# Rethinking war, nature, and supernature in early modern scholasticism: Introduction

**Published in:**
Journal of the History of Ideas

**Document Version:**
Peer reviewed version

**Accepted Manuscript – Do Not Cite**

**Re-thinking War, Nature, and Supernature in Early Modern Scholasticism**

Revised December 2021

Introduction for *Journal of the History of Ideas* Cluster

The purpose of these articles, which derive from a conference at Queen's University Belfast in 2018, is to reconsider early modern European writings on just war theory and its relationship with religious war inside and outside the European universities, across Catholic and Protestant Europe.[1] This early modern writing on warfare has not received really sustained and professional analysis from English-speaking historians. First, this introduction will explain the historiography of the just war among Anglophone historians, positing that just war theory offers a valuable perspective on the wider History of Political Thought. Next, two major groups of sources which have been omitted almost completely from these Anglophone histories will be introduced: discussions of warfare by Franciscan and other scholastics who followed the theology of John Duns Scotus; and analysis of warfare by Protestant scholastics in general, and especially Reformed scholastics. The incorporation of these sources into our account may well change the history of political thought outside the restricted area of just war theory.

Our approach accepts the agenda of the new history of universities, according to which universities were not mere obstacles to modernity but powerful agents of cultural transmission, and accepts the vitality of scholasticism (professional discourse in universities) into the seventeenth century. The most prestigious, most influential, and best paid, of these

---

university teachers (everywhere except Italy) were the theologians: that is why we concentrate on theologians in the essays that follow.[2] Catholics and Protestants did tend to favour slightly different varieties of theological genre, with Catholics writing commentaries on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, the other great medieval theologians, or theology textbooks of various kinds, and Protestants certainly writing more Biblical commentaries. But all of these scholastic writings were composed by high-status persons, institutionalized in scholastic curricula, and so charged with considerable social power. These theologians and their writings contributed to political culture outside the universities when theologians consulted with committees of investigation (as at Valladolid in 1550-1 during the Affair of the Indies), when theologians served as chaplains or court preachers to kings and emperors (including the Jesuits who attended Emperor Ferdinand II and the Reformed theologians who preached before Frederick V, elector Palatine), and when universities and other institutions of higher learning put themselves on display to their patrons at public disputations (during the Seventeenth Century these were advertised and recorded in Scotland in little pamphlets, and in Rome as beautiful folio posters).[3]

The examination of these institutionally important sources suggests that the distinction between nature (the zone of action of human reason) and supernature (the zone of God's direct action) was more culturally significant to European early modernity than the distinction between sacred and secular. As Benjamin Kaplan has written, the traditional

---

[2] Paul Grendler, "The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation," *Renaissance Quarterly* 57 (2002): 1-42; Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, "New Structures of Knowledge", in *A History of the University in Europe, Volume II: Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, ed. Hilde De Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 489-530, at 500-501.

[3] Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Juan Belda Plans, *La Escuela de Salamanca* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2000); Nicole Reinhardt, *Voices of Conscience and Political Counsel in Seventeenth-Century Spain and France* (Oxford University Press, 2016); Robert Bireley, *Reformation and Politics in the Age of the Counterreformation: Emperor Ferdinand II, William Lamormaini S.J., and the Foundation of Imperial Policy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981); Christine King, "Philosophy and Science in the Arts Curriculum of the Scottish Universities in the 17th Century" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1974); "Conclusiones ex Philosophia et Theologia", 3 vols. Archivio Storico, Collegio di Sant'Isidoro, Rome.

history of the decline of religious warfare in Europe taught that religion was tamed by an Enlightened reason that had been drained of the divine.[4] But imposing these categories of reason and religion on the seventeenth century obscures the fact that intellectuals believed humans were rational because of God, not despite God. This is where nature and supernature, concepts developed by sixteenth-century Catholic theologians, but sometimes borrowed by Protestants, can be helpful. When defending the legitimacy of pagan governments, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, as much a staple of seventeenth-century Protestant libraries as Catholic ones, reminded his readers that politics was founded in nature, not grace or supernature 'for man because made in the image of God, is next gifted with mind and reason, [and] therefore lords it over inferior things', and this meant that pagans, who did not receive God's supernatural aid, were still naturally capable of legitimate political life.[5] On the one hand, humankind was rational because created that way by God; on the other hand, those who rejected the supernatural gifts of Christianity were not thereby prevented from pursuing the natural purposes impressed in them by God. When Bellarmine's fellow Jesuit, Giles de Coninck, wrote in 1623 that the power of secular princes was "entirely political and natural", while "matters of faith are supernatural, and cannot be known by the light of nature, but only by the revelation of God", he employed a distinction by that time commonplace in Catholic debate.[6] The natural category thus existed at a remove from God, but not independently of him. This distinction between nature and supernature will recur in this introduction and in the articles that follow.

---

[4] B. J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[5] "Nam dominii fundamentum non est gratia, sed natura; homo enim quia factus est ad imaginem Dei, proinde mente ac ratione praeditus est, ideo dominatur rebus inferioribus", Robertus Bellarminus, *Disputationum... de Controversiis Christianae Fidei*, 4 vols. (Ingolstadt: Adamus Sartorius, 1601), vol. 2, bk. 3, chap. 8, col. 642-3.

[6] "Potestas Principium secularium est tota politica et naturalis", "cum res fidei sint supernaturales, nec lumine naturae, sed sola Dei revelatione possint cognosci" Giles De Coninck, *De Moralitate, Natura, et Effectibus Actuum Supernaturalium in Genere* (Antwerp: Jacobus Cardon, 1623), disputatio, 18, dubium 14, conclusio 4, pp 294-5.

The history of just war theory has not been closely connected to the wider history of political thought in the Anglophone world. The history of political thought, a discipline including scholars as distinct in outlook as John Neville Figgis, Hans Baron, Quentin Skinner, and Paul Rahe, is traditionally dedicated to reflection on the Anglophone liberal tradition – a tradition which comes into focus with Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, and contributed to the Revolution of 1688 and the American Constitution of 1789.[7] Neither Hobbes nor Locke wrote much about war between states, unlike the figure standing at the origins of the continental secular natural law tradition, Hugo Grotius. Thus *Kriegsrecht* (the law of war) has traditionally been treated more capaciously within German scholarship than in Anglophone histories.[8] Moreover, it has been axiomatic for the liberal tradition that religion should be separated from politics. Skinner wrote that "the acceptance of the modern idea of the state presupposes that political society is held to exist solely for political purposes", while Rahe argued at length that the Deism of the American founders incorporated the determination to separate Church from state.[9] And so those historians of political thought engaged in structuring the historical tradition of liberalism had no need to study theologians' analysis of warfare in depth, and this subject has tended to attract attention from wider communities of scholars mainly during wartime.

English-language scholarship on the just war tradition thus often has a contemporary focus that places historical accuracy under strain. As Michael Walzer responded to the

---

[7] John Neville Figgis, *Studies of Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius 1414-1625: The Birkbeck Lectures delivered in Trinity College, Cambridge, 1900* (2nd edn., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916); Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955); Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Paul Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution*, 3 vols. (2nd ed., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1994).
[8] Michael Stolleis, *Geschichte des öffentlichen Rechts in Deutschland*, vol. 1, *Reichspublizistik und Policeywissenschaft 1600-1800* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2nd edn., 2012).
[9] Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2:352; Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern*, 3:48-55, 159-166, 216-222.

Vietnam War, so Andrew Fiala and Jeff McMahan have engaged with the Iraq War of 2003-2011 and the USA's actions against Al-Qaeda.[10] Fiala provides an interesting case, because, on the basis of Walzer and Roland Bainton, he argued that because just war theory has its origins in Christianity it is genealogically bound to divine command ethics and the holy wars described in the Old Testament, being consequently an authoritarian tradition which incorporates the sacralisation of military service. This thesis cannot be sustained in detail. Erasmus of Rotterdam, mentor of those very many sixteenth-century humanists across Europe who aspired to Church reform, in 1515 celebrated the uniquely human capacity for rational friendship, deplored almost all warfare as irrational, and denied that the wars of the Old Testament were any more authoritative for Christians than circumcision and animal sacrifice.[11] Erasmus, admittedly, was a near-pacifist and an opponent of the just war tradition.[12] But when more conventional early modern theologians like John Calvin and Francisco Suárez (whose writings were swiftly institutionalised within their own theological traditions) attended to the wars of the Old Testament, it was, in the latter case, to deny outright that such wars provided any justification for present-day wars, and, in the former case, to argue merely that all wars should be fought in a limited and humanitarian manner.[13] Fiala appears to have developed his position from Roland Bainton's argument that 'Puritan Crusade' existed in seventeenth-century England, and that Calvinists (or the Reformed as

---

[10] Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); James Turner Johnson, *Ideology, Reason and the Limitation of War: Religious and Secular Concepts 1200-1740* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); Andrew Fiala, *The Just War Myth* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008); Jeff McMahan, *Killing in War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009).

[11] Erasmus, *Opera Omnia*, ord. 2 vol. 7, *Adagiorum Chilias Quarta*, ed. René Hoven (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1999), 11-44, at 14-16, 32; Idem, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 35, *Adages III iv 1 to IV ii 100*, ed. D.L. Drysdall and J. N. Grant (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 399-440, at 401-4, 423-4.

[12] R. P. Davies, *The Better Part of Valour: More, Erasmus, Colet, and Vives, on Humanism, War, and Peace, 1496-1535* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 88-111; Vincenzo Lavenia, *Dio in Uniforme: Cappellani, Catechesi Cattolica e Soldati in Età Moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2017), 44-8.

[13] Francisco Suárez, *Opus de Triplici Virtute Theologica, Fide, Spe, & Charitate* (Lyons: Jacobus Cardon, 1621), De Charitate, Disputatio 13, Sectio 5, pp. 487-488; John Calvin, *Mosis Libri V cum Iohannis Calvini Commentariis* (Geneva: Henricus Stephanus, 1573), secundum praeceptum, pp. 303-4, sextum praeceptum, pp. 349-350.

historians now prefer to call them) more generally favoured holy war. In fact, the Reformed did not take the cross at the beginning of a conflict, they did not swear a crusader's vow, and they most certainly did not receive a papal indulgence. Bainton's position is unconvincing, and Glenn Burgess's recent study is far more cautious about ascribing an ideology of holy war to the English Reformed.[14]

Richard Tuck's Carlyle Lectures, *The Rights of War and Peace*, have considerably refreshed this field, re-attaching just war theory to the history of liberalism.[15] Tuck argued that it was the humanists of the late sixteenth century, working in the discipline of law or teaching the basic arts degree, who constructed a recognisably modern state of nature in which sovereign states strove for their material advantage, recognising no natural law but self-defence.[16] Tuck contrasted the humanists with the great Dominican and Jesuit natural lawyers like Suárez, who had been understood by historians like Quentin Skinner as creators of a natural sphere which was ripe, with the admixture of some Calvinist doctrines, for complete secularisation.[17] Against Skinner's thesis, Tuck held that while the new liberal theorists of the seventeenth century (Hugo Grotius, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke) may have appeared superficially akin to the Catholic theorists, in reality they took what made them truly distinctive - those autonomous agents in a state of nature governed by a minimal natural law - from the humanists. For Tuck then, elite European debates on the rights and wrongs of war were seminal, not peripheral, to the history of European liberalism.

Tuck was right to note that the Jesuit scholastics made unlikely secularisers, and he offered the Jesuit Luis de Molina's *De Iustitia et Iure* (printed between 1593 and 1613) as a

---

[14] Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace* (Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 1960), 144-151; Glenn Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion? The Evidence of Political Propaganda," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61 (1998): 173-201.
[15] Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Many of the primary sources important to Tuck are included in Gregory Reichberg, Henrik Syse, and Endre Begby (eds), *The Ethics of War* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).
[16] Tuck, *Rights of War*, 16-50.
[17] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* 2 vols (Cambridge University Press, 1978), 2: 134-184, 345-348.

useful synthesis of the political views of the famous School of Salamanca, of which Dominicans like Francisco de Vitoria, Domingo de Soto, and Melchor Cano were founding members. Molina had written that neither idolatry nor other practices contrary to natural reason were sufficient cause for the pope, emperor, or any other prince without established jurisdiction to make war on infidels, so long as criminal harm was not being done to innocents.[18] By this last qualification, Molina meant that if evil kings were practicing human sacrifice or cannibalism, then a Christian prince would be obliged by natural law to defend the innocent. Molina insisted that neither the pope nor the emperor was lord of all the world, and neither had any right to force infidels to convert to Christianity, though he did believe that the pope could authorise an expedition against those Turks unjustly occupying previously Christian lands. But crucially Molina did insist that Christians had the right to preach the Gospel everywhere on earth, that these preachers could justly be protected, and that any people, king, or dynast who sought to impede this preaching could rightly by coerced by war.[19] Daniel Allemann has identified the right of preaching as a point at which natural rights and divine command intersected, while Giuseppe Marcocci has written extensively on Jesuit missionary practices in the Portuguese empire which included a large measure of force and violence. When one considers, as Sarah Mortimer argues below, that Catholic theologians defended the natural sphere not to protect the state from the sacred, but to protect, advance, and enable the Church in its mission, all this must remind us that nature was not an obviously proto-secular sphere.[20]

---

[18] Tuck, *Rights of War*, 60-61; Luis de Molina, *De Justitia et Jure Opera Omnia, Tractatibus Quinque.... Editio Novissima... Tomus Primus* (Cologne: Marcus-Michael Bousquet, 1733), disputatio 106, p. 235.
[19] Molina, *De Justitia et Jure*, disputatio 105, p. 234.
[20] Daniel Allemann, "Empire and the Right to Preach the Gospel in the School of Salamanca, 1535-1560," *Historical Journal* 62 (2019): 35-55; Giuseppe Marcocci, *L'Invenzione di un Impero: Politica e Cultura nel Mondo Portoghese, 1450-1600* (Rome: Carocci, 2011); idem, *Pentirsi ai Tropici: Casi di Coscienza e Sacramenti nelle Missioni Portoghesi del '500* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2013).

The improvement of our knowledge of early modern just war theory also demands the inclusion of those Catholic intellectual traditions alternative to those of the Jesuits and Dominicans, but far from negligible in the continental universities and the wider world of baroque culture. Among these traditions was the theology derived from John Duns Scotus and undergoing a vociferous revival before, during and after the Seventeenth Century. [21] Hitherto, Scotism has been the object of research for historians of metaphysics and economics, rather than political theory; but the political charge of Scotus's own theology is now receiving analysis.[22] Scotist theology leaned towards voluntarism, tended to be sceptical about the utility of Aristotle's philosophy to Christians, and saw politics more as the reconciliation of clashing rights, including the rights of God, than as the opportunity for rational flourishing. They certainly subordinated natural ends more decisively to supernatural ends than the Thomists did. Most pertinently for us, Scotists often supported the use of force in conversion, and a number of important Scotists (including Alfonso da Castro, Juan Focher, and John Punch) argued that wars fought for evangelisation could be just.

The history of Protestant scholasticism has changed substantially over the past two decades, so that it too must now be included in any comprehensive account of just war theory. Historical theologians have re-thought their previous condemnation of Protestant scholasticism as degeneration from the purity of reformers like Calvin, and now see it as a valid form of religious expression, responsive to the needs of Protestant society.[23] And for a German scholar like Michael Becker, preoccupied by the confessionalisation thesis,

---

[21] As a narrow sample, see Alfonso de Castro, *De Iusta Haereticorum Punitione* (Salamanca: Heirs of Jacobus Iunta, 1547); Juan Focher, *Intinerarium Catholicum Proficiscentium ad Infideles Convertendos* (Seville: Alphonsus Scribanus, 1574); Filippo Fabri (Faber), *Disputationes Theologicae*, 4 vols. in 1 (Venice, Bartholomeo Ginammi, 1613-1614); John Punch (Poncius), *Integer Theologiae Cursus ad Mentem Scoti* (Paris: Antonius Bertier, 1652); Bartholomeo Mastri (Mastrius), *Theologia Moralis ad mentem DD. Seraphici, & Subtilis concinnata* (Venice: Joannes Jacobus Herz,, 1671); Augustin Quevedo y Villegas, *Opera Theologica*, 4 vols. (Seville: Franciscus Sanchez, 1752-1757).

[22] Elsa Marmursztejn and Sylvain Piron, "Duns Scot et La Politique. Pouvoir du Prince et Conversion des Juifs," in *Duns Scot à Paris, 1302-2002*, ed. O. Boulnois et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 21-62.

[23] Willem J. Asselt, "Reformed Orthodoxy: A Short History of Research," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 11-26.

according to which the Lutheran, Calvinist, and Catholic confessions offered parallel roads to modernity, it has seemed important to ask whether the intense debates on war and peace characteristic of the School of Salamanca had any Protestant equivalent.[24] Becker's research has been productive: it is clear that the most important reformers of the first and second generations, from Martin Luther to John Calvin, were all driven by the circumstances of their time to reflect extensively on warfare, and this established an intellectual tradition among Lutheran and Reformed theologians that certainly extended to the end of the Seventeenth Century. Whether this should be seen as a rejection of Erasmian pacifism is examined by Mortimer in her essay below. Moreover, Becker has emphasised that Alberico Gentili and Hugo Grotius themselves were members of the Reformed communities whose theological traditions left important traces on their analysis of warfare.[25]

While Protestant scholastics generally rejected religious war, this was not because they were in some way secularised. Protestant scholastics, largely lacking the imperial context in which many Catholic theologians worked, did not attend closely to war as forced evangelisation but rejected it on the basis of the Two Kingdoms doctrine (*Zwei-Regimente-Lehre*) when they did.[26] Nevertheless, the idea that war fought in defence of right religion was just was built into Protestantism from the start, and was developed in polished form in Philip Melanchthon's *Loci Communes* of 1559, which insisted that the magistrate was obliged to defend both tables of the Decalogue (even outside his own territory).[27] Finally, while the Two Kingdoms doctrine meant that the struggle against the Anti-Christ was

---

[24] Michael Becker, *Kriegsrecht im frühneuzeitlichen Protestantismus: Eine Untersuchung zum Beitrag lutherischer und reformierter Theologen, Juristen und anderer Gelehrter zur Kriegsrechtsliteratur im 16. and 17. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 2-7.

[25] Noel Malcolm, "Alberico Gentili and the Ottomans," in *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations: Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*, ed. Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 127-145; Becker, *Kriegsrecht*, 7-11, 189-205, 226-279. For a brisk survey that passes straight from Vitoria to Grotius, ignores the Reformation, and treats Grotius as a largely secular theorist, see Stephen Neff, *War and the Law of Nations: A General History* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[26] Becker, *Kriegsrecht*, 334-337, 389.

[27] Becker, *Kriegsrecht*, 74-76, 106-7, 386-7.

primarily framed as a spiritual and not physical struggle, theologians like David Pareus could

drift (especially in times of great political pressure) from using the Biblical account of the last

things to interpret wars then being fought in Europe to legitimating those wars; and this drift

is more clear in minor authors who used this Biblical eschatology to, for example, legitimate

the war of Frederick the elector Palatine against Emperor Ferdinand II.[28] The distinction

between nature and supernature was thus not native to this Protestant tradition and the sacred

was more densely interwoven into the secular state than it was for Catholics. Nevertheless

Protestant theologians especially during the Seventeenth Century resorted more frequently to

the category of nature and to natural law, although, as in the case of the Scottish Presbyterian

Samuel Rutherford, these borrowings were marked as such by meticulous citation of Catholic

sources or otherwise obvious.[29]

It remains to outline the relationship between the articles that follow below and the

themes laid out in this introduction. Sarah Mortimer insists that we should place the problem

of war at the centre of the distinction between nature and supernature, or grace, across both

Catholic and Protestant Europe. Indeed, she identifies the achievement of the founder of the

continental natural law tradition, Hugo Grotius, as the re-introduction of a distinction

between nature and grace into the Protestant tradition. And while Protestants before Grotius

were always conscious that the distinction between nature and supernature was something

borrowed rather than inherent to their own theology, those borrowings could often be

important ones. Floris Verhaart provides just such an instance of an impeccably orthodox

Dutch Reformed theologian, Johannes Hoornbeeck, who employed, quite ambivalently,

Jesuit arguments derived from the distinction between nature and supernature when treating

---

[28] Becker, *Kriegsrecht*, 353-361; David Pareus, *In Divinam Apocalypsin S. Apostoli et Evangelistae Johannis Commentarius* (Heidelberg: Johannes Lancellotus, 1618), columns 627-8, 638-9, 921-927, 977-981; Anonymous, *Tuba Belli Sacri Apocalypseos Beati Johannis* (No place, 1622), 61, 65.

[29] Karie Schultz, "Catholic political thought and Calvinist ecclesiology in Samuel Rutherford's *Lex Rex* (1644)," *Journal of British Studies* doi:10.1017/jbr.2021.119 (21 December 2021).

the mission of the Reformed church to evangelise the world. Daniel Schwartz and Ian Campbell explore a Catholic tradition that drew the line between nature and supernature very differently to other Catholics (and indeed, to most Protestants). Schwartz points to the strange modernity of Scotist theologians who argued, against their Dominican and Jesuit colleagues, that a war just on both sides (the defence of which is often associated with Enlightenment theories of warfare) could only be the result of a direct divine command. It was this Scotist preoccupation with divine command and enlarging the bounds of the supernatural that so alarmed other Catholics. It could result in fierce doctrines of holy war, but Campbell explains that the key site for Scotist reflection on holy war and the boundary between nature and supernature was not the American Indian individual or polity, but rather the Jewish family. Giuseppe Marcocci explains that Portuguese scholasticism, too often neglected, should be understood to have existed in constant exchange with the famous Spanish scholasticism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so much that neither national instance of this movement can properly be understood alone. Indeed Marcocci emphasises that an alternative to the distinction between nature and supernature, the functionalist understanding of religion (in which Roman religion might be more conducive to empire than Christianity) that the sixteenth-century Portuguese derived from Niccolò Machiavelli, was sharply rejected by Martín de Azpilcueta in 1545. Divine providence – the supernatural category - remained central to justification of empire in Portugal and Spain in the 1640s.

The just war theory taught in the early modern universities provides valuable insights into the development of modern political thought. If one attends closely to the writings of these scholastics on warfare, the European path to a secular future begins to seem less, not more, obvious. And European religious warfare and violence did not cease suddenly in 1648: there was a strong confessional element to the wars in Britain and Ireland which continued until 1652 and re-ignited between 1688 and 1691, in the Cévennes between 1702 and 1710

and Hungary between 1703 and 1711. Heinz Schilling's argument that the confessional age ended in 1648 thus seems less plausible than Wolfgang Reinhard's suggestion that the period ended with the expulsion of the Salzburg Protestants in 1731-2: and one might argue that the churches played a major role in the political development of major states like Spain, France, and Britain at least until the end of the Eighteenth Century.[30] The articles that follow demonstrate not firm boundaries between nature and supernature in early modern Europe, but the profound anxieties of Europeans as they attempted to distinguish the two, or rejected that distinction altogether.

---

[30] David Onnekink, "Introduction," in *War and Religion after Westphalia, 1648-1713*, ed. David Onnekink (Farnham: Routledge, 2009), 1-15; Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und Gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620", *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1-45, at 28-30; Wolfgang Reinhard, "Konfession und Konfessionalisierung in Europa", in *Bekenntnis und Geschichte: Die Confession Augustana im Historischen Zusammenhang*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard (Munich: Vögel, 1981): 165-189.