

REVIEWS

BOOK REVIEWS

John G. Gagliardo. *Germany under the Old Regime, 1600-1790*. London and New York: Longman, 1991. Pp. ix, 453. \$27.95.

Professor Gagliardo's book, the latest edition in Longman's History of Germany series, focuses on two tumultuous centuries of central European history—the seventeenth with the Thirty Years' War and its aftermath and the eighteenth with the rise of Prussia and its rivalry with the Austrian Habsburg dynasty. Making sense of any period of "German" history before the founding of the German Empire in 1871 is a formidable task, and writing an interpretive survey about it even more so. In this sense, the book should receive a hearty welcome from Germanists as well as instructors in modern European history.

The author assembles an impressive, perhaps intimidating array of facts about the era, unearthing forgotten personalities while adding needed depth to concepts sketched in introductory European history courses. The organization of this material is conventional, with chapters devoted to political, economic, and cultural topics following in chronological order. The opening chapter presents clearly the paradoxical political situation of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in 1600 and serves as a base for succeeding chapters. The Thirty Years' War and the "development of territorial autocracy" in German states is presented in careful detail, reflecting the importance of the war in shaping the course of events for the next 150 years. Chapters on economic policy and social structure follow the political section, examining cameralism and emphasizing the (limited) social mobility in a "society of orders" (*Ständegesellschaft*). Two chapters on cultural topics (religion, education, music, literature, and a very good section on architecture) serve as a transition to the second half of Gagliardo's coverage of political history: the development of enlightened absolutism, particularly in Prussia and Austria in the eighteenth century. His analysis of these regimes and Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa is critical and extensive. Smaller German states receive mention, when appropriate, and emphasize the diversity inherent in the Holy Roman Empire, but Gagliardo never strays too far from the Austro-Prussian path. A discourse on culture in the second half of the eighteenth century concludes the book.

The book answers the need for a comprehensive reference text for German history survey courses in paperback. Hardly a stone goes unturned, particularly in the sections on political history, and obviously Gagliardo engaged in painstaking research to collect the material for this work. In light of the scope and the depth of the book's contents, though, the presentation of the material is something of a disappointment, especially since Gagliardo has already published a book on the German peasantry of this era. Although he does not write poorly, Gagliardo does not always provide the necessary transition between chapters to create the readable "flow" instructors look for in assigning required readings, especially for undergraduate students. The division of the material into the traditional topical format, while unimaginative does not detract from the book as much as what appears to be the lack of effort to integrate the various topics into a coherent whole. One example is the awkwardness of the book's final chapters, when Gagliardo seems to add, almost as an afterthought, two chapters on the later years of the German Enlightenment after wrapping up an extensive discussion of enlightened absolutism. Given the high quality of Gagliardo's topical analyses, the lack of a thoughtful conclusion is puzzling.

Finally, there is Gagliardo's quizzical statement in the Preface regarding his policy on maintaining the German spelling of proper nouns, particularly names of cities and people.

Certainly, the author's inclusion of the German terminology (e.g. *Landeshoheit*, *Honoratioren*), when accompanied by a definition in English, is fine. However, Gagliardo attempts to be "innovative" by using *Nürnberg* instead of Nuremberg, *Karl* instead of Charles, and so on, all the while leaving untouched those names where "the inveteracy of English usage is indisputable." So: Cologne, Frederick the Great. This all seems a bit arbitrary and pretentious, especially in light of the background today's students have in world geography. More attention might have been devoted to placing maps within the text, rather than grouping them at the end of the book.

These criticisms are minor, though, for the book as a whole is a significant achievement and will serve the academic community well in the years to come. It is by no means an "easy" read; students should have completed the basic European survey sequence before attempting this work. As a course text, the book would be appropriate for upper-level undergraduate surveys of German history and for core readings in senior-level and graduate seminars. Graduate students with a reading knowledge of German, though, might be encouraged to combine this book with Christof Dipper's *Deutsche Geschichte 1648-1789* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1991), written in the vein of the *Annales* school and a much more integrated discussion of the period. Instructors teaching Western Civilization and History of Europe surveys will find the book very useful as a reference in lecture preparation and as a suggested reading for beginning students looking to explore this aspect of history further.

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Stuart Woolf. *Napoleon's Integration of Europe*. London and New York: Routledge, 1991. Pp. ix, 319. \$45.00.

Stuart J. Woolf, who has previously written on fascism and on the social and economic history of early modern Europe, here offers a volume for those already familiar with the basic political and military story of the Napoleonic epoch. This work addresses the perplexing situation that has faced every conqueror since Sargon of Akkad first extended his dominion over the peoples of Mesopotamia: Once the battles are over, how are the myriad cultures, heritages, and institutions of the subdued to be united under some semblance of coherent administration? The transformation of coercion into legitimacy is ever the key to successful and stable empire; it is also Woolf's concern with respect to Napoleon's hegemony in Europe.

In a variant on the interpretation of Napoleon the revolutionary, the proponent of the centralized state in direct contact with its citizens, and the prophet of a unified Europe, Woolf focuses on French administrators and their collaborators across the continent as the agents of a common ideology that went beyond mere exploitation. These functionaries sought "to extend their ideals of progress and civilisation to every region of Europe touched by French armies" and "to convince the peoples who came under their control of the benefits of integration or imitation association by demonstration of the superiority and applicability of the French model of government." This model, it should be noted, was no static thing. It was the pre-*Brumaire* legacy that Napoleon creatively reshaped, amplified, and developed according to the ever-changing needs of his ever-expanding empire.

The values of the imperial administrative elite, derived from the Enlightenment, included scientific efficiency, informed decision-making based on statistics, uniformity, and the implementation of benevolent policies designed for the betterment of all. The aim was to sweep aside the disorder of the *ancien régime* in the name of reason as expressed by, say, the Napoleonic law codes or a reformed fiscal system. This was a new order to be created and imposed by the enlightened despotism of professional administrators in league with local notables, the traditional molders of public opinion. Ironically, these missionaries of modernity