

often transformational process that accompanies this relationship. Many of the themes explored reach beyond the specific German experience with modernity, and suggest other European-wide possibilities, while others, perhaps unintentionally, indicate congruence with the global application of the »likeness of the unlike«. In the specialized field of noble history, revisionism is the norm; some of these essays are recapitulations of specific themes in previous research, while others break new ground and challenge orthodox interpretations.

The first section on »Herrschaftspraxis und Soziales Kapital« elucidates the theme of noble adaptation and flexibility in various western European regions. Thomas Kroll's article on the Tuscan nobility outlines their affiliation with liberalism in the pre-unification period, this affinity developed in opposition to the absolutist policies of the Habsburg Grand Dukes, particularly the practice of ennobling bureaucrats. For these nobles, liberalism and national unification meant preservation of regional autonomy within a federalist structure and limited political cooperation with separate social spheres. Peter Mandler's article on the British Aristocracy both confirms and questions David Cannadine's theory of decline. Mandler agrees that the British aristocracy suffered a precipitous decline in post World War I Great Britain, but he posits that it recovered from this decline after World War II; withdrawing from political life and cleverly posing as stewards and protectors of the nation's heritage, while actually protecting their lands and property. Claude-Isabelle Brelot, in her short but fascinating essay on the post-revolutionary French nobility, theorizes that the French nobility survived as a fragmented cultural formation in a strongly egalitarian state. Jaap Dronkers and Huibert Schijft analyze the Dutch nobility's continuing social and cultural capital. This short study suggests that Dutch society is formally meritocratic, but the nobility are disproportionately hegemonic in the eco-

## ■ Adel und Moderne

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Eckart Conze and Monika Wienfort's edited volume evaluates nobles' encounters and mediation of modernity in Germany and Europe. This volume continues the work started by Heinz Reif, and furthered by other academics, many of whom are represented in this volume. The overall theme, the relationship of the noble to society, is explored in two interrelated ways: the relationship between the normative landscape of the noble family on one side and greater society on the other, and the internal and

nomic and political sphere, which indicates that the Dutch nobility's cultural capital is a plus factor in the competition for job advancement.

The second section »Elitekonzepte« revolves around the theme of nobles and a new elite. Michael Müller's article on the nineteenth century Polish nobility argues that Polish nobles, whether in Russia, Prussia, or Austria, were transformed from an order based on lineage, to a landed elite. Without an estate, one could no longer be considered noble. In place of the lineage-based order, the remaining nobility constructed a horizontal alliance with bureaucrats and bourgeois intellectuals that posited a new notion of nobility. Raffael Scheck's article on Paul von Hindenburg's presidential candidacy, argues that Hindenburg was an *Ersatzkaiser*, who was foisted on the Weimar Republic in an effort to recreate the camarilla of interests that controlled Wilhelm II, therefore subverting the democratic process. Stephan Malinowski and Sven Reichardt's work on nobles and the SA is an empirical tour-de-force that outlines both the statistical percentages of brown-shirted nobles, and their reasoning for joining the stormtroopers. The authors note the deep mental divide between the image of the storm trooper and the nobility, therefore a study of nobles and the SA indicates the limits of noble involvement with the National Socialists. Malinowski and Reichardt suggest that nobles in the SA were uniformly in leadership positions, mostly from Protestant East Elbian backgrounds, lacked estates, were seasoned soldiers, older and married with children. Although a minority, these nobles acted as a bridge between the old elite and the radical regime. Eckart Conze's article departs from the aforementioned examples by examining the meaning of a »new nobility« within the SS. Although linked to the many debates about the new nobility in the Weimar Republic, Imperial Germany and Imperial Austria, the SS definition of nobility was based on the idea of racial purity, and was tied to

the program of eastern expansion and liquidation. From day one, the SS equated the old nobility with decadence, degeneration, and mixed bloodlines, and therefore built a new conception of nobility on natural selection, merit, and extreme manliness. In essence, the SS were not only meant to be a new nobility for the National Socialist state, but a vanguard for a new type of society and man »the best of all classes«.

The every-day, symbolic parameters of noble life and the janus-faced complexity of signification comprise section three entitled »Aspekte von Adeligkeit«. Monika Wienfort investigates differing roles of noble women in the early twentieth century; high noble socialite, lower noble estate administrator and charitable activist, and additionally a nonconformist artist. Whether traditional or rebel, female nobles shared a mental world with their peers, though not necessarily with each other. Marcus Funck, in his innovative essay on noble men and masculine theory, writes about the transformation of codes of masculinity from the Kaiserreich to the Weimar Republic. Before 1914, the ideal for the nobleman was the courtly knight, who had the dual-function of warrior and courtier in the womanly sphere of the court. This ambiguous construct was destroyed during and after World War I, when rightist organizations insisted on complete masculinity symbolized by discipline, hardness, and severity. Josef Matzerath theorizes on the importance of symbols to the nobility. The examples used include an idealized drama, and a hat riddled with bullet holes. These two items symbolized both social cohesion, and articulated parameters to be observed by family and order. Angelika Linke continues this theme with her discussion of bodily position and communication among the nobility in the early modern era. Noble knowledge of the symbols and meanings behind bodily posture and gesture enacted a barrier between themselves and commoners. This system of body performance was opposed and eventually marginalized by the

bourgeois symbolic system of speech. Similar to Funck's protagonists, the bourgeoisie eventually forced noble bodily practice into marginality as an effeminate affectation.

The fourth section »Adelsgeschichte als Erfahrungsgeschichte« is united by the theme of noble reaction to traumatic circumstances. Ewald Frie discusses the twin paths of the von der Marwitz brothers (Ludwig and Alexander) during the era of Napoleonic domination. The trajectory of the brothers clarifies the struggle for position within a noble family and with other families, but also the relatively different choices made by siblings in the transitional era from orders to civil society. Wencke Meteling compares the evolving views and reactions of seven different noble officers to the defeat of World War I. She demonstrates that the decisive break for most of these men was not the military defeat, or the fall of the monarchy, but the break-down of army discipline and the shocking lack of respect towards them as officers when they returned from the front. This destabilizing paradigm implicitly reinforced the Damascus experience of these men and completed their break with the past. Karina Urbach's article on the Standesherren continues rather than questions the South German Sonderweg. The Standesherren tended to be politically pragmatic, unenthusiastic about the war, and had already accommodated revolutionary change and developed oppositional strategies that were useful in combating said change. Nonetheless, the war was a break with the past, because the Standesherren had daily contact with commoners, and this experience decisively influenced some of their political choices in the Weimar era.

Edited volumes of this type have their idiosyncrasies and this is no exception. Although the volume promises a comparison of Germany with Europe, this in fact is not the case. With the exception of Kroll and Müller, the examples are far too short to draw all but the most superficial conclusions. Particularly disappointing is the short article

by Brelot, which has many interesting ideas that were not fleshed out in this volume. Likewise, Scheck's fascinating argument practically begs for global comparison, for example the military camarilla around Emperor Hirohito.

The German aspects of the book promise much, and deliver more in several different areas. First, the implicit recognition that the German nobility was a regional nobility and therefore overarching theories are of little significance unless they are mediated by a common experience (e.g. the front, disinheritance, ideology). Wienfort, Mazerath, Frie, and Urbach all work within this framework in various ways. Second, the fundamental importance of the lived front experience combined with the trauma of the revolution are critical for understanding the motives of many nobles in the Weimar and Nazi periods. The essays of Meteling, Funck, Conze, and Malinowski and Reichardt all confirm the discontinuity of noble identity between Imperial Germany and the post World War I era, while outlining the threads of continuity between the eras, particularly among the minor East Elbian military clans. Meteling makes a critical point that neither the lost war, nor the fall of the monarchy, was as important a factor in noble officers support of the radical right as the reaction of both soldiers and civilians to them in the early days of the Republic. Malinowski and Reichardt posit various reasons why some nobles chose to join the SA, but for most it was the opportunity to recreate the front experience and find an alternative position of leadership denied to them by the Republic. Funck's brilliant essay on the transformation of manliness supports the huge disconnect between the mentality of the pre and post war eras. The noble officer/courtier/aesthete was normal in the Kaiserreich, but nearly unthinkable later. Perhaps Funck's essay explains the attraction of National Socialism to so many of the pre-war noble avant-garde. Finally, Conze article goes beyond the dismissal of

SS ideology as hocus-pocus with a serious and compelling look at what Himmler, Darre, and company meant by a new nobility. It seems clear to this reader, after reading Conze's article, that nobles were attracted to the SS not by a new noble habitus but by the realistic opportunity to recreate a position of authoritarian leadership under a different regime. If one could grab an estate in the East because of SS ideology, fine, but it was not critical as an attraction.

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Overall, this is a strong volume filled with much, though not all, of the latest research on the German nobility during the modern period, and has essays of interest to the political, social, intellectual, and cultural historian alike.

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