

Some of the chapters in this book concentrate on highly idiosyncratic religious issues, such as the spirituality of Hendrik van Barrefelt, also known as Hiël. Mirjam van Veen evaluates the erastian ideas of Caspar Coolhaes in relation to his views on minority groups outside the public Church. The volume also contains contributions that address larger historiographical questions, such as the role of religion in the early Enlightenment. In a critical evaluation of Jonathan Israel's Enlightenment trilogy, Douglas Shantz argues that the culture of religious 'innovation' in the Netherlands and Germany during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries paralleled and also informed the early Enlightenment. While this argument draws heavily on Pietist and Evangelical social engagement and could have been enriched by the identification and examination of more factors, Shantz's point is important and it supports the revisionist approach to Enlightenment thought as exemplified by Jonathan Sheehan and others.

Despite its wide range of topics and approaches, this volume manages to evade the problems typically associated with the *Festschrift*-genre, avoiding far-fetched contributions as well as well-trodden paths. It reflects the quite recent de-confessionalisation of Dutch religious scholarship and shows that trans-confessional perspectives can offer new and fruitful insights. Bringing leading experts on early modern Dutch minority groups together and inviting them to engage in approaches that transcend the historiographies of the various confessions, this volume is a welcome contribution to the religious and cultural history of the Dutch Republic.

UNIVERSITEIT LEIDEN

JOHANNES MÜLLER

*Bremen als Brennpunkt reformierter Irenik. Eine sozialgeschichtliche Darstellung anhand der Biografie des Theologen Ludwig Crocius (1586–1655).* By Leo van Santen. (Brill's Series in Church History, 69.) Pp. xxix + 447 incl. 1 ill. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2014. €168. 978 90 04 28102 8; 1572 4107  
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Bremen has not fared particularly well in Anglophone historiography of the Reformation period. The city on the Weser has been overshadowed by its mightier neighbour Hamburg to the north-east or the bustling urban centres of the Low Countries to the south-west. Its geography, though, is precisely the reason for the region being such a fascinating target of study. In the Middle Ages Bremen was one of the critical provinces of the imperial Church, but with the coming of the Reformation, the archdiocese found itself in a difficult position. Caught between the Lutherans of the Baltic and the Calvinists of the North Sea, Bremen straddled an awkward confessional divide. Though its archbishop, the rock-ribbed Christoph von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, did not desert Rome, its canons did, and by the 1530s the region had defected to the Lutherans. The growing influence of Dutch merchants on the city's mercantile elite pushed Bremen towards the Calvinists by the 1560s. The cathedral itself became a symbol of Protestant stalemate. The Lutheran canons of the cathedral, angry and upset with the Reformed leaders of the municipality, simply shut and locked its doors in 1561, and for nearly eighty years the massive medieval monument remained closed to the public. This is all background material for Leo van

Santen's fascinating monograph on one of Bremen's most important figures of the early seventeenth century, Ludwig Crocius, a gifted leader who sought to mediate tensions between Lutheran and Reformed communities.

Born in 1586 in the spa town of Laasphe in what is today North Rhine-Westphalia, Ludwig Crocius came from two generations of Lutheran pastors. Both, though, were mild and favoured a Melancthonian vision of reform. As a young man, Crocius studied in Herborn, Marburg, Bremen, Basle and Geneva, and through his travels began to develop a wide network of correspondents across the Protestant world. He was eventually called to Bremen to serve as professor at the city's *Gymnasium illustre*, an institution that has been aptly described as a 'fortress of Reformed education'. In his first foray in the arena of theological controversy Crocius faced a formidable Catholic opponent as he engaged in a lengthy polemical battle with Galileo's interlocutor, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine. A few years after this encounter, he represented the city as a delegate at the synod of Dordt. Reflecting the desires of an urban elite eager to stay on good terms with all its Protestant neighbours, Crocius cautiously sought a middle ground in the discussions intended to resolve the Arminian controversy. He publicly criticised one of the fiercest opponents of the Remonstrants and seemed sympathetic to a number of their views. Nevertheless, when the synod drew to a close, he subscribed to its canons. Throughout his career, however, he remained suspect in the eyes of more orthodox Calvinists. Leo van Santen follows his career as it moved from Dordt to a period when he began to establish himself more solidly in Bremen. He pays special attention to the connections that he developed with other irenicists who sought to bridge divides between Protestant communities. He probes his relationships and correspondence with Alsted, Calixt, Pareus, Durie and others. He gives special attention to his friendship with the classicist Gerhard Johannes Vossius, who too was suspected of Arminian sympathies.

How does this volume fit into a broader literature and what is its more general significance? On the one hand, *Bremen als Brennpunkt reformierter Irenik* is the archetypal monograph of the forgotten figure. Heretofore, Crocius has eluded the scholarly nets of both the historian and the theologian. There is no biography and even Otto Scheib includes no treatment of him in his massive three-volume overview of religious dialogue during the confessional era. Listing close to two hundred libraries and archives, Leo van Santen has mined institutions from Durham, North Carolina, to Dunedin, New Zealand, to give us an extensive treatment of Crocius. At the volume's conclusion he has compiled a thorough bibliography of Crocius' own work, well more than a hundred volumes. But the text is really more than a simple intellectual portrait of a single individual from north Germany. *Bremen als Brennpunkt* is a fascinating study of the polycentric world of German Calvinism in the first half of the seventeenth century. While for most scholars Heidelberg traditionally stands out as the *Hochburg* of the Reformed movement in the German lands, van Santen has laid out a more complicated topography. Through Crocius he has developed a fascinating prosopography that connects so many figures of the Reformed world together and highlights the linkages of central European Protestantism. As with any scholarly study, there are of course areas one could highlight where an author may overstate a claim or fail to develop a theme thoroughly. Though one may expect from the title and

introduction a deeper analysis of Bremen in its socio-political context, a study that would do for Bremen what Tom Brady did for Strasbourg, van Santen does not go in that direction. In similar fashion there is no extended discussion of the Thirty Years' War and how that conflict may have had an impact on Crocius' thought and his reception as Howard Hotson did for the broader world of central European irenicism in his marvellous article, 'Irenicism in the confessional age'. Van Santen instead has focused on the intellectual and theological. Such a decision is perfectly justifiable, for he has produced a first-rate study that hopefully will encourage more scholars to venture to that north-west corner of the old empire for further exploration of its fascinating religious geography in the early modern period.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

HOWARD LOUTHAN

*The crisis of British Protestantism. Church power in the Puritan revolution, 1638–44.* By Hunter Powell. (Politics, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain.) Pp. viii + 264. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015. £70. 978 0 7190 9634 1

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The subject of Hunter Powell's monograph is the debate on church power from around 1640 to 1644, the year the Congregationalist 'Dissenting Brethren' entered their dissent in the Westminster Assembly against the Assembly's Presbyterian settlement. The Westminster Assembly has generally been poorly treated in British historiography. Robert S. Paul's 1980 *The assembly of the Lord*, while a very useful study of the debates, was marred by Paul's own confessional biases and his failure to stray far from Victorian historical scholarship. When discussing the disputes over religion among Parliamentarians in the 1640s, historians have often been unable to escape a conflict model of 'Presbyterians versus Independents'. In this narrative the 'Independents' are pictured as forward-looking tolerationists against the 'Presbyterians' drive to impose an intolerant Calvinist theocracy on the British kingdoms. While there is a body of doctoral theses that have challenged this picture, notably the studies of Rosemary Bradley and Carol Geary Schneider, it is rare that a published monograph outside the world of confessional publishing has dealt with these issues. Nevertheless, the subject has received fresh attention in recent years following an important monograph by Michael Winship and the publication of the *The minutes and papers of the Westminster Assembly* in 2012 under the editorial genius of Chad Van Dixhoorn. Powell's work, which combines the contextual historical theological approach of Richard A. Muller and Carl Trueman with a broadly 'Cambridge school' approach to history, is the first monograph to use Van Dixhoorn's monumental edition of the Assembly minutes.

Hunter Powell's book of eight chapters can be divided into three parts. The first two chapters look at the alliances and ideas of the principal godly ecclesiologists from the start of the Long Parliament to before the Westminster assembly was summoned. The middle chapters focus on the confusion generated by the October 1643 debate in the Assembly on the meaning of Jesus' donation of 'the keys of the kingdom of heaven' to the Apostle Peter (Matthew xvi) and on the