation intensified.

As a starting point, Maria Antonietta Visceglia makes

the observation that papal interregnum rituals had a similar objective to monarchical interregnum rites, with the difficulty that papal power was not dynastic. During an interregnum, the church had to accommodate discontinuity (a pope's death) and continuity (the church's persistence). Visceglia describes the development of rites around the papal interregnum. The Sacred College, which became very powerful, prepared the funeral. Many parallels were made to royal funerals, especially the embalming of the body and burials of different body parts in different places. The place of the tomb had to be negotiated between the pope's family, the cardinals he had installed, and his own wishes. Before St. Peter's Basilica was finally rebuilt, many popes were transferred from one tomb to another. Such multiple funerals served as public displays of the continuation of papal power. The late and present popes were united by means of the subsequent burials.

Maria Cr?ciun investigates the Eucharistic imagery of Transylvanian altarpieces of the Late Middle Ages and through the Reformation and confessionalization period. By the end of the Middle Ages, the "Man of Sorrows" was the most frequent theme. In Catholic times Eucharistic images were meant to teach people about transubstantiation and the importance of Christ's sacrifice. In Lutheran times images were preserved but reorganized and displayed in new places. Altars were adorned with new images. Although Eucharistic images remained important, they received a new meaning; they were now meant to teach consubstantiation, faith, and the historical origin of the Lord's Supper. Sometimes explanatory captions were added. Cr?ciun explains the continuing prominence of Eucharistic images in Lutheran times with the fact that the Lord's Supper was very important for Lutheran identity; it was here that they differed from Catholics and Reformed Protestants.

The forth and final section, "Religious Communication: Print and Beyond" is introduced by Judith Pollmann and Mark Greengrass, who emphasize the impact of printing on the Reformation and confessionalization and then discuss other forms of communication: oral, written, song, theater, ritual, architecture, and imagery, laying the outlines for the following papers. In his essay, Ian Green divides preaching in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in four periods. From the 1530s to the 1580s, few qualified preachers worked in England. The church responded to this problem by publishing approved sermons and establishing preaching classes. During the second period, from the 1590s to the 1630s, more qualified preachers were available and sermons preached more regularly, which meant that more preaching aids and sermons were printed. The function of sermons changed from edification to education. In the wake of the revolutions of the 1640s and 1650s, many qualified clerics were dismissed and new, often untrained, preachers installed. Preaching was again used to propagate change. From the 1660s to the early eighteenth century, qualified regular clergy again served in England. Printed sermons now proved to be close to the crown and emphasized obedience, morality, and teaching.

Stefan Ehrenpreis's contribution investigates two tools for education: catechisms and images. The great variety of catechisms can be ascribed to two Protestant types (Luther/Melanchthon/Brenz or Calvin/Heidelberg) and one Catholic (Tridentine) type. The biggest differences consisted not in the form of the catechisms but in their use. In Elisabeth's England, for instance, they were used to teach children reading, whereas in Germany they were primarily intended to teach doctrine. Other means of education were images and emblem books. Symbolic images conveyed ethical concepts. The use of catechisms and images depended on the local system before the Reformation, on the status of the users in their countries, and on their relationship to people of their faith in other countries. Ehrenpreis notes that these differences meant that over the years, national traditions of education were created.

Guido Marnef explores the propagation of religious ideas by the Dutch Chambers of Rhetoric, or amateur theatre companies. These were very popular in the Netherlands. They dared to criticize the church but at the same time often propagated edifying and moralizing messages. The texts were sometimes published but the printing press does not seem to have had a modifying impact on the Chambers of Rhetoric. The authorities tried to control the activities and persecute unorthodox rhetoricians. The Chambers of Rhetoric were of great impact in the Netherlands, approved of by the people and condemned by the clerics.

Turning to music, Judith Pollmann asks which confessions used certain sorts of song and how. The Lutheran Reformation composed new texts for old melodies. Anabaptists used the "Souterliedekens," but some of them found the psalms too aggressive to sing. The Reformed Reformation, on the other hand, sang psalms but did not want to use secular melodies. They created and used a metrical psalter, even if it was difficult to sing. There is evidence that it was also sung at home and at work. Many songs were used by several confes-

sions so they were not necessarily exclusive. Catholics did not often use print to propagate songs and only in the second half of the sixteenth century they began to use songs for teaching purposes, which Protestants had already done for some decades. Presumably such songs were quite popular until at least the mid-seventeenth century.

Mark Greengrass compares scribal networks of two minorities: Huguenots in France and Catholics in Elizabethan England. He thus shows how identities and new, virtual networks were created. In these networks, manuscripts had many advantages: ciphers could be used more easily, as could citrus ink for secret communication. Many types of letters connected the communities: private letters, newsletters, letters of martyrs (which were also used as devotional objects by Catholics and sometimes distributed with body parts), letters of the Reformers, or the life-stories by people imprisoned for their faith. Letters and books were also catalogued and sometimes translated into Latin for further distribution. Books were distributed as well but they were more expensive, easier to catch, and therefore more dangerous.

Martin Elbel closes the circle of the volume with another study on Bohemia, this time on Franciscan communication strategies. Two main topics occupied Franciscan mission in Bohemia: the cult of saints and lay fraternities. Franciscans enforced their distinct hagiography by use of different media, above all sermons, images, and rituals. By doing so they revised their formerly negative attitude towards splendor. The most popular lay fraternity was the Franciscan Third Order, in which lay people could become members without becoming monks, which proved attractive even in rural areas. The linked activities of the Franciscan Order and the tertiaries and their intensive interaction in various media became very important for Franciscan successes in Bohemia.

This excellent volume presents the results of long-lasting research and discussions between leading European scholars–and does so in a very readable way that will be interesting to scholars and understandable for students. The application of cultural historical concepts to religious and ecclesiastical history provides new insights into church history. Readers can hope that church historians will adopt this approach and that secular historians will include theologians in further research projects of this sort.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at:

https://networks.h-net.org/h-german

Citation: Judith Becker. Review of Schilling, Heinz; TÃ³th, IstvÃ¡n György, eds., *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe: Vol. 1, Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700.* H-German, H-Net Reviews. February, 2008.

URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=14237

Copyright © 2008 by H-Net, all rights reserved. H-Net permits the redistribution and reprinting of this work for nonprofit, educational purposes, with full and accurate attribution to the author, web location, date of publication, originating list, and H-Net: Humanities & Social Sciences Online. For any other proposed use, contact the Reviews editorial staff at hbooks@mail.h-net.org.