POWER AND PIETY: THE ORIGINS OF RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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John Wesley may have claimed that the world was his parish, but Methodist historians have been strongly tempted to make his parish their world, or, on the ecumenical rebound, pretend that Methodism has no firm connection with time and place but is a sort of *philosophia perennis* providentially welling up in the church universal from time to time.\(^1\) I suspect that God is as little glorified as I know the historian is little enlightened by either of these attitudes. For Methodism illustrates the complex of early eighteenth-century forces which were uniting England to Germany closer than ever before, to its politics and piety, to its theology, and to the private comforts and overt terrors of the German religious mind. Wesley’s own development was crucially influenced by events not only on the fringes of the Protestant world, but on opposite fringes—by Salzburgers and Moravians in Georgia and on the Atlantic passage, and by those other Moravians at Herrnhut on the frontiers of Saxony and what is now Czechoslovakia, whither amongst hundreds of others, Wesley made a pilgrimage in 1738, to see if sinless perfection really existed in this world, and to write some of the most moving pages in the whole of his *Journal*.\(^2\) Why were the fringes operating upon the centre in this way? The question is the more urgent because of what one hears scholars describing as the ‘tunnel’ period of English history, the twenty years or so before the beginning of Wesley’s evangelistic ministry in 1739. Something at least is known of the grandiose panorama of the religious struggles under Queen Anne, of the alliance of theology and eastern studies, of

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\(^1\) Lecture delivered in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester on Wednesday, 7 May 1980.

\(^2\) Rupert Davies, *Methodism* (London, 1963), pp. 11–23. The affirmation in the first sentence of this chapter clearly counts much more than the qualification in the last.

England, Prussia and the Russia of Peter the Great to frustrate a putative take-over of Greek Orthodoxy in the interests of Popery and French power; and the international negotiations of Archbishop Wake after Anne's death were explored by Dean Sykes. But then the darkness falls, and there seems no accounting for religious revival when it comes. In this paper, ignoring what was happening in the Reformed world for reasons of space, I would like to approach these questions by examining some developments in Central Europe, and assuming that there were shared anxieties in the Protestant world which gave rise to shared expectations. In these shared expectations, rather than in the sociology of parish or denomination lies the explanation of the random outbreak of religious revival all the way from Carinthia to New England.

Among the most powerful unifying factors in the whole Protestant world were the ambitions and problems of the new kingdom of Prussia. Long before she acquired Stettin in the Oder estuary in 1714, Prussia had ambitions in the Oder valley, and the construction of a canal between the Spree and the Oder in 1669 had given Berlin direct access to Breslau, one of the most important of German cities and the starting point of the Russia trade. The importance of this connection was enhanced by the acquisition of the duchy of Magdeburg in 1680. At that time a thoroughly rundown post-Thirty-Years-War province, Magdeburg mattered to Prussia as a junction to its possessions in the West, as a bridgehead against Saxony, and as an asset capable of rapid improvement. Under Prussian management the mines of salt, copper and hard coal began to boom, the Saale was made navigable, the population doubled in two generations, and manufactures were exported via the Silesian route to Hungary and Moravia. It was a bold move to do all this on the doorstep of Leipzig, the seat of an ancient and famous university, the home of an international trade fair, one of the two leading German book markets, and the chief place of Saxony which was itself the chief mining and manufacturing state in Germany, and whose Elector acquired the Polish crown in 1697. But the Berlin government meant business and, as was their wont, they made it plain by founding a university at Halle. A Lutheran university to turn out clergy and officials for the state was indeed
required. Duisberg and Frankfurt-on-Oder were both reformed universities, while the Saxon universities of Leipzig and Wittenberg were strongholds of Lutheran Orthodoxy, perilous to the affections of Brandenburger ordinands for their Reformed monarchy.¹

There was also an anti-Saxon slant to the religious policy of the Berlin government. They had somehow to gain acceptance of the Reformed religion of the court and their Rhineland provinces against the ingrained prejudices of the established Lutheran churches of their main territories. Politics as well as religion drove the Berlin court to play with all kinds of movements which sought to circumvent the entrenched theological positions of the past. The patronage rights which Orthodoxy acknowledged in the gentry constituted it not only a theological party, but a politics of gentry, a politics nowhere more deeply rooted than in the outlying territories of Magdeburg and East Prussia. Moreover, Lutheran Orthodoxy was the confessional platform for Prussia’s immediate rivals in the great international game, Sweden and Saxony. In this conflict the Berlin government found one ally in the early champions of Enlightenment, another in the leaders of Lutheran Pietism. Rather like English Methodism, Pietism combined a reliance on one set of past traditions with a sharp criticism of others. Building on a movement of generalized and unconfessional puritanism which had been widespread in the early seventeenth century and in which the literature of English puritans and of German writers like Arndt of a markedly anti-Saxon bent was still highly prized, the Pietists also followed their predecessors in calling for a second Reformation of the ecclesiastical forces in possession; in Germany this meant the Orthodoxy sustained in the old Lutheran heartland of Saxony, and institutionalized in the teachings of the universities of Wittenberg and Leipzig. Unjust as the Pietist criticisms of Orthodoxy as ‘hard’ and ‘dry’ often were, they gave vent to a disquiet common in Catholic as well as Protestant Europe at the policy of Christianizing the people by the device of privileged religious establishment.

operating at one level by a closely articulated doctrinal system
guaranteed against defeat in polemical warfare, and, at another,
by parish oversight. If Christianity was for ordinary people, it must
be something other than the complicated orthodoxies of the
seventeenth century; if it was to be transmitted from generation to
generation, it looked as if some other mechanism must at least
supplement the round of parish devotions; if it was to exert an
effective leverage upon conscience, it must find some substitute
for the increasingly ridiculous Orthodox insistence upon repent-
ance before the imminent end of all things. But if the end was not
at hand, time was limited. The prospects for Protestantism in
Germany looked bleak. The decline of France and the rise of the
Habsburg house encouraged the formation of a powerful Catho-
lic party in the empire.¹ There was a sorry trail of conversions of
Protestant princes to Rome, of which Saxony was only the chief.
Still worse, the legal constitution of Protestantism in Germany
gave increasing trouble, bringing the Empire to the brink of con-
fessional war in 1719, generating a series of hair-raising plans for
the forcible extirpation of protestantism under the aegis of
Prince Eugene or the Vienna allies of 1725 or the college of
Cardinals, which harrowed opinion throughout the twenties and
thirties, and kept the machinery of the Empire at full stretch
resisting, with only partial success, constant Catholic encroach-
ments on Protestant church property and other rights.² And, as
we shall see, where the provisions of the Westphalia settlement

¹On this see e.g. Hugo Hantsch, Reichsvizekanzler Friedrich Karl Graf von
Schönborn (Augsburg, 1929); Alfred Schröcker, Ein Schönborn im Reich
(Wiesbaden, 1978); and cf. Norbert Huber, Österreich und der Heilige Stuhl
(1714–21), Archiv für österreichische Geschichte, Bd. 126 (Vienna, 1967).
²On the crisis of 1719 see Karl Borgmann, Der deutsche Religionstreit der Jahre
1719/20 (Berlin, 1937); Andreas Biederbick, Der deutsche Reichstag zu Regensburg
im Jahrzehnt nach dem Spanischen Erbfolgekrieg, 1714–24 (Unpub. diss., Bonn,
1937). Only the contemporary discussions (e.g. J. J. Moser, Teutisches Staatsrecht
(21 vols. Nuremberg &c., 1737–54), i 119–78; Barcard Gotthelf Struve, Ausführliche
 Historie des Religionsbeschwerden zwischen den Römisch-Catholischen und
Evangelischen im Teutschen Reich (Leipzig, 1722); and the resolutions of the
Corpus Evangelicorum (E. C. W. von Schauoth, Vollständige Sammlung aller
Conclusorum, Schreiben, und anderer übrigen Verhandlungen des hochpreiss-
lichen Corporis Evangelicorum . . . bis auf die gegenwärtigen Zeiten (Regensburg,
1751–2)) give any impression of the labour involved in getting the provisions of
the religious peace agreed at Westphalia, to work. A brief introduction to all
did not apply at all, or applied still less effectively than they did in Germany, the situation was even more urgent.

One solution to this set of problems was offered by mystical and enthusiastic movements of a Quakerish type which had little use for the formalities of church life and were as common in Germany as they were in England. Spener, the founder of Lutheran Pietism, took another line. Beating the drum about the New Birth, the conditions of vitality in the faith, Spener treated the doctrine of justification less as the personal consciousness of the forgiveness of sins than as the real transformation of the newly-born; he repudiated the things of this world and yet demanded their improvement on the basis of the real improvement worked by faith upon mankind. In his *collegia pietatis* or class meetings he found a form of religious practice which seemed to provide something missing in the preaching and sacraments of the church. And in his 'hope of better times', his insistence that the end of all things would not come till all the scriptural promises to the church had been fulfilled, he afforded another motive to strive for the kingdom of God on earth.¹ Like Wesley, Spener claimed in no way to differ from the doctrines received in his church, but the Orthodox did not at all take to his effort to make faith dependent on an active piety and regarded his devotional groups as an invitation to schism. In the Orthodox view there were enough schismatic enthusiasts in Germany already, and it was known that Spener's right-hand man, August Hermann Francke, stood near them. The upshot was that a big drive against the Pietists was put on between 1689 and 1692. Spener and Francke were spectacularly drummed out of Saxony, their friends elsewhere were expelled, and it became clear that Pietism was bound for the underworld of visionary enthusiasm if some new protector could not be found. That protector turned up in Brandenburg-Prussia. Senior appointments were found for Spener and his friends, and

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¹The voluminous literature on Pietism is briefly introduced by Martin Schmidt, *Pietismus* (Stuttgart/Berlin/Cologne/Mainz, 1972); for an example of the recent work, Johannes Wallmann, *Philipp Jakob Spener und die Anfänge des Pietismus* (Tübingen, 1970).
above all the theological faculty at the new university at Halle was staffed with Pietists. This alliance between the Pietists and the Prussian court, which occasioned the most ferocious disputes with the Orthodox clergy of Halle and the estates of Magdeburg, lasted till Francke’s death in 1727, and in a less intimate form till the accession of Frederick the Great in 1740.¹

This reversal of fortune was not more singular than the uses to which Francke put it. He was one of the most extraordinary organizers in the whole history of Christianity. He began by systematizing what the stages of the Christian life were, beginning with a conviction of sin under the law, working through fear of the wrath to come to a total breach with the old Adam, a faith and sanctification continuously tested by rigorous self-examination. Francke indeed laid the basis for that pattern of Christian existence against which Methodist class-members and leaders were eventually experimentally to test their progress, a pattern the total absence of which is one of the distinguishing features of Christianity today. He also established characteristic forms of charitable and educational activity which marked the whole subsequent history of evangelical religion. Everybody knows, and everybody knew from Francke’s calculated propaganda at the time, of the Orphan House he created at Halle, of the dispensary, the schools, the teacher-training institutions, and the Bible Institute attached to it. But Francke’s Orphan House bore no resemblance to the minuscule reproductions of it set up by Wesley in Newcastle and Whitefield in Georgia, nor was the dispensary primarily a device for pumping pills into orphans. The Orphan House was one of the biggest buildings in Europe, if not the biggest—3,000 people were soon living and working there²—while the dispensary was the first producer of standardized branded medicaments on a commercial scale, able and anxious to sell a complete public health kit for a city or province and marketing its wares by brochures in Latin, French, English, Dutch and Greek. How else indeed was Francke’s vast enterprise to be paid for? His institutions received

¹Klaus Deppermann, Der Hallesische Pietismus und der preussische Staat unter Friedrich III (I) (Gottingen, 1961); Carl Hinrichs, Preussentum und Pietismus (Gottingen, 1971).
²Gerhard Oestreich, Friedrich Wilhelm I (Gottingen, 1977), p. 82.
royal privileges which had a cash value; there were charitable collections all over Europe; but the whole organization turned on commercial ventures on an enormous scale, Francke's spiritual agents tapping the markets for a wide range of products all the way from Venice to the Far East. But the great business of Halle lay in the supply of medicaments and Bibles and other religious literature. The press speedily became one of the chief in Germany, publishing not only in German and Greek and Russian Cyrillic type, but in a whole range of Slavonic languages where nothing of the kind had been available before. These works were partly for the benefit of Wends and other enserfed populations on the estates of the Pietist nobility in Germany, but still more for the restless Protestant populations of the Habsburg lands.¹ To these peoples the Bible was a forbidden and revolutionary book, and the strategy underlying Francke's hope of creating a second Halle at Teschen, the point at which Silesia made a junction with Hungary on the one side and Bohemia on the other needs no comment. Francke indeed began with Utopian aims of setting the whole world to rights, and supported them by a gigantic correspondence, by establishing his agents in all the key points of central and eastern Europe, and by alliances with a number of important imperial counts outside Prussia, especially in Silesia and in Lusatia, the most recently acquired and dissident portion of Saxony. These connections explain why Francke was useful to Prussia, and also explain the link between a Pietism which was not itself revivalist and the origins of Protestant religious revival.

The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 is commonly spoken of as having secured the establishment of Protestantism, and certainly it put a ring-fence around the principal Protestant church-establishments. But this ring-fence excluded enormous numbers of Protestants in Salzburg, Bohemia, Moravia, Austria, Hungary, Silesia and Poland, populations often locally in a numerically dominant position. No rights of toleration were secured for those in Bohemia, Moravia and Austria; in Hungary there were constant persecutions, even while Transylvania was preserved as a sort of Botany Bay for Protestants deported from all parts of the Habsburg lands. In all these areas the Reformation had been as much a

¹See reference in note 1 above, p. 233.
plea for social justice as a theological or liturgical programme, and a steady intensification of serfdom had led to a long succession of peasant revolts in which the defence of Protestantism, the defence of older social customs, and in places, the defence of oppressed nationality were inextricably mingled together. In all these areas the problem of securing the survival of the faith was far more acute than in Germany or England; slow decline seemed hardly a practical possibility; the Protestants must generate new power from their own resources quickly or go under; and they must do so in the more of less complete absence of the ordinary mechanisms of church life.

Silesia was a fascinating half-way case. Under the Westphalia settlement the free exercise of the Protestant religion was preserved only in Breslau and a few indirectly ruled territories. The rest of Silesia had to make do with three churches newly built before the walls of Glogau, Jauer and Schweidnitz; all the other churches were withdrawn and the pastors, soon followed by the schoolmasters, were driven out. For formal worship Protestants resorted by hundreds to the frontier churches of the neighbouring areas of Saxony, Brandenburg, Poland and Liegnitz, but in 1675 Liegnitz itself fell to the Habsburgs and was Catholicized. The Jesuits worked hard in Breslau, created a university in a splendid baroque building by the Oder, and clearly aimed to cream off the educated strata of Protestant society. Help eventually came from Charles XII of Sweden, who marched victoriously into Silesia in 1707, and secured very extensive concessions to the Protestants by the Convention of Altranstädt. One hundred and twenty churches were to be returned to them in the indirectly governed principalities, six new ‘grace’ churches were to be built in the Habsburg family lands, and to these and some other churches schools were to be attached. The city of Breslau got back four churches in the neighbouring countryside. There was no religious equality, but the worst pressure was off.


2 G. Biermann, *Geschichte des Protestantismus in Oesterreichische-Schlesien* (Prague, 1897), pp. 65–92; *Geschichte Schlesiens,* ed. L. Petry and J. Joachim
What is interesting is what happened to the religion of the Silesian Protestants who were in the toils, but not afflicted by the demoralizing oppression which came upon the Protestants of France or Hungary. What could not be accomplished by the ordinary mechanisms of church life must be accomplished in some other way. Domestic piety, informal class-meetings, must replace public worship. Clergy, dispossessed of their livings, lived perilously, keeping in touch with their flocks on an itinerant basis, known already as Busch-prediger, the local equivalent of the later Methodist field-preachers. Deprived of public standing, the Silesian Protestants turned to inwardness of faith, a patient steadfast trust in God, a certain tenderness of piety which became one of the hallmarks of Protestant revival. If Silesian Protestantism at the beginning of the eighteenth century was more sober in tone than later revivalism, this owed much to the empirical scholarship of its inherited leadership. Caspar Neumann, then chief pastor in Breslau, professor at the gymnasium and theological adviser to the town council, was in touch with Leibnitz and other leading scholars abroad, a member of the Royal Society of Sciences in Berlin and a correspondent of the Royal Society in England. Of course the Breslau Protestants could not afford to let the Jesuit educational ladder draw off the upper ranks of society. Their gymnasium must be as good as their competitors, and, while sending off their prospective professional men to Jena and Leiden, they must find a substitute for a local university. Already in 1652, before any of the big scientific societies in the West, an Academia Naturae Curiosum had been founded in Schweinfurt, and the Breslau doctors soon formed a branch of their own. They launched the world's first scientific medical journal, and developed academy sections to pursue physics and chemistry, mineralogy and meteorology, zoology and palaeontology, to the same


standard as medicine. The Breslau clergy, concluding, unlike most clergy at most times, that if they were going to hold forth on the great facts of life and death, they had better know what they were, cooperated with the doctors to produce better tables of vital statistics than those which could be obtained from the Bills of Mortality in England. Caspar Neumann and one of the doctors, Gottfried Schultz, sent the data on to Halley in 1692, who used them as the basis for the first satisfactory calculations of annuity tables. This was the same Caspar Neumann whose hymns were prized all over Germany, and whose book of prayers, Kern alle Gebete, went through twenty-two editions in his lifetime, and was translated into almost all European tongues, including English (in 1705).

Yet there had been not only Swedes at the Altranstädt negotiations; Francke had been there too and it was Halle that exploited the opportunities there created. And there were other things besides sober piety in Silesia, and these put Neumann in 1707 much in the position of John Wesley dealing with the Ranters. When the Swedish army entered Silesia there were no protestant churches for their use, so their church parades were held in the open air, introducing another familiar Methodist word, camp-meetings (Feldgottesdienste). When the troops moved on, the children of Lower Silesia took over where they had left off, meeting several times a day in the open air, without adult cooperation, standing in circles around their elected leaders in prayer and singing. Despite the winter, this 'uprising of the children' as it was called, spread across the country, and reached Breslau in 1708. The objects of the camp-meetings—the re-establishment of Protestant churches and schools—were politically sensitive in the highest degree, and behind them came a new wave of pietist camp-meetings, a new race of itinerant preachers backed by Halle, and, we are told, 'enormous balderdash leading to fanaticism was heard'. Neumann turned this corner by baptizing the movement, setting aside newly returned churches for children's use, and established clerical leadership.

1Hildegard Zimmermann, Caspar Neumann und die Entstehung der Frühaufklärung. Ein Beitrag zur schlesischen Theologie- und Geistesgeschichte im Zeitalter des Pietismus (Witten, 1969).
It was quite impossible for Silesia’s embarrassments to be locally confined. There were, first of all, substantial population movements in a part of Europe still very short of labour. Eighteen hundred Protestant weavers went off to Lusatia; in 1724 the Jesuits got the Schwenkfelders out of Liegnitz and they went (via Herrnhut) to America. The Governor of Schweidnitz expelled a group of the ‘awakened’ (‘Erweckten’—the German word for revival is ‘Erweckungsbewegung’); there were also substantial immigrations of Poles and of German Lutherans escaping persecution in Hungary. Above all, Halle with the Prussian government behind it was determined to exploit the key situation of the grace church at Teschen, the natural meeting-ground for Poles, Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians. Voigt, the original preacher there, was a former tutor to Francke’s own children; he was succeeded by other able agents from Halle, and when the Jesus Church was finally dedicated, there was a congregation of 40,000, three-quarters of whom were Poles.\(^1\) The Polish work continued on so large a scale as to tempt the historians of communist Poland to see the whole affair in terms of Polish hatred of German lordship and their leadership of the oppressed.\(^2\) But the openings which most interested Halle were in Bohemia and Moravia. A great peasant revolt in 1680 against increasing catholicization and intensified serfdom, had led to a steady emigration centred on Zittau and Upper Lusatia. After the Convention of Altranstädt 7,000 peasants appealed to Sweden for religious freedom, and the repression, war and taxation which followed, led to another rising in 1713–14.

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Religion blended with politics on both sides. Among the Czechs, resistance to forced labour combined with secret Protestantism and revolutionary elements in the Hussite tradition; the Bohemian government accompanied a Forced Labour Patent in 1717 with an edict against secret Protestant emissaries.

This legislation was directed in the first instance against the activity of the Jesus Church in Teschen. The Jesuits were too clever to allow the creation of a second Halle in that place, but they could not stop religious literature produced at Halle going through it to the tune of scores of thousands of volumes, nor could they stop illegal journeys by the Teschen preachers into Bohemia to inflame the troubles there. Things became particularly difficult after the Pietist John Steinmetz was appointed to Teschen in 1719. His assistants, Liberda, Sarganek and Macher, trained at Halle in the Polish and Czech languages, were powerful characters, and Liberda in particular, in whom the preacher and political agitator were almost indistinguishable, must have been one of the most effective revivalists of all time. The success of the preachers in Bohemia may be measured by the determination of the Jesuits to get them out of Teschen; after a seven-year trial they succeeded in 1730, and the preachers were expelled.

The Jesuit counter-attack was only the overt sign of an inward competition for the religious roots of Czech nationalism which passes unmentioned in the books. For it was now that the Habsburgs took up the veneration of a fourteenth-century Bohemian, John of Nepomuk, and pressed it on a great scale. Charles VI and his consort Elizabeth Christine effectively urged Pope Clement XI in 1720–1 to speed his canonization, and obtained it 1729. At the crisis of Habsburg survival in 1742, with Silesia lost and French and Bavarian troops in Prague itself, a great veneration of the Bohemian saint began at the court of Maria Theresa. In Vienna itself two churches, six chapels, statues by the score at every bridge and river bank, and religious fraternities with their altars, testified to the new standing of the only Bohemian saint of international significance. Czech Protestants could now hardly avoid a rival

2 Elisabeth Kovács, 'Die Verehrung des hl. Johannes von Nepomuk am
effort to appropriate their country's religious past, and if their efforts to do so never seemed to the Lutheran Orthodox anything but arbitrary,¹ they generated a religious revival which not only beat the canonization of John of Nepomuk by a short head, but considerably outdid him in international impact.

By 1730 a considerable wave of Czech emigration had been got going, most of it into Saxony, and especially into a few parishes in Upper Lusatia. The first name here was one of John Wesley's heroes, Christian David from North Moravia. He had been converted and later strengthened in the faith by the preaching of Steinmetz at Teschen, and had been put in touch with a young Pietist nobleman, educated at Halle, Count Zinzendorf, who had bought an estate at Berthelsdorf, on the borders of Bohemia, with a view to creating a religious community. It was here at Herrnhut, 'The Lord's Watch', that David felled the first tree in 1722, and peopled the settlement with illegal emigrants brought out on his repeated perilous sorties across the frontier; it was here that the famous revival broke out in 1727 and the renewed Unity of the Moravian Brethren was created; it was here that the famous troubles with the Saxon church and government took place, and that one of the most famous missionary forces of the revival was born of the necessity to secure alternative bases, the Moravians of John Wesley's youth, of Fulneck and Droylsden, of Gracehill in Ireland and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, of mission stations as distant as Greenland and the West Indies. But these Herrnhuters were Germans, and Wesley's Journal had no reason to note that the movement which Christian David let loose in North Moravia spread far into East Bohemia and produced a large Czech emigration as well. This emigration poured into Gross Hennersdorf, a

parish adjacent to Berthelsdorf, owned by Zinzendorf's aunt, Henrietta von Gersdorf, one of the lay supporters of Francke. Milde, who translated Francke's works into Czech, and got them into Bohemia at the rate of 10,000 a year, had long spells in Hennersdorf organizing the inflow, clearly preparing the parish to be a staging-post for a migration. And when it became necessary to appoint a Czech preacher there in 1726, who should be installed but the inflammatory Liberda from Teschen. This was important for the future. The Pietist nobility of Upper Lusatia might hope to populate their estates with Protestant refugees, but they wanted to have them in the same bondage as they had the Wends. But of all the nationalities in this part of the world, the Czechs were the most determined to preserve their nationality, and, having fought Leibeigenschaft in Bohemia, were adamant against submitting to any such thing in Germany. And Liberda was the last man to persuade them to do otherwise.

A generation of policy had now rewarded the Prussian government and its henchmen at Halle with the leadership of the Protestant interest inside Germany and out. Rousing the Protestant minorities weakened the Habsburgs and was producing a flow of immigration so profitable as to be denounced by the Lutheran Orthodox as selling gospel truth for Mammon. For quite apart from the vast empty spaces in Prussia, there were in 1721 three thousand two hundred and fifty seven deserted peasant lots in Brandenburg alone, and multitudes more further east. From 1718 the King advertised throughout Europe annually, offering favourable conditions for colonists, and it was a measure of the Emperor's concern that he did his best to divert the King of Prussia's acquisitiveness to the Rhineland territories of Jülich and Berg and made privately encouraging noises when in 1732 Prussia's immigration policy accomplished its most signal triumph in the neighbouring territories of the Archbishop of Salzburg.1 Of course, the great difference between the Salzburg crisis and the

great Catholic assault in the Reich in 1719 was that Charles VI was now buying approval of the Pragmatic Sanction by any means to hand.

The Archbishopsric was a sovereign state, allied to the Habsburgs, with, it was supposed, a modest Protestant minority of five or six thousand, miners of gold, salt and other minerals, hill and valley peasants. In 1685 at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, there had been a clash between the government and the Protestants in the Defereggental which led to a small emigration to Prussia and Baden. But the real crisis did not come till the election of Baron Leopold von Firmian to the see in 1727. Firmian was a mechanically-minded man, zealous according to his lights, who had tried to raise the moral tone of the diocese of Lavent by minutely regulating the moral conduct of the clergy; as Bishop of Seckau (1724–7) he had turned to the Jesuits, and he now resorted to Jesuit missions again. These produced evidence of a peasant Protestantism in the mountains, kept going through the generations by Luther’s Bible and Protestant hymnbooks, and began to take ever more severe measures against suspects, against the weak and against children. Gastein was full of heretics, with a long tradition of private devotions and itinerant peasant preachers, and in the early thirties heretical gatherings were taking place at night and during mass in many places. The Protestant estates of the Empire defended their co-religionists and kept up the smuggling of forbidden books; and preparations for Protestant resistance began in Salzburg amid scenes of religious excitement which became part of the regular expectation in religious revivals. Over the winter of 1730–1 the peasants of the Lungau and Pongau began to associate and petitioned the Corpus Evangelicorum at Regensburg on behalf of their 19,000 brethren in the Protestant faith that they might have the rights


assured by the Peace of Westphalia of the free exercise of their religion or of emigration. This petition showed for the first time what the statistical proportions of the problem were. Finally, the Salzburg government called in Austrian troops, and in November 1731, in midwinter, expelled all Protestants over twelve at eight days’ notice, with no opportunity to clear up their affairs. There were rumours that a Prussian army was to be sent in; instead a rescue operation was mounted which was one of the most remarkable achievements of eighteenth-century government. Thousands of Salzburgers made their way through neighbouring territories which did not want to give rights of passage, were picked up by Prussian commissaries in various parts of Swabia, marched in columns by different routes to ease the billeting problem, to Berlin, and then on to Pomerania, East Prussia and Lithuania, paid a daily subsistence allowance on the way, and rapidly settled in domestic service or on peasant lots. The poor Salzburgers had to face a second winter without proper housing, but they did get themselves provided for, and soon the Prussian government supplied them with churches, clergy and schools, and set about getting some return on the property they had had to abandon in Salzburg. After an initial contumacy, in which some even threatened to turn Papist, the Salzburgers settled down, and those who read contemporary novelists like Bobrowski and Siegfried Lenz, who write about East Prussia and Lithuania as they were just before the last war, will have come across them, still a distinct population marked out by its own customs and methods of making sauerkraut. The whole operation cost the Prussian government half a million thalers, but they got about 20,000 settlers, the largest group to be displaced in Germany since the Reformation. The Dutch subscribed 400,000 thalers and got 788 Dürrenberger miners and settled them partly at Flushing and partly on an island in the Maas estuary, where they mostly sickened and died.¹ The English subscribed 228,000 thalers and

¹Since 1972 the descendants of the Dürrenberger have had their own historical journal published at Groede (Netherlands). The East Prussian Salzburger Verein, founded in 1911, was dissolved by the Russians in 1945, but was reconstituted at Bielefeld in 1952/3, and since 1962 has also had a journal. Bernhard H. Zimmerman, ‘Salzburger Glaubensfluchtlinge in dem Nederlanden und in Ostpreussen’, IGGPÖ, lxxix (1973), 183–7.
got a first instalment of 200 who were settled near Savannah by the Georgia Trustees with two ministers sent from Halle, and put under the general spiritual oversight of the Wesley brothers. The Archbishop of Salzburg got the enthusiastic congratulations of the Pope, but, unable to fill the spiritual vacuum he had created, also got what is supposed to be the oldest centre of hard-core working-class atheism among the salt miners at Hallein, and a diocese in which female dress was regulated with exemplary minuteness but in which money was not safe in the bank and collapse was imminent.

The propaganda generated by the episode is as interesting as the episode itself. As the Salzburgers marched across Europe they were catechized in every town and treated to endless sermons which were sold to raise funds on their behalf.¹ The catechizing proved that, notwithstanding the allegations of the Salzburg government, after centuries without a church, they were still Lutherans with rights under the Westphalia settlement, not an unrecognized sect. The Salzburgers, even more than the Silesians before them, had found not so much an alternative church as an alternative to the church, and in doing so had left an indelible mark on the history of Protestant revival. As Valentin Ernst Löscher, the great spokesman of Saxon Orthodoxy,² put it in amazement:

it is astonishing that so many thousands should become Protestants without teachers, in the midst of the Kingdom of anti-Christ under the power of the Pope of Rome, without special human leadership... We knew almost nothing of them, and those who did know something of them reckoned the secret brethren of the faith at scarcely some hundreds and behold there are many thousands of them...

The charity sermons went out with emotional line-drawings of the Salzburgers turning their back on their mountain homeland for the sake of the faith, and depicted them carrying a fat baby under


²For Löscher see Martin Greschat, Zwischen Tradition und Neuen Anfang. Valentin Ernst Löscher und der Ausgang der lutherischen Orthodoxie (Witten, 1971).
one arm and the Luther Bible under the other, or with a fat baby under each and Luther's shorter catechism. The evidence was that in the absence of all the routines of church life, the Bible and a quite small number of Reformation classics were capable of keeping faith alive. Is there any wonder that the English proto-evangelicals, sick at the feebleness of the church and their own personal failings, should have their eyes opened to the forgotten sustenance still contained in this kind of literature? Their agonies, indeed, were perfectly well-known in Germany, the spies of Halle reporting back on the respective merits of Mr Wesley and Mr Whitefield (whom they preferred), and the great Weimar Orthodox journal, the *Acta Historico-Ecclesiastica*, giving a highly circumstantial account of the toils Wesley got into in Savannah, which reads very oddly beside his own account.

But there was another kind of propaganda for which the Prussian government made itself responsible with the minimum of disguise. One huge work of seven enormous volumes, published at Halle, gave the crop yields for every settler in Georgia; another monster, written in the house of one of the members of the Prussian government, described in similar detail the settlements around the Baltic. The case was clearly being made in the most circumstantial way possible that to leave the realms of Anti-Christ and Habsburg was a way to serve not merely God but Mammon, and was speedily to be put to the test. There were, as we have seen, Czechs at Gross Hennersdorf bitterly opposed to the living conditions, religious restrictions and the attempts of

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1 The Protestant crisis inside and outside the Westphalia ring-fence was being circumstantially reported in England at the time of Wesley's conversion (see e.g. *The Present State of Germany* (London, 1738), vol. 1, pp. vii, 36) but was in any case perfectly well-known. English historians neglect the Hanoverian role of George I and even George II as Protestant crusaders; on this see Martin Nau mann, *Österreich, England und das Reich 1719–1732* (Berlin, 1936).


3 *Acta Historico-Ecclesiastica*, ii. 405–24; iii. 1087; iv. 885–95.

Henrietta von Gersdorf to put them in bondage. Led by Liberda, and supported by the other exiles from Teschen, Sarganek and Steinmetz, and by the younger Francke, a deputation obtained an audience with the King of Prussia in 1732, and proposed to make the Hennersdorf Czechs the advance guard of a new train of 30,000 Czechs from Bohemia who should be settled with the Salzburgers in East Prussia. Frederick William, as usual, temporized, but patience was not in the nature of any of the parties he was dealing with. Liberda dashed off into Bohemia armed with supplies of his spiritual works, the Key of David and the New Harp, which had a proved revolutionary effect. No sooner had he left Hennersdorf than the bulk of the Czechs there uprooted, and marched off to Berlin in mid-winter, where they were set to work in a textile factory and became one of the basic units of the Berlin proletariat. When Liberda got into Bohemia, he found a peasant revolt already under way, with agitators claiming to bring great promises from the King of Prussia, and he drafted the rebels' petition, Salzburg style, claiming freedom of conscience or an unimpeded passage to Prussia. Alas! the Habsburg government hit hard and crushed the rebels. But the basic situation remained unchanged, the Protestant emissaries still came in, a steady trickle of secret emigrants went out, and there was another peasant revolt in 1738. When Liberda got back to Hennersdorf he was dragged off in chains to Dresden, convicted of high treason, and imprisoned in one of the most notorious gaols in Saxony. The Czech congregation in Berlin, however, begged the King to get them Liberda as their minister. Frederick William actually laid on a gaol-break attempt and at the third try Liberda escaped, taking his gaoler with him, and both took refuge in Berlin. The next stage of the story, Frederick the Great's direct assault upon Silesia, and his cynical efforts, with Liberda's assistance, to get up another Czech revolt in 1741, all of which made the young sceptic the Protestant hero of innumerable public-house signs in England, falls outside the limits of this paper. It is worth, however, seeing what was happening in Inner Austria.

1Manfred Schlenke, England und das friderizianische Preussen, 1740–1763 (Freiburg/Munich, 1963). On the later history of the religious question in Silesia, see G. Jæckel, 'Die Bedeutung der konfessionellen Frage für die Besitzergreifung
In Styria and Carinthia features familiar from Salzburg and Bohemia were combined. As in Bohemia, the persecutions of the previous two centuries had dislodged the Protestant nobility, leaving only peasants behind; but, as in Salzburg, the Protestant peasantry were a minority, conforming on occasion to Catholic worship, though in the long mountain valleys of Upper Styria and Carinthia many of them lived miles from a parish church and were not much disturbed. In these equivocal circumstances the only prophylactic against absorption into a dead Catholicism lay in basing a live family-worship upon the Bible and a few other approved books. There had been a lively sympathy in Austria for the victims of persecution in Salzburg in the 1680s, and one of those expelled, Joseph Schaidtberger, became the first of the working-men revivalists in Austria, leaving a permanent memorial in his spiritual writings and songs. The crisis in Salzburg in 1731 produced great excitement in Austria. The Government closed the passes into Salzburg on pretext of cattle-plague to keep out the Salzburgers, only to be embarrassed by the efforts of their own Catholic peasants to break into Salzburg on a massive scale to take advantage of the collapse of land prices after the Protestant emigration. In Graz and Klagenfurt religious commissions were established to keep the situation under control and to keep a lookout for Prussian agents. The Austrian government produced the names to the Corpus Evangelicorum of Salzburgers and Carinthians sent in with religious literature and assistance to those who wished to emigrate; Prussian agents were well-known to be there too, but were not taken red-handed. There is no mistaking, however, the level of religious excitement. The Habs-
burgs resorted to their heavy weapons, drafting Protestants into the army and transporting others to its own frontier area in Transylvania. Yet the troubles went on; there was more unrest in Carinthia between 1738 and 1741, and when the whole Habsburg system was imperilled by Frederick the Great’s incursion into Silesia, Vienna feared a Protestant uprising in Carinthia.

The later stages of the Protestant movements in Inner Austria and Bohemia fall outside the scope of this paper. It could hardly have been accidental that there were serious troubles as events led up to the Seven Years War, and that disturbances in Inner Austria immediately preceded the great Czech peasant uprising of 1775. Each of these troubles produced fresh emigration to Prussia, though nothing more on the Salzburg scale. For this there were several reasons. Frederick was too cynical by half in manipulating religious grievances and the Czechs, bent on preserving nationality and liberty at all costs, became too clever for him. So, too, in their way did the Habsburgs. If they had to cede Silesia, they would not give up the key-point of Teschen; they confronted heresy not only with force, but with improved church organization and a missionary appeal of a new character. Above all, the thoroughly anti-Protestant government of Joseph II began by ending the worst forms of personal servitude in 1780 and introducing religious toleration in 1781. This was trebly profitable. It produced immediate relaxation of political tension; it tempted some of Prussia’s ill-used Czechs back home; and it ensured that the next round of peasant discontent went not into the now tolerated Protestant churches, but into weird sects with often fantastic views. The days when religious revival sprang from the conjunction of Protestant self-help and Prussian conspiracy were


over. The sign of Habsburg victory at home was that nineteenth- and twentieth-century statues of St. John of Nepomuk could bear the face of Hus; the proto-Protestant could be pressed into Catholic service.

The impulse given by these events was now, however, beyond the reach of any of the Central European governments. Revival began to break out in America, first among those German communities most closely in touch with Halle, and then amongst New Englanders also in touch with Halle. When Halle finally became the prisoner of a Prussian state which cared nothing for its universal ends, Zinzendorf's Moravians developed a world-wide mission, and both directly and on the rebound from America left their mark in England. Above all, the evidence, at a time when the Protestant world outside the Westphalia ring-fence reached its crisis, that with a bit of assistance, with the scriptures and the pure milk of the Reformation word, popular Protestantism could pull itself up by the boot-straps in a remarkable and un-ecclesiastical way, created self-fulfilling expectations which lasted on a large scale till the end of the nineteenth century and are not yet dead.

Moreover, the political and social ambiguities which are usually discussed on an absurdly narrow basis in relation to Halévy and Methodism were there from the beginning. The religion which was a tool of state policy at Halle was that of a country opposition to a baroque court in Württemberg much as the earliest Methodism seems to have been related to the opposition to Walpole. The same Lusatian Pietist gentry who incited the Czechs to rise against serfdom proposed to enserf them as soon as they got over the border. Germans and Czechs from adjacent Bohemian villages went opposite ways; the one into universal evangelism and a forswearing of politics, the other into the defence of a national tradition by a mixture of intense trade unionism and political intrigue. The so-called 'tunnel', decades before Wesley's conversion, had seen many of the themes of Methodist history rehearsed in advance by a strange mixture of forces of revival, renewal and resistance operating in the most varied contexts between the Russian and the American frontiers of the European world.