THE CATHOLIC ENLIGHTENMENT IN AUSTRIA OR THE HABSBURG LANDS

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1. The Part of Europe in Question

Before 1804 “Austria” was the name of the Habsburg dynasty, the “House of Austria”. However there were also the “German hereditary lands” or the “Austrian lands”—the archduchies of “Austria under the river Enns” (Lower Austria) and “Austria above the river Enns” (Upper Austria), the duchies of Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola and lands such as Tyrol or the later Vorarlberg. These “Hereditary lands” under the rule of the Habsburg “archduke of Austria” or—in case of Maria Theresa (1717–1780) the archduchess of Austria—were united with the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. Another part of the “Austrian lands” were the territories of the so-called “Austrian Vorlande” and “Swabian Austria” in the southwest of Germany. Since 1714 the former Spanish Netherlands—the “Austrian Netherlands”—and the duchies of Milan and Mantua—the “Austrian Lombardy”—were parts of the “Austrian Monarchy”. In 1772 parts of Poland became Austrian before Joseph II occupied Bukovina in 1774. The western part of the “Austrian Monarchy” including Bohemia was a constituent part of the Holy Roman Empire. The Austrian Netherlands were connected with this Empire in a loose way, whereas for the Italian territories in Lombardy these connections were no more than traditions of feudal law. The Habsburg archdukes were Roman emperors from the coronation of Frederick III in 1452 to the decline of the Empire in 1806, except the years 1740 to 1745. The German-speaking Hereditary lands with their capital in Vienna were regarded culturally as parts of Germany,

1 The author apologizes for the lack of details in this article and in its notes. Due to limitations of space he eliminated many items his first draft contained. He deleted a great number of names of 17th and 18th century persons, many titles of 17th and 18th century books and many particular points concerning personal networks or theological and philosophical ideas. Moreover he removed many quotations taken from original sources. In the notes he deleted references to sources (mostly from his own edition Der Josephinismus (1995) and bibliographic information.
with an especially close relationship to the Catholic parts of Germany like Bavaria, the Rhineland, and the Catholic countries of Southwest Germany which were partly provinces of the Austrian Monarchy.

2. FOREIGN INFLUENCES AND AUSTRIAN FORMATIONS

The wide expanse of the Austrian Monarchy resulted in various influences on thought and ideas, knowledge and intellectual life, philosophy and theology. But there were also special Austrian conditions and formations grown up since the 17th century. Perhaps the most important was the “Austro-Catholicism” that arose as a result of the Counter-Reformation in Austria since its beginning in the later 16th century and of the decline of the Bohemian opposition of the noble estates and the Bohemian Protestantism by the victory of Ferdinand II on the White Mountain in 1620. Thereafter Catholicism and Habsburg autocracy had triumphed elsewhere in the Habsburg dominions except Hungary, which was mostly under Turkish rule until the end of the 17th century. R. J. W. Evans has written about the alliance of the Habsburg dynasty, the new Catholic aristocracy, and the Catholic church.² The result of this triple alliance was what he called “Austro-Catholicism”. Another specifically Austrian formation was the “Pietas Austriaca”, i.e. the baroque form of Catholicism and Catholic piety with its culmination under Leopold I (1640–1705).³

The close connection between the Hereditary lands and Italian territories like the duchy of Milan appears to be the most important reason for Italian influences on Austria. In Italy began the “Innocentian turn”, first under Innocent XI, elected pope in 1676, who was one of the most important popes of the 17th century, and afterwards under Innocent XII. The “Innocentian turn” was a turn against baroque Catholicism in remembrance of the 16th-century Council of Trent and its mostly unfulfilled reformatory efforts.⁴ This re-establishment of the Tridentine reforms was one of the foundations and motifs of Catholic

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