

the desire of great magnates to maintain and expand their position in society at the very moment monarchs sought to reverse such trends.

Kaiser contends that this rub did not end with such powerful figures as Richelieu and Mazarin but under the influence of Louis XIV and his contemporaries. In this era, rulers seized the upper hand by bringing violence under control and stressing the benefits of moderation and achievable objectives in conflicts, an approach that Kaiser claims permitted "Louis XIV and his fellow monarchs [to conduct] war in the service of politics more successfully than any other generation of modern European political leaders."

Kaiser views war in the French Revolution and Napoleonic eras as the means by which states consolidated central authority. He stresses that reason supplanted the idea of glory in war, a shift in approach that led to expansion and ended the more restrictive nature of war in the preceding century. A generous by-product was the opportunity that these years provided for the ambitious to engage in social and political mobility.

After a century of relative peace, two irrational ideas—imperialism and nationalism—fueled the next era of confrontation in Europe, one that plunged the planet into the conflagrations of two world wars. The efforts of European states to establish self-sufficient empires was not compatible with the emergence of a world economy. Furthermore, nationalism and its appeal to homogeneity could not be reconciled in central and eastern Europe, which was (and remains) a patchwork quilt of nationalities and ethnic groups. Whereas Louis XIV had succeeded by stating his objectives in ambiguous terms, twentieth-century governments publicly declared lofty aims that resulted in a deadly spiral of cost, destruction, and disillusionment.

Kaiser has provided an important contribution to the growing literature concerned with the relationship of war to society—his belief that European conflicts over the past four centuries have not necessarily resulted from the need for states to expand but rather reflect the political, economic, and social forces peculiar to each era. Kaiser's essay, well-researched and written in an engaging crisp style, is especially important because it provides the reader sufficient detail as well as a wide array of nineteenth and twentieth-century historiographical material. In this regard, the work is valuable on two levels. First, the novice can follow the flow of events within Kaiser's established framework. Second, the more seasoned reader has the opportunity to weigh his arguments on the spot in the face of the more traditional scholarship. Thus, Kaiser has established himself as an important scholar in the field of modern international politics.

United States Military Academy

Lee T. Wyatt, III

Gordon Martel, ed. *Modern Germany Reconsidered: 1870-1945*. New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 1992. Pp. x, 286. Cloth, \$24.95; paper, \$19.95.

Modern Germany Reconsidered is a collection of introductory historiographical and synthetic essays written by top scholars especially for undergraduate students beginning their study of German history. Students receive introductions to the historical discussions and interpretations of major events and periods (Second Reich, World War I, Nazism, Holocaust) and topics (economic history, women's history) without the acrimony that often laces debates played out in the professional journals. The book may be used as a companion volume to such reference textbooks as Gordon Craig's *Germany 1866-1945*, or instructors may prefer to assign a variety of topical monographs and use this book to link them together. Each essay has ample endnotes that should serve curious students well as they branch out and pursue those specific topics in the fields that interest them for term papers.

The opening essay on Bismarckian Germany by Geoff Eley lends evidence in support of Eley's position (shared with David Blackbourn and opposed by Hans-Ulrich Wehler) that German liberals were much more successful in the nineteenth century than might be assumed. For students unaware of Eley's place in the debate, James Retallack's essay on Wilhelminian Germany should prove enlightening, as he traces the historical literature from the 'legacy of the conservative historical tradition' to the recent achievements in the history of working-class culture of the Second Reich. Other noteworthy contributions include Jane Caplan's piece on the beginnings of Nazism in the Weimar Republic, Eve Rosenhaft's superb summary of the literature of women's history in modern Germany, and Richard Breitman's essay on the historiography of the Holocaust. Richard J. Evans provides an excellent discussion of German historiography at the end of the book that acknowledges the continued need for Germans and others to confront the German past, especially in light of recent events in the newly-united Germany.

The list of Martel's collaborators is impressive. Although several prominent American scholars (Larry E. Jones, Breitman, David Kaiser) contribute to this effort, most of the contributors are prominent British and Canadian academics. Only one German, Dieter Langewiesche (liberalism), is included among the twelve scholars. Eley's presence atop the list might explain the absence of Wehler or Juergen Kocka from the enterprise. It does not, however, explain the relatively scant attention paid to the German phenomenon of *Alltagsgeschichte* (the history of everyday life), perhaps the most exciting trend in historical writing to come from Germany in the last decade. Because *Alltagsgeschichte* proponents such as Alf Luedtke and Adelheid von Saldern have found champions among the contributors to this volume, the omission of a detailed exposition of the phenomenon is odd. One hopes Martel will consider including such an essay in future editions of this textbook, for the book should become a staple for undergraduate German history courses in the coming years.

The book's jacket states that "*Modern Germany Reconsidered* represents "essential reading for second- and third-year undergraduates on a range of Modern Germany courses." I second that appraisal—it is a remarkable accomplishment that ranks alongside William Sheridan Allen's *Nazi Seizure of Power* in its service to undergraduate students. (Graduate students might use Tracey Kay's bibliographical essay as a reading list for their comprehensive exams.) *Modern Germany Reconsidered* should find its way quickly to required reading lists in undergraduate German history courses.

St. Ambrose University

Jon Stauff

Richard Bonney. *The Short Oxford History of the Modern World: The European Dynastic States 1494-1660.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. pp. xxxiv, 658. Cloth, \$80.00.

Richard Bonney (of Leicester) has written this volume as part of a series on the modern world, four of which deal with English history and others with general European history and world regional topics. The series is designed to provide a basic core of historical knowledge and to incorporate the research and thinking that has significantly altered recent historiography. Thus, while the title may seem rather old-fashioned, Bonney tries to provide authoritative guidance with sensitivity to the proliferating complexity of specialized studies. One of the ways he does this is by providing a superb annotated bibliography for each chapter. A detailed chronology and dynastic charts are placed where they are most useful, at the beginning. One major flaw, in addition to the cost of the volume, is the map section; it is stuck at the back instead of being integrated, and the majority of the ten maps are monochrome and less than