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Protestant Nations Redefined: Changing Perceptions of  
National Identity in the Rhetoric of the English, Dutch and  
Swedish Public Churches, 1685-1772 (review)

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(Review)

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Sebastian Franck. He argues persuasively for the central role of Church history in the formation and articulation of the Spiritualist perspective. He also proves that many of the early Anabaptists came to care about Church history because of the role it played in the Spiritualist movement.

Dipple's work reminds us that almost every aspect of the Christian tradition played a role in the confessional conflicts of the sixteenth century. That the history of Christianity was a center of conflict is hardly surprising, but the innovators, whether Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, or the radicals, had to offer a vision of Church history that was compelling to would-be followers and provided a foundation for their reforming visions. It is not without irony that the vision of Church history that emerged among the Hutterites and Mennonites in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was largely derived from the work of one of their Spiritualist opponents, Sebastian Franck. This book is an important addition, not only to the narrow field of Anabaptist and Radical Reformation studies, but to the larger intellectual and religious history of the sixteenth century.

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Pasi Ihalainen. *Protestant Nations Redefined: Changing Perceptions of National Identity in the Rhetoric of the English, Dutch and Swedish Public Churches, 1685–1772.*

Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions: History, Culture, Religion, Ideas 109. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005. xviii + 664 pp. index. append. bibl. \$199. ISBN: 90-04-14485-4.

The author of this volume, Pasi Ihalainen, received his PhD in General History in 1999 from the University of Jyväskylä in Finland and is a Research Fellow of the Academy of Finland. His work has also been funded by the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Fund and the Niilo Helander Foundation. This book discusses the rhetoric and redefinition of national communities by the clergy of the Protestant public churches in eighteenth-century England, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Public churches here include the Church of England, the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, and the Lutheran state church of Sweden. The book reconstructs the various meanings attached to the concepts of nation and fatherland in political preaching. The author discusses sermons as a medium of national ideology and analyzes the decline of the Israelite prototype of the nation, the changing relationship between religious and national communities, international Protestantism, the weakening stereotype of anti-Catholicism, redefinitions of the Protestant monarch, and the diversification of national vocabulary. It also compares the rise of non-theological languages of classical patriotism, freedom, economy, and nature in the three outlined political cultures, revealing how the secular worship of nation arose even within the public presentation of religion. The book discusses the Enlightenment and nationalism in a postnationalist comparative history. The relationship between God and the nation became redefined not

so much as a sinning community fearing divine punishment but as an active political agent advancing the common good in the world. The book also makes an attempt to revise part of the historiography of the transition from early modern religious national identities toward a secular modern nationalism. Eleven pages are devoted to the comparison of the word *national* and its variants in English sermons before the monarch, concerning the coronation of the monarch, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. Twenty-nine pages are devoted to the extensive bibliography. The book is well-written and well-documented, and the topic regarding rhetoric in state sermons and formal church statements is well-researched.

Preachers on state occasions included new political languages in their expressions of patriotism and national consciousness. Related terminology and various metaphorical expressions for the national community are discussed. The author notes that there was a tendency to draw parallels between a single nation state and Israel instead of the traditional identification of Christendom in general or some locality as God's Israel. He points out that Israelite analogies were also used in the creation of national myths in Catholic countries, both before and after the Reformation. The author points out that the Dutch concept of Israel could simultaneously carry local, national, international, and purely spiritual senses.

Clergy in each Protestant country, whether English Anglicans, Scottish Presbyterians, Dutch Calvinists, or Lutheran Swedes, considered their own brand of religion as "the true religion," but the author does not consider sermons defending or criticizing another Protestant church. He always speaks of Catholic persecution of Protestants but not of Protestant persecution of Catholics or one branch of Protestantism's persecution another branch of Protestantism, such as Anglican versus Quakers or Presbyterians. In this sense, the author is biased. However, the author does present sermons showing how often the Protestant clergy spoke out against certain government officials and were then criticized by the state, but in most instances the Protestant church was expected to go along with the government official or ruling family.

Protestants wanted the freedom to practice their religion, but in general did not want an individual of another Protestant religion (or a Catholic Christian) to have the freedom to practice their own religion. The degree of internationalism in Protestantism varied dramatically from country to country. Swedish bishops expressed a limited degree of solidarity toward fellow Protestants abroad, while the Dutch Reformed clergy often identified themselves with the locality, province, republic, and international community at the same time. By the 1750s, it became possible for the Reformed clerics in Holland to recognize the right of different Protestant denominations in the republic to profess their religion, although this did not mean the removal of the favored status of the Reformed Church among Protestant churches, or civil equality for Protestant or Catholic nonmembers.

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