

Roland Engelhart, »Wir schlugen unter Kämpfen und Opfern dem Neuen Bresche«. Philipp Funk (1884–1937). Leben und Werk, Europäische Hochschulschriften: Reihe 3, Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften, Bd. 695, Frankfurt am Main (Peter Lang) 1996, 553 S., ISBN 3-631-49982-5, DM 138,-.

Roman Catholic "modernism" in Germany is back on the historical agenda. Otto Weiß' voluminous collection of biographical sketches of major and minor German "modernists" has shown how vast this landscape is and how intricate its cartography. Engelhart's approach is biographical, too, and his subject seems promising: Philipp Funk (not to be taken for his elder namesake, the Tübingen Church Historian Franz Xaver Funk) belonged to the small Swabian intellectual elite which read Loisy, Harnack and the mystics and was driven out of the Rottenburg Seminary and the Tübingen Faculty of Catholic Theology by the antimodernist Bishop Keppler in the years around 1910. Frustrated in his hopes for ordination, Funk finally became the editor of "Neues Jahrhundert", which, until 1909, had borne the subtitle "Organ der deutschen Modernisten". The anti-ultramontane and "frei-religiös" leanings of this journal and of some members of the "Kraus-Gesellschaft" behind it were checked successfully by Funk, who wanted to be more "mystic" and genuinely catholic. After the war, Funk played an interesting role as critic of the enthusiastic "ver sacrum catholicum" of Peter Wust and others, as commentator on past "modernism" in Germany and as promotor of a new catholic identity based on the "romantics" Sailer and Möhler. He managed to get rehabilitated in the more conservative circles of catholic academe around the Görres-Gesellschaft and was rewarded with a chair for history at the Academy in Braunsberg, from where he moved to Freiburg/Br. in 1929 and became the successor of the most important catholic historian of the time, Heinrich Finke. Funk, a sensitive and often sensible person, underwent some suffering after 1933. He had to leave the »Badische Historische Kommission« and was discriminated against as catholic historian when he tried to attain a chair at the University of Munich in 1935.

Thus, Funk's life is indeed interesting, but Engelhart manages to miss most of the clues in it. As already suggested by the histrionic Funk-citation in the title, this study is written

virtually without any distance to its subject or some redeeming irony. On the whole, Engelhart tries to reverse the negative image given to the "modernist" Funk by the shrewd Rottenburg Vicar General and influential amateur historian August Hagen some thirty years ago. But instead of situating Funk in concrete intellectual controversies, the author elaborates on the individual psychology of his (slightly eccentric anti-) hero whom he presents, at the same time, as a model for an "open" catholicism today. With that goes a lot of moralising about the Rottenburg antimodernists Keppler and Rieg and their victim Funk. Behind this screen of an *histoire engagée* Funk's highly interesting intellectual career becomes scarcely discernible: His way from modernism to Neo-Catholicism in the Weimar republic finds no real analysis. Funk's relationship with Herman Hefele, for instance, who pursued the same path, is nearly always seen on the purely personal level of changing sympathies.

Painstakingly detailed, this is in some respects (archival sources on Funk, anonymous articles by him, his time in the Tübingen Wilhelmsstift and the Rottenburg seminary, conflicts in the "Kraus-Gesellschaft", Funk's depressions, his personal way of life, the cause of his death – probably no suicide) the definitive biography of Funk. But even in his thirst for positivistic information the author gets it wrong. For instance, much thought is given to an anonymous article by Funk describing a stay at the Riviera which cannot be fitted into his biography. But as Funk talks about a state of serious illness and being wheeled around in an armchair, it may seem best to regard the whole story as a literary self-stylization, evoking the memory of the ever-sickly "liberal" catholic Franz Xaver Kraus who had died at the Riviera some years earlier, in 1901. Yet, Engelhart's work is a mine of bio-bibliographical information and it remains to be hoped that future research on Funk and German Catholicism will draw on its riches. Perhaps Funk is best seen as a figure of transition in the development of a catholic "Bildungsbürgertum" in the last two decades of the Kaiserreich (cf. the recent article of Dieter Langewiesche on this subject). Roman antimodernism brought these circles into some difficulty. Then, with Funk as with other discontented catholic intellectuals, war proved to be the great healer and brought a new sense of being supported by faith and ecclesiastical community. The beginning of war and the death of Pius X. coincided – happily so as many German catholics thought. Funk worked, only to Engelhart's surprise, for German war propaganda in Belgium and Roumania. The outcome of World War I brought his latent tendency toward cultural pessimism to the surface and Engelhart, to his great credit, at least illustrates this not so progressive side of his hero. Although now critical of liberal historic "relativism", Funk, like many other catholic academics, still clung to the old programme of the Görres-Gesellschaft, which sought catholic academic parity by means of accommodation to liberal-protestant "german" science. Therefore, he could not entirely share the younger generation's taste for a booming catholic "Weltanschauung" and its movements (liturgical and other) which profited from the decline of the "kulturprotestantisch" Establishment. On the other hand, Funk's essayistic historical writings, of which his Habilitationsschrift "Von der Aufklärung zur Romantik" was the most famous, were essential for the invention of a catholic intellectual identity in the 1920ies. His heroes were Sailer and Möhler, irenic in spirit but astutely catholic. He championed their "organic" and – as he thought – anti-Enlightenment thinking and thus influenced the formation of a specific "bildungskatholisch" identity, which reached its acme in the 1950s and is still looming in the intellectual background of much German church historical research. Now that "justice" has been done to Funk by Engelhart, there may be time for a closer analysis.

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