



# The Concept of “Confessionalization”: a Historiographical Paradigm in Dispute

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*Abstract:* Since the 1980s the concept of “confessionalization” has been one of the leading interpretive categories in the historiography on early modern Germany. This article will, firstly, explain the paradigm of confessionalization as it was developed by Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Secondly, it will recapitulate the critique that has been voiced against the concept, which can be broadly differentiated into four categories: first, macro-historical criticism; second, the discussion about the periodization of the processes of confessionalization; third, the controversy about the role of theological “truth” in the process of confessionalization and about the specific characteristics of the different confessions; and fourth, the criticism of what has been called the “etatic narrowing” or “top-to-bottom approach” of the concept of confessionalization. In this context, the paradigm of confessionalization has in recent years become a hotly debated subject in the field of tension between micro- and macro-history.

*Key words:* confessionalization, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, historiography of confessionalization, micro- and macro-history, societal and cultural history.

## *El concepto de “confesionalización”: un paradigma historiográfico a debate*

*Resumen:* Desde la década de los ochenta el concepto de “confesionalización” ha sido una de las interpretaciones destacadas de la historiografía sobre la Edad Moderna de Alemania. Este artículo explicará, en primer lugar el paradigma de la “confesionalización” tal y como fue desarrollado por Wolfgang Reinhard y Heinz Schilling a finales de los setenta y comienzos de los ochenta. En segundo lugar recapitulará las críticas que se han hecho contra el concepto, y que en general, se pueden dividir en cuatro categorías: la primera, la crítica macrohistórica; la segunda, la discusión sobre la periodización de los procesos de confesionalización; tercera la controversia sobre el papel de la “verdad” teológica en el proceso de confesionalización y sobre las características específicas de las diferentes confesiones; y cuarta la crítica que ha sido denominada la “etatic narrowing” o “aproximación de abajo-arriba” (“top-to-bottom approach”) del concepto de “confesionalización”. En este contexto el paradigma de “confesionalización” ha llegado a ser en los últimos años objeto de un debate apasionado en el campo de la tensión entre micro- y macro-historia.

*Palabras clave:* confesionalización, Reforma, Contrarreforma, Catolicismo, Luteranismo, Calvinismo, historiografía de la confesionalización, micro- y macro-historia, historial social y cultural.

Since the 1980s the concept of “confessionalization” has been one of the leading interpretive categories in the historiography on early modern Germany. It has shifted historiographical interest from its former emphasis on the early Reformation in the first half of the sixteenth century to the second half of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. However, in recent years, this macro-historical paradigm has also met with severe criticism, to which the advocates of confessionalization have answered by defending and also modifying the concept. The following article will, *firstly*, explain the paradigm of confessionalization as it was developed by Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling in the late 1970s and early 1980s. *Secondly*, it will recapitulate the critique that has been voiced against the concept, mainly from within German historiography. This includes very fundamental criticism, e.g. attacking the paradigm as a “top-to-bottom approach” which has to be overcome by different interpretive models as well as criticism which accepts the usefulness of confessionalization as a paradigm but suggests certain modifications to the model. The reactions of Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling to this critique will also be described. The article will thus try to evaluate the usefulness of the concept of confessionalization as an interpretive category in the field of tension between macro- and micro-history. In this context, it will be instructive to look at the ways in which the paradigm has so far been applied in case studies on the Holy Roman Empire and other European countries.

## I

In German historiography since Leopold von Ranke the sixteenth century was traditionally divided into the “Reformation” of the first half and the “Counter-Reformation” of the second half of the sixteenth century. As the term “Counter-Reformation” has a problematic connotation, implying a mere reaction to Protestantism and neglecting that of reform within Catholicism, it was repeatedly criticized. In 1946, Hubert Jedin, a Swiss scholar of Catholic background, therefore suggested the compromise terminology “Catholic reform and Coun-



ter-Reformation”<sup>1</sup>, which has remained influential in historical research ever since. However, in 1958 the Catholic historian Ernst Walter Zeeden in an article in the *Historische Zeitschrift* fundamentally changed the way of looking at the sixteenth century. In contrast to the “Reformation - Counter-Reformation” dichotomy, Zeeden stressed that in the second half of the sixteenth century Catholicism, Lutheranism and Calvinism in the Holy Roman Empire started to build modern, clearly defined confessional churches, each of which centred on a written confession of faith. He called this process “confession-building” (*Konfessionsbildung*), a neutral term which could be applied to all churches<sup>2</sup>. This is the historiographical background to the concept of confessionalization which was introduced almost simultaneously in the late 1970s and early 1980s by two scholars of the next generation, Wolfgang Reinhard, a scholar of Catholic background, and Heinz Schilling, a scholar of Protestant background. While Reinhard developed the concept of confessionalization from his criticism of the negative and anti-modern implications of the term “Counter-Reformation”, Schilling developed the paradigm out of his research on the interactions of Calvinism and Lutheranism in north-western Germany.

Reinhard and Schilling widened the concept of confession-building, which Zeeden understood to be concerned with religious and church history, into that of confessionalization, a paradigm of societal history (*Gesellschaftsgeschichte*)<sup>3</sup>. In their view, the confessional divi-

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<sup>1</sup> See Hubert JEDIN, *Katholische Reformation oder Gegenreformation? Ein Versuch zur Klärung der Begriffe nebst einer Jubiläumsbetrachtung über das Trienter Konzil*, Luzern, Stocker, 1946.

<sup>2</sup> See Ernst Walter ZEEEDEN, “Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe”, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 185, 1958, pp. 249-299; see also Ernst Walter ZEEEDEN, *Die Entstehung der Konfessionen. Grundlagen und Formen der Konfessionsbildung im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe*, München, Wien, Oldenbourg, 1965; Ernst Walter ZEEEDEN, *Konfessionsbildung. Studien zur Reformation, Gegenreformation und katholischen Reform*, Stuttgart, Klett-Cotta, 1985.

<sup>3</sup> The most important articles on the concept of confessionalization by Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling are: Wolfgang REINHARD, “Konfession und Konfessionalisierung in Europa”, in Wolfgang REINHARD

sions and conflicts of the early modern period did not affect only the area of religion and church, but the entire social and political system. "The concept 'confessionalization' contains this political and societal dimension"<sup>4</sup>. It proceeds from the general observation that in Old Europe, in the Middle Ages as well as in the early modern period,

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(ed.), *Bekenntnis und Geschichte. Die Confessio Augustana im historischen Zusammenhang*, München, Vögel, 1981, pp. 165-189; Wolfgang REINHARD, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters", in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 10, 1983, pp. 257-277; Wolfgang REINHARD, "Reformation, Counter-Reformation, and the Early Modern State. A Reassessment", in *Catholic Historical Review*, 75, 1989, pp. 383-404; Wolfgang REINHARD, "Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?", in Wolfgang REINHARD and Heinz SCHILLING (eds.), *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung. Wissenschaftliches Symposium der Gesellschaft zur Herausgabe des Corpus Catholicorum und des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, Gütersloh, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1995, pp. 419-452; Heinz SCHILLING, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich. Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620", in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 246, 1988, pp. 1-45, translated into English as: "Confessionalization in the Empire. Religious and Societal Change in Germany between 1555 and 1620", in Heinz SCHILLING, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society. Essays in German and Dutch History*, Leiden, New York, Cologne, Brill, 1992, pp. 205-245; Heinz SCHILLING, "Confessional Europe", in Thomas A. BRADY, Jr., Heiko A. OBERMAN and James D. TRACY (eds.), *Handbook of European History, 1400-1600. Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation. II. Visions, Programs and Outcomes*, Leiden, New York, Cologne, Brill, 1995, pp. 641-675; Heinz SCHILLING, "Die Konfessionalisierung von Kirche, Staat und Gesellschaft. Profil, Leistung, Defizite und Perspektiven eines geschichtswissenschaftlichen Paradigmas", in REINHARD and SCHILLING (eds.), *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung...*, pp. 1-49. See also the proceedings of three major conferences on "confessionalization": Heinz SCHILLING (ed.), *Die reformierte Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland - Das Problem der "Zweiten Reformation"*. *Wissenschaftliches Symposium des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte 1985*, Gütersloh, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1986; Hans Christoph RUBLACK (ed.), *Die lutherische Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland. Wissenschaftliches Symposium des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte 1988*, Gütersloh, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1992; REINHARD and SCHILLING (eds.), *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung...*

<sup>4</sup> SCHILLING, "Confessionalization in the Empire...", p. 208.



religion and politics, church and state, were closely linked with each other. Thus there was always a connection between confession-building and early modern state formation. These processes could interact in different ways. According to Reinhard and Schilling, in most cases confessionalization “enabled states and societies to integrate more tightly...”.<sup>5</sup> In the Holy Roman Empire, this was the case if the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*, established by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, was successfully enforced by the German princes in their territories. As a consequence, Schilling and Reinhard describe confessionalization as the first phase of early modern absolutism or “social disciplining” (*Sozialdisziplinierung*)<sup>6</sup>. But, as Schilling has always stressed, although this aspect has increasingly been overlooked in subsequent discussions, “confessionalization could also provoke confrontation with religious and political groups fundamentally opposed to this... integration of state and society. The process of confessionalization took place between the two poles of state-building and confessional conflict...”.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast to the older historiography, Reinhard and Schilling are not primarily interested in the differences of doctrine and ritual between the confessions, but approach the subject from a comparative point of view: they look at parallel developments and “functional similarities”<sup>8</sup> between the confessional churches, such as their contribution to social control. This has also led to a new terminology. The terms which were used by German historians to describe the development of the three confessional churches —Catholic reform/Counter-Reformation, Second Reformation (for the introduction of Calvinism in German territories) and Lutheran orthodoxy— have been replaced by the parallel terms Catholic, Calvinist (or Reformed) and Lutheran confessionalization and the term “age of confessionalization” or “confessional age”. In addition, Reinhard and Schilling emphasize the

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209.

<sup>6</sup> REINHARD, “Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung?...”, p. 268. The term *Sozialdisziplinierung* is originally Gerhard Oestreich’s, see Winfried SCHULZE, “Gerhard Oestreichs Begriff ‘Sozialdisziplinierung in der Frühen Neuzeit’”, in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 14, 1987, pp. 265-302.

<sup>7</sup> SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 209.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 210.

modernizing factors within these processes of confessionalization. Reinhard—in order to contradict the implications of the term “Counter-Reformation”—stresses the modernizing impetus of early modern Tridentine Reform, for example the rationality of the Jesuit order. Schilling goes even further than this and describes the entire period of confessionalization as a process of modernization, which in his opinion manifested itself above all in the cooperation of church and state aimed at disciplining the people. In this context, Schilling rejects the established notion that it was the Reformation which brought about deep-rooted changes on the way to modernity. Rather, Schilling sees the age of confessionalization as the decisive turning-point towards the modern age (*Vorsattelzeit der Moderne*)<sup>9</sup>. In sum, both authors are of the opinion that the process of confessionalization contributed to the emergence of the modern world. Although Reinhard and Schilling take their examples mainly from Germany, their definition of the concept of confessionalization is much more extensive: confessionalization has been defined as a process of early modern *European* history, which not only took effect in other European countries but also in international relations<sup>10</sup>.

Proceeding from Catholic confessionalization, Wolfgang Reinhard has identified seven “methods” or “mechanisms” which in his opinion were essential to the process of confessionalization, i.e. to a successful implementation of the *cuius regio, eius religio* principle and a politico-religious integration of society. *First*, the establishment of “pure doctrine” and its formulation in a written confession of faith: in

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<sup>9</sup> Heinz SCHILLING, *Aufbruch und Krise. Deutschland 1517-1648*, Berlin, Siedler, 1988, p. 313.

<sup>10</sup> See Heinz SCHILLING, “Konfessionalisierung und Formierung eines internationalen Systems während der frühen Neuzeit”, in Hans R. GUGGISBERG and Gottfried G. KRODEL (eds.), *Die Reformation in Deutschland und Europa. Interpretationen und Debatten*, Gütersloh, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1993, pp. 591-613; Heinz SCHILLING, “Die konfessionellen Glaubenskriege und die Formierung des frühmodernen Europa”, in Peter HERRMANN (ed.), *Glaubenskriege in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996, pp. 123-137; in future see also: Heinz SCHILLING, *Konfessionalisierung und Staatsinteressen. Internationale Beziehungen 1559-1659*, Paderborn, Schöningh, forthcoming.

this way, the confessional churches could be clearly distinguished from one another and possible sources of confusion were eliminated. *Second*, the distribution and enforcement of these new norms through, for example, confessional oaths and subscription: this enabled church and state to remove dissidents and to ensure the religious orthodoxy of personnel in strategic positions — for instance, theologians, priests, teachers, and secular officials. *Third*, propaganda and censure: this meant making use of the printing press for propaganda purposes on the one hand and preventing rival churches and religious movements from using the printing press on the other hand. *Fourth*, internalization of the new norms through, above all, education, but also through catechizing, sermons, pilgrimages etc. *Fifth*, disciplining the population: visitations and the expulsion of confessional minorities were to ensure that the confessional group remained as homogeneous as possible. *Sixth*, rites and the control of participation in rites: participation in rites like baptism and marriage was ensured through the keeping of registers. *Seventh* and lastly, Reinhard refers to the confessional regulation even of language: for example, while saints’ names were particularly appealing to Catholics, they were forbidden in Geneva<sup>11</sup>.

While Reinhard’s analysis thus puts more emphasis on what has been labelled the “confessionalization of the churches”, Schilling has given more attention to the consequences of confessionalization in state and society<sup>12</sup>. He defines confessionalization as a “fundamental process of society, which had far-reaching effects upon the public and private life of individual European societies”<sup>13</sup>. In consequence, he stresses four factors of political, social, cultural and mental change. *First*, confessional homogenization, which, in his view, often meant “Christianization” (Delumeau), i.e. the suppression of popular religion in favour of forms of religious practice approved by the confessional

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<sup>11</sup> See REINHARD, “Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung?...”, esp. p. 263; REINHARD, “Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?...”, p. 426; REINHARD, “Reformation, Counter-Reformation, and the Early Modern State...”, pp. 391-395.

<sup>12</sup> B. RÜTH, “Reformation und Konfessionsbildung im städtischen Bereich. Perspektiven der Forschung”, in *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Kanonistische Abt.*, 77, 1991, pp. 197-282, here pp. 207-208, note 27.

<sup>13</sup> SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 209.

churches. *Second*, social control, i.e. the disciplining of the population in all areas of life and behaviour, which, according to Schilling, resulted in the formation of early modern society<sup>14</sup>. *Third*, the development of confessional identities which had a decisive influence on the formation of cultural and political —often national— identities<sup>15</sup>. And *fourth*, the “gains” for the state resulting from the process of confessionalization: while Protestant princes gained full control over their churches by becoming their spiritual heads, far-reaching control over the church was in practice also achieved in Catholic states. This entailed an extension of state bureaucracy and thus an intensification of the process of state formation<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> See Heinz SCHILLING, “Die Kirchengleichheit im frühneuzeitlichen Europa in interkonfessionell vergleichender und interdisziplinärer Perspektive - eine Zwischenbilanz”, in Heinz SCHILLING (ed.), *Kirchengleichheit und Sozialdisziplinierung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa*, Berlin, Duncker & Humblot, 1994, pp. 11-40; Heinz SCHILLING, “Profil und Perspektiven einer interdisziplinären und komparatistischen Disziplinierungsforschung jenseits einer Dichotomie von Gesellschafts- und Kulturgeschichte” (with English summary), in Heinz SCHILLING (ed.), *Institutionen, Instrumente und Akteure sozialer Kontrolle und Disziplinierung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa / Institutions, Instruments and Agents of Social Control and Discipline in Early Modern Europe*, Frankfurt a.M., Klostermann, 1999, pp. 3-36.

<sup>15</sup> See Heinz SCHILLING, “Nationale Identität und Konfession in der europäischen Neuzeit”, in Bernhard GIESEN (ed.), *Nationale und kulturelle Identität. Studien zur Entwicklung des kollektiven Bewußtseins in der Neuzeit*, Frankfurt a.M., Suhrkamp, 1991, pp. 192-252; Heinz SCHILLING, “Konfessionelle und politische Identität im frühneuzeitlichen Europa”, in Antoni CZACHAROWSKI (ed.), *Nationale und ethnische Minderheiten und regionale Identitäten in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, Toruń, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1994, pp. 103-123; Heinz SCHILLING, “Confessionalisation and the Rise of Religious and Cultural Frontiers in Early Modern Europe”, in Eszter ANDOR and István György TÓTH (eds.), *Frontiers of Faith. Religious Exchange and the Constitution of Religious Identities, 1400-1750*, Budapest, Central European University/European Science Foundation, 2001, pp. 21-35.

<sup>16</sup> See Heinz SCHILLING, “Nation und Konfession in der frühneuzeitlichen Geschichte Europas. Zu den konfessionsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen der frühmodernen Staatsbildung”, in Klaus GARBER (ed.), *Nation und Literatur im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit*, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1989, pp. 87-107.





Besides these more theoretical descriptions of confessionalization, Heinz Schilling has developed a periodization of German history roughly between the Peace of Augsburg and the Thirty Years' War which defines the phases of the confessionalization process<sup>17</sup>. The *first* phase covers the period between the late 1540s and the early 1570s and is labelled the “preparatory phase”<sup>18</sup> of confessionalization. Although confessions of faith had already been formulated in the Reformation period, this was—in societal terms—essentially a pre-confessional period, which after 1555 saw a functioning religious Peace of Augsburg. Gradually, Tridentine Reform entered the Empire while the first territorial princes, notably Frederick III of the Palatinate, converted to Calvinism. The *second* phase marked the “transition to confessional confrontation”<sup>19</sup> in the 1570s. After the conflicts within Lutheranism after Luther's death in 1546, Lutheran orthodoxy once again defined Lutheranism unambiguously and drew a clear dividing line towards Calvinism. “The Formula of Concord of 1577 and the Book of Concord of 1580-1581 together served as a boundary marker and a catalyst”<sup>20</sup>. In consequence, Protestant princes were increasingly forced to choose between Lutheranism and Calvinism—a “pressure for confessionalization” (*Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung*)<sup>21</sup> set in. At the same time, Tridentine Reformation became more dynamic because princes and prince bishops embraced it wholeheartedly and, among other things, gave their support to the Jesuits. Between 1570 and 1585 there was a change of generations in the Empire: “In place of men who had protected the religious peace as a hard-won political compromise there appeared theologians and politicians who actively sought to reshape, delimit, and revise”<sup>22</sup>. This led to the *third* phase of

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<sup>17</sup> For the following see SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, pp. 210-232; the original German version of this is SCHILLING, “Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich...”, pp. 7-30.

<sup>18</sup> SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 219.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 222.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 223.

<sup>21</sup> The term is originally Wolfgang Reinhard's, see REINHARD, “Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung?...”; for the translation see SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 224.

<sup>22</sup> SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 226.

confessionalization, the “apogee of confessionalization”<sup>23</sup> from the 1580s to the 1620s. During this phase several German princes introduced the “Second Reformation”, i.e. Calvinism, in their territories. At the same time, the concord movement was vibrant in Lutheran Germany and in Catholic territories Tridentine Reformation had become a major force. All this took place against a political background which was more and more characterized by confrontation on all levels of Imperial politics —notably in the Imperial diet and the Imperial chamber court (*Reichskammergericht*). One of the more striking examples of how confessionalization affected the whole of society and everyday life is the calendar dispute. After Pope Gregory had introduced a much-needed calendar reform in 1582, Protestants did not accept this new calendar because it came from the pope. In consequence, even the time became confessionalized with the Protestants living ten days behind the Catholics until 1699/1700<sup>24</sup>. The *fourth* and last phase marks “the end of confessionalization under the conditions of war and on the basis of the Peace of Westphalia”<sup>25</sup>. It began in the 1620s, during the Thirty Years’ War, when it became clear that the brutality of confessional conflict could lead to complete destruction, and lasted until the early eighteenth century. It was characterized by the rise of irenicism and new religious movements such as Pietism.

## II

The paradigm of confessionalization itself as well as the discussions following from it have resulted in a shift of emphasis in historiographical research in Germany. While in the early 1980s, Winfried Schulze could still write that “any interest in this period [between the Peace of Augsburg and the Thirty Years’ War] can scarcely arise from the period itself”<sup>26</sup>, numerous Ph.D. theses and

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 226.

<sup>24</sup> See SCHILLING, *Aufbruch und Krise...*, pp. 264-266.

<sup>25</sup> SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 230.

<sup>26</sup> The original quote is in Winfried SCHULZE, “Möglichkeiten der Reichspolitik zwischen Augsburger Religionsfrieden und Ausbruch des 30jährigen Krieges. Einleitung”, in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 10,



other works have since been written on this period<sup>27</sup>. As a consequence, the concept of confessionalization has been proven to be a fruitful research instrument, but has also been criticized in various ways. The critique of the paradigm of confessionalization can be broadly differentiated into four categories: *first*, macro-historical criticism; *second*, the discussion about the periodization of the processes of confessionalization; *third*, the controversy about the role of theo-

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1983, pp. 253-256, here p. 253; for the translation see SCHILLING, “Confessionalization in the Empire...”, p. 205.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Thomas Paul BECKER, *Konfessionalisierung in Kurköln. Untersuchungen zur Durchsetzung der katholischen Reform in den Dekanaten Ahrgau und Bonn anhand von Visitationsprotokollen 1583-1761*, Bonn, Röhrscheid, 1989; Arno HERZIG, *Reformatorsche Bewegungen und Konfessionalisierung. Die habsburgische Rekatholisierungspolitik in der Grafschaft Glatz*, Hamburg, Dölling und Galitz, 1996; R. Po-chia HSIA, *Social Discipline in the Reformation. Central Europe 1550-1750*, London, New York, Routledge, 1989 (with a somewhat misleading title); Ute LOTZ-HEUMANN, *Die doppelte Konfessionalisierung in Irland. Konflikt und Koexistenz im 16. und in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2000; Michael G. MÜLLER, *Zweite Reformation und ständische Autonomie im königlichen Preußen. Danzig, Elbing und Thorn während der Konfessionalisierung 1557 bis 1660*, Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1997; Siegrid WESTPHAL, *Frau und lutherische Konfessionalisierung. Eine Untersuchung zum Fürstentum Pfalz-Neuburg 1542-1614*, Frankfurt a.M., Lang, 1994. See also the following collections of essays: Joachim BAHLCKE and Arno STROHMEYER (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa. Wirkungen des religiösen Wandels im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert in Staat, Gesellschaft und Kultur*, Stuttgart, Steiner, 1999; Burkhard DIETZ and Stefan EHRENPREIS (eds.), *Drei Konfessionen in einer Region. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Konfessionalisierung im Herzogtum Berg vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, Köln, Rheinland-Verlag, 1999; Peer FRIEB and Rolf KIEBLING (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung und Region*, Konstanz, Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 1999. For a review essay see Heinz SCHILLING, “Literaturbericht ‘Konfessionsbildung’ und ‘Konfessionalisierung’”, in *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 41, 1991, pp. 447-463, “Literaturbericht ‘Konfessionelles Zeitalter’”, in *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 48, 1997, pp. 350-369 (part I), pp. 618-627 (part II), pp. 682-694 (part III), pp. 748-766 (part IV), to be continued; for a review article that takes the story up to the nineteenth century see Joel F. HARRINGTON and Helmut Walser SMITH, “Confessionalization, Community, and State Building in Germany, 1555-1870”, in *Journal of Modern History*, 69, 1997, pp. 77-101.

logical “truth” in the process of confessionalization and about the specific characteristics of the different confessions; and *fourth*, the criticism of what has been called the “etatistic narrowing” or “top-to-bottom approach” of the concept of confessionalization.

*First*, from a macro-historical point of view, Winfried Schulze doubts Schilling’s and Reinhard’s claim that because religion was an important category in early modern society, confessionalization was also a fundamental process. In contrast, Schulze argues that there existed historical subjects and processes independent of religious developments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These can, according to Schulze, be described independent of and without reference to confessionalization. In addition, Schulze is of the opinion that the “pressure for confessionalization” has been overestimated by Reinhard and Schilling. Instead, he stresses ideas and phenomena of tolerance and religious freedom, but also of scepticism and unbelief as well as secularized peace ideas of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From this Schulze draws the conclusion that “confessionalization” was not one of the major characteristics of the period, but that the age paved the way for secularization and that this is its true historical meaning<sup>28</sup>. This criticism has been reinforced from the point of view of the history of law. Martin Heckel and Michael Stolleis have stressed aspects like the secularization of Imperial law and the “de-theologizing of politics” (*Enttheologisierung der Politik*)<sup>29</sup> by political theorists and lawyers.

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<sup>28</sup> See Winfried SCHULZE, *Einführung in die Neuere Geschichte*, Stuttgart, Ulmer, 1987, p. 51; Winfried SCHULZE, “Konfessionalisierung als Paradigma zur Erforschung des konfessionellen Zeitalters”, in DIETZ and EHRENPREIS (eds.), *Drei Konfessionen in einer Region...*, pp. 15-30; Winfried SCHULZE, review of: Heinz SCHILLING, *Konfessionskonflikt und Staatsbildung. Eine Fallstudie über das Verhältnis von religiösem und sozialem Wandel in der Frühneuzeit am Beispiel der Grafschaft Lippe, Gütersloh*, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1981, in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 12, 1985, pp. 104-107.

<sup>29</sup> Michael STOLLEIS, “‘Konfessionalisierung’ oder ‘Säkularisierung’ bei der Entstehung des frühmodernen Staates”, in *Ius Commune*, 20, 1993, pp. 1-23, here p. 7; see also Martin HECKEL, *Deutschland im konfessionellen Zeitalter*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983.



In recent years, historians have increasingly identified further elements and developments in the age of confessionalization which were unconfessional or could not be confessionalized: Roman law and many aspects of matrimonial law, the relations within the Humanist *res publica litteraria*; the mystic-spiritual tradition; alchemy and astrology. As Anton Schindling has pointed out, the boundaries of the paradigm of confessionalization in modern research are thus defined by those areas of contemporary life that were not affected by confessionalization<sup>30</sup>. The two advocates of the concept of confessionalization have accepted this critique in so far as they have conceded that the non-confessional existed in the confessional age and that both secularization and confessionalization were at work in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries<sup>31</sup>. However, Schilling insists that the "unconfessional" elements and developments were essentially ineffective during the age of confessionalization and that confessionalization therefore remains a fundamental process of the period. In addition, Reinhard emphasizes that secularization was one of the unintentional "side-effects" of confessionalization<sup>32</sup>.

The second major point of criticism from a macro-historical viewpoint concerns the modernizing impetus of the process of confessionalization. This critique has recently been summarized by Luise Schorn-Schütte who has stressed that the connection Reinhard and Schilling see between confessionalization and modernization can be explained by their historiographical background: modernization

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<sup>30</sup> See Anton SCHINDLING, "Konfessionalisierung und Grenzen von Konfessionalisierbarkeit", in Anton SCHINDLING and Walter ZIEGLER (eds.), *Die Territorien des Reichs im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung. Land und Konfession 1500-1650. VII: Bilanz - Forschungsperspektiven - Register*, Münster, Aschendorff, 1997, pp. 9-44, here p. 40.

<sup>31</sup> See SCHILLING, "Die Konfessionalisierung von Kirche, Staat und Gesellschaft...", p. 22; Wolfgang REINHARD, review of: Heinrich Richard SCHMIDT, *Konfessionalisierung im 16. Jahrhundert*, München, Oldenbourg, 1992, in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 22, 1995, pp. 267-269, here p. 269.

<sup>32</sup> See Wolfgang REINHARD, "'Konfessionalisierung' auf dem Prüfstand", in BÄHLCKE and STROHMAYER (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa...*, pp. 79-103, here p. 80.

was an important concept for the historiography of the 1970s which proceeded from the assumption that there was a teleological process of social change, constantly moving toward improved social and political structures. As this notion of modernization has by now been revised and replaced by the notion of different potentials and aims of development coexisting simultaneously in history, this aspect of the concept of confessionalization can, according to Schorn-Schütte, not be maintained<sup>33</sup>. In reply, Wolfgang Reinhard has insisted on the neutral—not positive—meaning of the term “modernization”, citing the “modernity” of the Third Reich as an example. And he has made clear that in his opinion the modernizing impulses of confessionalization were unintentional: e.g. contemporaries saw the enforcement of rites as a measure to ensure a confessionally unified population, but this contributed to the processes of rationalization and social disciplining<sup>34</sup>.

*Second*, the discussion about the periodization of the process of confessionalization is already inherent in the differences in definition between Reinhard and Schilling. As we have seen above, Schilling’s periodization identifies an age of confessionalization between the 1570s and the beginning of the Thirty Years’ War. Although he has not developed a detailed periodization of the confessionalization process, Reinhard has extended the confessionalization process much further. On the one hand, he sees the beginning of the age of confessionalization in the 1520s with the development of written confessions and the *Confessio Augustana* of 1530 as a first climax of this process. On the other hand, he describes the process as ending only in the early eighteenth century, around the time of the expulsion of the Salzburg Protestants in 1731-32<sup>35</sup>. However, Reinhard also defines the processes of confessionalization in the three major con-

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<sup>33</sup> See Luise SCHORN-SCHÜTTE, “Konfessionalisierung als wissenschaftliches Paradigma?”, in BÄHLCKE and STROHMEYER (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa...*, pp. 61-77, here pp. 66-68.

<sup>34</sup> See Wolfgang REINHARD, “Gegenreformation als Modernisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters”, in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 68, 1977, pp. 226-252, here p. 230; W. REINHARD, “Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?..”, p. 422; REINHARD, “‘Konfessionalisierung’ auf dem Prüfstand...”, pp. 85-86.

<sup>35</sup> See REINHARD, “Konfession und Konfessionalisierung in Europa...”, p. 188; REINHARD, “Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?..”, p. 436.



fessional churches as chronologically largely parallel developments<sup>36</sup>. Thus, it remains open whether the first Lutheran confession, the *Confessio Augustana*, is already to be considered part of the process of confessionalization or whether only the *Formula* and *Book of Concord* were truly part and parcel of this process.

This has opened the way for different opinions on the periodization of confessionalization. One of the more prominent advocates of an early start of the confessionalization process is Harm Klueting. He argues in favour of 1525 as the end of the Reformation period and the beginning of confessionalization because, in his opinion, the end of the Peasants' War in Germany also meant the end of the Reformation as a popular movement and thus the beginning of a process of confessionalization initiated by the state<sup>37</sup>. Other historians have argued against the thesis of the parallel development of the confessional churches. The Catholic historian Walter Ziegler rejects this thesis on the grounds that the Catholic church retained an unbroken continuity with the medieval period which the Protestant churches did not have. In contrast to Reinhard, Ziegler sees the Catholic church in the age of confessionalization in a special position because of its "continuity to the medieval and old, i.e. the true church"<sup>38</sup>. With this definition, Ziegler moves from the realm of history to that of theology, a point which will be discussed in the next section. The Protestant church historian Thomas Kaufmann also criticizes the periodization of the confessionalization process. In contrast to Ziegler, Kaufmann concentrates on the role of the Reformation and rejects Schilling's thesis that it was confessionalization, not the Reformation, which brought about modernity. Kaufmann insists that from the point of view of a (Protestant) church historian the Reformation was an upheaval which once and for all splitted up the medieval universal

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<sup>36</sup> See REINHARD, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung?...", p. 258.

<sup>37</sup> See Harm KLUETING, *Das Konfessionelle Zeitalter 1525-1648*, Stuttgart, Ulmer, 1989.

<sup>38</sup> "...Kontinuität zur mittelalterlichen und alten, also zur wahren Kirche...", Walter ZIEGLER, "Kritisches zur Konfessionalisierungsthese", in FRIEB and KIEBLING (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung und Region...*, pp. 41-53, here p. 42; see als Walter ZIEGLER, "Typen der Konfessionalisierung in katholischen Territorien Deutschlands", in REINHARD and SCHILLING (eds.), *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung*, pp. 405-418, here pp. 417-418.

church and therefore has to be seen as a decisive turning point. He draws the conclusion that Reformation and confessionalization cannot be differentiated as clearly as in Schilling's periodization of the process of confessionalization. Rather, both processes were, according to Kaufmann, closely intertwined<sup>39</sup>.

*Third*, both Ziegler, as we already have seen, and Kaufmann severely criticize the concept of confessionalization for ignoring the question of theological truth. Kaufmann regards the treatment of religion in the context of the paradigm of confessionalization as "functional-reductionist"<sup>40</sup> —functional because the concept only looks at the function of religion in society and reductionist because in this way the characteristics of the early modern confessional churches are levelled<sup>41</sup>. This aspect has in fact been criticized in the discussions on confessionalization from the very beginning. Already during the first symposium on Calvinist confessionalization in the Empire<sup>42</sup>, participants drew attention to the fact that the *propria* of the Calvinist (Reformed) church in Germany were not sufficiently considered in the framework of confessionalization. Recently, Anton Schindling has again demanded to give more consideration to the specific character of each of the early modern confessional churches, which in theology, piety and spirituality were radically different from one another<sup>43</sup>. The two advocates of the concept of confessionalization have reacted in opposite ways to this kind of critique. Heinz Schilling accepts that these objections bring to light "weak spots" of the paradigm and suggests to overcome the weaknesses by integrating into the concept

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<sup>39</sup> See Thomas KAUFMANN, "Die Konfessionalisierung von Kirche und Gesellschaft. Sammelbericht über eine Forschungsdebatte", in *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 121, 1996, cols. 1008-1025 (part 1), cols. 1112-1121 (part 2), here cols. 1118, 1115.

<sup>40</sup> "...funktionalistisch-reduktionistische Betrachtung der Religion...", *ibid.*, col. 1121.

<sup>41</sup> See *ibidem.*, cols. 1115-1116, 1121; ZIEGLER, "Typen der Konfessionalisierung...", p. 417; ZIEGLER, "Kritisches zur Konfessionalisierungsthese...".

<sup>42</sup> See SCHILLING (ed.), *Die reformierte Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland...*

<sup>43</sup> See SCHINDLING, "Konfessionalisierung und Grenzen von Konfessionalisierbarkeit...", p. 12.



of confessionalization perspectives stressing the differences between the confessional churches<sup>44</sup>. In contrast, Wolfgang Reinhard has stressed that the paradigm confessionalization consciously ignores confessional *propria* as part of its methodological approach. Therefore, he sees no need for an integration of this perspective, but argues for its continued exclusion from the paradigm of confessionalization in terms of a scholarly “division of labour”<sup>45</sup>.

The *fourth* point of critique on the paradigm of confessionalization is probably the most important one because it impinges on the general discussion about the relationship between macro- and micro-history. The question of the relation between history “from above” and “from below”, between societal history (*Gesellschaftsgeschichte*) and cultural history (*Kulturgeschichte*) has in recent years found expression in a very lively debate in German historiography<sup>46</sup>. Especially younger historians who are influenced by the new cultural history and historians working on other regions of Europe than the Holy Roman Empire have identified several “blind spots” of the concept. Above all, they have expressed severe doubts concerning the close association between confessionalization and state-building postulated by Reinhard and Schilling. As we have seen above, the advocates of the concept of confessionalization proceed from the assumption that confessionalization was decisively influenced or even set in motion by the early modern state and that it was therefore a top-to-bottom process: the people thus appear as subjects which state and church disciplined.

From a micro-historical point of view and also from the point of view of research into processes of social disciplining in the early modern period, Heinrich Richard Schmidt has thus criticised the etatistic focus and the overestimation of the role of the state in the paradigm of confessionalization. Drawing on the results of his research on

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<sup>44</sup> See SCHILLING, “Die Konfessionalisierung von Kirche, Staat und Gesellschaft...”, pp. 16-21.

<sup>45</sup> See REINHARD, “Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?...”, p. 435.

<sup>46</sup> See e.g. Wolfgang HARDTWIG and Hans Ulrich WEHLER (eds.), *Kulturgeschichte heute*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996; Thomas MERGEL and Thomas WELSKOPP (eds.), *Geschichte zwischen Kultur und Gesellschaft. Beiträge zur Theoriedebatte*, München, Beck, 1997.

church courts (*Chorgerichte*) in the rural communities of the Reformed territory of Berne in the early modern period, Schmidt came to the conclusion that successful social disciplining —if it existed at all— was not due to pressure from the state but was based on mechanisms of self-regulation and self-disciplining of the village communities. Concerning the paradigm of confessionalization, Schmidt therefore calls for “an end of etatism in research on confessionalization”<sup>47</sup>, for —in his opinion— confessionalization was a communal process: certain gender and social groups within the rural communities took up guidelines and instructions “from above” (from clergymen and state authorities) and put them into practice because they fitted in with their particular interests. Schmidt does not deny that there were impulses, regulations and even pressures exerted by governments and confessional churches “from above”. However, he sees the (rural, and by implication also urban) communities as the foundation of society<sup>48</sup> and thus as the decisive body responsible for disciplining and confessionalization. According to Schmidt, these processes could only be successful because there was a need for regulation within society<sup>49</sup>. Although both advocates of the concept of confessionalization have accepted that their definition of the paradigm is in danger of over-emphasizing the view “from above” and that it is useful to supplement the etatistic view with a view from the communities, they nevertheless reject Schmidt’s complete change of perspective towards a view “from below”. For, as Reinhard has argued, this would be an equally

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<sup>47</sup> This is the subtitle of a programmatic article by Schmidt: see Heinrich Richard SCHMIDT, “Sozialdisziplinierung? Ein Plädoyer für das Ende des Etatismus in der Konfessionalisierungsforschung”, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 265, 1997, pp. 639-682.

<sup>48</sup> In his emphasis on the communities as the basis of early modern society, Schmidt is influenced by Peter Blickle’s theory of “communalism” (*Kommunalismus*). See Peter BLICKLE, *Kommunalismus. Skizzen einer gesellschaftlichen Organisationsform*, vol. 1: *Oberdeutschland*, vol. 2: *Europa*, München, Oldenbourg, 2000.

<sup>49</sup> See Heinrich Richard SCHMIDT, *Dorf und Religion. Reformierte Sittenzucht in Berner Landgemeinden der Frühen Neuzeit*, Stuttgart, Jena, New York, Fischer, 1995 (see pp. 377-400 for an English summary). For Schmidt’s criticism of the paradigm of confessionalization see also Heinrich Richard SCHMIDT, *Konfessionalisierung im 16. Jahrhundert*, München, Oldenbourg, 1992.



one-sided view, “which plays down religious and administrative history in favour of a social history understood as the history of the lower orders”<sup>50</sup>.

Proceeding from other perspectives and other case studies, several historians besides Schmidt have in recent years criticized the concept of confessionalization for its emphasis on the initiatives of state and church. In this context, territories of mixed confessional make-up within and outside of the Holy Roman Empire have proven to be suitable “test cases” for the critique of the paradigm of confessionalization, in particular the connection between state formation, social disciplining and confessionalization and the problem of “success” or “failure” of confessionalization “from above”. For the Holy Roman Empire, Marc Forster has drawn attention to the bishopric of Speyer, where the Catholic communities developed a Catholic identity “from below” without being influenced either by Tridentine reform or by confessionalization measures by the state. Such measures were in fact almost completely absent from the bishopric. Forster draws the conclusion that the concept of confessionalization cannot be applied to this territory because “the Catholic population of the Bishopric of Speyer developed a confessional culture without being confessionalized”<sup>51</sup>. In a collection of essays on the duchy of Berg, a multi-confessional region in north-western Germany, the concept of confessionalization as a successful “top-to-bottom process” is also called into question. Because of the coexistence of Catholicism, Lutheranism and Calvinism in the region, the “etic” version of the paradigm of confessionalization can clearly not be applied to this case. However, the editors of the volume, Stefan Ehrenpreis und Burkhard

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<sup>50</sup> “...die Religionsgeschichte wie die Institutionengeschichte zugunsten einer als Unterschichtengeschichte verstandenen Sozialgeschichte herunterzuspielen...”, REINHARD, review of: SCHMIDT, *Konfessionalisierung im 16. Jahrhundert...*, p. 269.

<sup>51</sup> Marc R. FORSTER, *The Counter-Reformation in the Villages. Religion and Reform in the Bishopric of Speyer, 1560-1720*, Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press, 1992, p. 4. However, in his latest book Forster actually uses the term “confessionalization” in a chapter heading: see Marc R. FORSTER, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque. Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550-1750*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 21-36: “Confessionalization under Austrian leadership”.

Dietz, have interpreted the formation processes on the local level, which resulted in many conflicts between the different confessional communities, as competing processes of confessionalization “from below”<sup>52</sup>.

Comparable suggestions have been put forward by historians working on European countries other than the Holy Roman Empire. Olaf Mörke has made clear that the concept of confessionalization cannot be applied to the Dutch Republic as a whole because of its multi-confessionalism and—in early modern European terms—far-reaching toleration<sup>53</sup>. However, Mörke drew attention to the fact that in the Netherlands it was the individual religious communities which experienced processes of confessionalization. Therefore, Mörke identifies not one confessionalization, but many different confessionalizations within one political and territorial unity. Thus, the Netherlands do not, according to Mörke, fit the “etic mainstream” of the paradigm of confessionalization, which does, however, not mean that processes of confessionalization did not take place there<sup>54</sup>. Similar results have been presented by scholars working on east central Europe, notably by Winfried Eberhard. He has shown that in the countries of east central Europe, above all in Bohemia, the German model of “confessionalization from above” can also not be applied. Similar to the Netherlands, confessionalization processes took place within a multi-confessional framework and were thus regionalized and localized. And, in contrast to Germany, they were not initiated by the state

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<sup>52</sup> See Stefan EHRENPREIS, “Konfessionalisierung von unten. Konzeption und Thematik eines bergischen Modells?”, in DIETZ and EHRENPREIS (eds.), *Drei Konfessionen in einer Region...*, pp. 3-13, here pp. 8-9.

<sup>53</sup> See Olaf MÖRKE, “‘Konfessionalisierung’ als politisch-soziales Strukturprinzip? Das Verhältnis von Religion und Staatsbildung in der Republik der Vereinigten Niederlande im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert”, in *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, 16, 1990, pp. 31-60.

<sup>54</sup> See Olaf MÖRKE, “Die politische Bedeutung des Konfessionellen im Deutschen Reich und in der Republik der Vereinigten Niederlande. Oder: War die Konfessionalisierung ein ‘Fundamentaltvorgang’?”, in Ronald G. ASCH and Heinz DUCHHARDT (eds.), *Der Absolutismus - ein Mythos? Strukturwandel monarchischer Herrschaft in West- und Mitteleuropa (ca. 1550-1700)*, Köln, Weimar, Wien, Böhlau, 1996, pp. 125-164, esp. pp. 145-146 and 155.



“from above” but by the estates<sup>55</sup>. The author of the present article has come to similar conclusions regarding the nature of the confessionalization process in Ireland. In contrast to England and confessionally unified territories in Germany, Ireland became bi-confessional after the introduction of the Protestant Reformation because the majority of the native population remained Catholic. This led to two confessionalization processes taking place in Ireland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—one Catholic, one Protestant. While the Protestant process of confessionalization was state-sponsored, i.e. it was initiated “from above”, the Catholic process of confessionalization came “from below” and used parliament as a political institution to voice its demands. From this I have drawn a conceptual conclusion and termed the development in Ireland a process of “double confessionalization”<sup>56</sup>.

Recently, Luise Schorn-Schütte has summarized this critique of the paradigm of confessionalization: the intensive research on different case studies in recent years has shown that confessionalization “from above” did not take effect “below”, i.e. confessional disciplining intended by the state was more often than not a failure. Thus, the paradigm of confessionalization has, according to Schorn-Schütte, been shown to be a self-fulfilling prophesy: it interprets *intentions* of disciplining, centralizing and confessionalizing the population in early modern society as having been successful and as actually having formed behaviour, while in reality this did not happen. In addition, Schorn-Schütte has again drawn attention to the fact that resistance to confessionalization measures “from above”—resistance by the populace, burghers, clergymen, local officials and the nobility—needs to

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<sup>55</sup> See Winfried EBERHARD, “Zur reformatorischen Qualität und Konfessionalisierung des nachrevolutionären Hussitismus”, in Frantisek ŠMAHEL (ed.), *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter*, München, Oldenbourg, 1998, pp. 213-238; Winfried EBERHARD, “Voraussetzungen und strukturelle Grundlagen der Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa”, in BÄHLCKE and STROHMEYER (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa...*, pp. 89-103.

<sup>56</sup> See LOTZ-HEUMANN, *Die doppelte Konfessionalisierung in Irland*, esp. pp. 15-16; see also Karls S. BOTTIGHEIMER and Ute LOTZ-HEUMANN, “The Irish Reformation in European Perspective”, in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 89, 1998, pp. 268-309.

be taken into account much more intensively<sup>57</sup>. All in all, the paradigm of confessionalization has certainly had an immense impact in German historiography and has undoubtedly inspired a lot of research—from local and regional history, to gender history and the history of other European countries<sup>58</sup>. However, the critique of the paradigm has shed a clear light on its more problematic aspects and “blind spots”. *First*, the thesis of confessionalization being a fundamental process of society has basically been falsified by historiography: there were always areas of life which were not influenced by confessionalization. *Second*, it seems clear that confessionalization can no longer be regarded as a successful process “from above” *per se*, but that the concept has to be modified to allow for various *attempts* at confessionalization “from above” and “from below” within one political and geographical entity. *Third*, as a consequence, conflict and resistance as major factors in the process of confessionalization have been brought into the forefront: conflicts between competing confessional churches on the one hand and forms of resistance “from below” against confessionalization, social disciplining and early modern state-building “from above” on the other hand<sup>59</sup>. It is to be expected that the shift of historiographical interest towards micro-history, the history of everyday life and the new cultural history will in the future lead to more research on the meaning of confessionalization for the lives and identities of the common people. Whatever the outcome of the discussion, it can already be said that the paradigm of confessionalization is a major contribution and has given enormous impulses to historiography.

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<sup>57</sup> Schorn-Schütte calls such resistance “criticism of authority” (*Obrigkeitskritik*): see Luise SCHORN-SCHÜTTE, “Konfessionalisierung als wissenschaftliches Paradigma?”, in BÄHLCKE and STROHMEYER (eds.), *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa...*, pp. 63-77.

<sup>58</sup> See above notes 3 and 27.

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. LOTZ-HEUMANN, *Die doppelte Konfessionalisierung in Irland...*; Werner FREITAG, “Konfliktfelder und Konfliktparteien im Prozeß der lutherischen und reformierten Konfessionalisierung – das Fürstentum Anhalt und die Hochstifte Halberstadt und Magdeburg im 16. Jahrhundert, in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 92, 2001, pp. 165-194.