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innerhalb seines Schaffensprozesses. Alles in allem eine gelungene Ausgabe, die zur Lektüre einlädt und – was zu hoffen wäre – auch die Forschung zur weiteren Beschäftigung mit einem Autor anregt, der sich schon früh für ein »geeeintes Haus Europa« eingesetzt hat.

Helga BRANDES, Oldenburg

Preußen und die revolutionäre Herausforderung seit 1789. Ergebnisse einer Konferenz, hg. von Otto BÜSCH und Monika NEUGEBAUER-WÖLK, mit Beiträgen von H. BERDING etc., Berlin (Walter de Gruyter) 1990, VI–371 p. (Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission zu Berlin, 78, Forschungen zur preußischen Geschichte).

This book, part of the flood of publications promoted by the bicentenary of the French Revolution, differs from traditional treatments of the Revolution's impact on Germany¹ by its focus on Prussia and its analysis of how three linked »revolutions«, the Atlantic, the French, and the Polish-Eastern European impacted on it.

The so-called Atlantic Revolution, to be sure, plays only a minor role—a brief discussion of America in Eberhard WEIS introductory essay, an essay by Monika NEUGEBAUER-WÖLK on Prussia's role in the revolution at Liège in 1789–90, and some discussion by Ernst Wangermann of Prussia's anti-Austrian activities in the Belgian revolution. But ample attention is paid to Prussia in East Central Europe. Klaus ZERNACK provides a provocative analysis of how Prussia faced, and failed, the »challenge« in 1790 of changing the basis of its great-power position in Europe from partnership with Russia against Poland to alliance with Poland in enlightened monarchism. WANGERMAN describes Prussian efforts under Frederick William II to continue Frederick's policy of exploiting religious and political discontents, especially in Hungary, to undermine the Habsburg Monarchy. In the longest essay of the volume, Waclaw DUGOBORSKI describes the widespread social tension and frequent local risings in Prussia's Polish territories in the late 1780's and early 90's—risings, to be sure, of a mostly ancien regime character, owing little to the French Revolution, but becoming broader and more united in character with the Kosciuszko revolt of 1794.

Most of the essays, naturally, concern the French Revolution-Franco-Prussian diplomatic relations, fear of revolution in Prussia, the activities of the (tiny) group of radical revolutionary democrats there, the far wider Prussian network of reading clubs and other societies to promote enlightenment and how they fared during the revolution and war, a content analysis of two Prussian newspapers to detect attitudes toward the Revolution, the long-range modernizing effects of French rule on various Prussian lands, their juridical integration into Prussia after 1814, and the changing image of Prussia among Frenchmen in the course of revolution and war.

In all this there are few surprises and no radical departures. A fair number of the essays rehearse familiar themes and summarize research published elsewhere; one (that of Dominique BOUREL on Franco-Prussian relations) is rather sketchy and superficial, and another, that of Jörn GARBER on the work of the Prussian Saint-Simonian Friedrich Buchholz and its potential historiographical importance, of doubtful relevance to the volume's overall theme. Yet on the whole the essays hang together and are of high scholarly quality; there is a good mixture of established authorities and younger scholars. Inevitably, one can find conclusions or interpretations with which to disagree, but the arguments are mostly sensible, and the book offers much information and insight.

Why then was my main reaction in reading it one of dissatisfaction, even frustration – a sense

1 A recent contribution to this tradition is Eberhard WEIS, ed., *Deutschland und Frankreich um 1800* (Munich, 1990).

that historians, even eminent ones, can sometimes strain at gnats and swallow camels, detect subtle effects and fine nuances of meaning while overlooking what is staring them in the face?

The overall theme of the book, as neatly expounded by Otto Büsch in his concluding remarks, is that of revolution/reform as forming part of a single, though complex and variegated, modernization process stretching from the latter 18th to the early and middle 19th centuries in Prussia. The general verdict here, as predominantly in current German historiography with its emphasis on societal transformation, is that the French Revolution and Napoleon made, on the whole, major positive contributions to this process.

All this is familiar, plausible, and doubtless important. What I see this book and this whole tendency doing, however, is three things: (1) obscuring the crucial distinction between linear, direct results and indirect, systemic, ironic results in history, and the different ways in which each should be explained; (2) overlooking or taking for granted the most obvious, important direct effects of the Revolution and Napoleon on Prussia as on Europe generally, while perhaps unconsciously portraying the indirect ironic ones as decisive; and (3) thereby missing the real revolutionary significance of the period.

To state briefly the main direct effects of the Revolution and Napoleon on Prussia as on Europe generally (all well known, even clichés, but overlooked in this work or mentioned only in throwaway lines): First, it associated the ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity, which antedated 1789, with terror, tyranny, war, foreign conquest and exploitation, and the destruction of existing values and of civic and international order, thus setting the revolutionary cause back a generation or more and providing conservatives with powerful ammunition for generations to come. Second, it »modernized« the state, starting with France, primarily in making it a vastly more efficient machine for extraction, coercion, and war, and »modernized« society first and foremost in making it more readily mobilized for these purposes. Third, it changed France from a potential ally of Prussia to a mortal threat and enemy, and Austria from a mortal enemy to an indispensable ally.

The reigning modernization/societal transformation schema for German history treats these well-known effects as short-term phenomena, event rather than structural history. In fact, precisely these direct effects proved among the most powerful over the long term. True, we cannot say just how Prussia and Germany would have »modernized« (no unmixed good, incidentally) without the Revolutionary-Napoleonic impact; but neither can we suppose it would never have happened without it. We know the process had begun before 1789; we know the most successful modernization (in Britain) occurred against and despite France; we know the French impact distorted, damaged, and even destroyed societal modernization as well as promoted it (e. g., in Austria and Spain). In contrast, one cannot see how the change in the French-Prussian-Austrian relationship, as in European politics generally, could have happened at all without the Revolution and Napoleon. Klaus ZERNACK's observation that Prussia rose in the 18th century to minimal great power status on the basis of partnership with Russia in a negative Poland policy has an exact 19th century corollary. Prussia-Germany's ascent to European half-hegemony and world power aspirations, with all its fateful consequences, rested upon partnership with Austria (broken only briefly in the 1860's) in a negative France policy growing squarely and directly out of the Revolution and Napoleon.

One must go further: the most profound, and salutary, effects of this era on Prussia and Europe generally came from the rejection of the Revolutionary-Napoleonic models and example. Ilja MIECK's essay on Prussia's juridical integration of former French-ruled territories into the kingdom after 1814 illustrates this (though the author may not see it). It portrays the caution, flexibility, and prudence with which Prussian officials picked up the pieces from the legal-political chaos Napoleon had left behind and made a working system out of it, deliberately sacrificing a centralized uniformity to the needs and wishes of the Rhinelanders. This is just one instance of a dominant trend in 1814–15: the determination of European statesmen to replace the whole Old Regime-Revolutionary-Napoleonic model of statecraft,

with its pure power-political principles and its arbitrariness at home and violence abroad (characteristics their states had shared with France, to be sure) with a domestic and international order based primarily on legality, consent, compromise, and conciliation.

In short, to the extent the Revolution and Napoleon had long-term benefits for Prussia and Europe, it is largely because the allies in the so-called Restoration era deliberately chose not to act like the revolutionaries or Napoleon, and not to have a Restoration. There is only one revolution in this era really worth celebrating, really pointing to the future, whose benign effects in international politics have never been exceeded and whose working principles are still far from fully realized: the revolution of 1814–15.

Paul W. SCHROEDER, Urbana

Meinrad SCHAAB (Hg.), *Oberrheinische Aspekte des Zeitalters der Französischen Revolution*, Stuttgart (W. Kohlhammer Verlag) 1990, VI–289 p. (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg, Reihe B: Forschungen, 117).

En 1988, bicentenaire oblige, la Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg a consacré son congrès annuel à la Haute-Rhénanie à l'époque de la Révolution française. Mais au lieu d'examiner simplement les répercussions des événements de France sur cette région, les organisateurs ont préféré considérer le Rhin non comme une frontière séparant l'Allemagne de ses voisins, mais comme l'artère irrigant un espace culturel et social susceptible à son tour d'enrichir un espace plus grand, en l'occurrence l'Europe. C'est dire le caractère d'actualité de cette démarche.

L'objet des débats fut de dégager ce que la discussion menée en 1789 en France sur les droits de l'homme (au centre de laquelle nous trouvons Mirabeau et l'abbé Grégoire) doit à des modèles de réflexion et d'argumentation expérimentés dans l'espace haut-rhénan, Alsace, Bade, Suisse germanophone. La première partie de l'ouvrage reproduit les communications sous forme de «thèses», telles qu'elles ont été soumises aux discussions des congressistes.

M. THOMANN (Strasbourg) pose la question, à première vue provocante, de savoir si la Haute-Rhénanie ne fut pas «la patrie des droits de l'homme». Il rappelle que Mirabeau, avant de devenir député à la Constituante, a été en contact étroit non seulement avec la Prusse, ce que tout le monde sait, mais aussi (on l'oublie trop souvent) avec des personnalités allemandes, suisses et françaises qui ont influencé depuis Strasbourg la pensée pré-révolutionnaire, menant notamment le combat européen pour l'émancipation des Juifs. C'est parce qu'il ne put, malgré ses efforts, être le candidat de la noblesse libérale alsacienne que Mirabeau échoua finalement dans une circonscription de Provence, où il représenta le tiers-état. M. T. insiste sur le rôle joué par Strasbourg, dont l'Université était la seule en France à enseigner le droit naturel et la philosophie pratique, et dont la Société (secrète) des Philanthropes, proche de la maçonnerie, comptait parmi ses membres (dès 1776) l'abbé Grégoire, ainsi que le Bâlois Isaak Iselin et l'Allemand Johann Georg Schlosser, et également, quelques Illuminés. La Haute-Rhénanie fut, d'une manière plus générale, l'un des lieux où s'affrontèrent, parfois non sans vigueur, partisans et adversaires de l'Aufklärung. Et lors de la discussion du Préambule de la fameuse Déclaration, Mirabeau essaya, avec un succès d'ailleurs mitigé, de faire passer des conceptions empruntées au droit naturel qui reflétaient les idéaux de «citoyens suisses experts en révolution» (p. 12) transmis par le canal de ses relations strasbourgeoises.

La problématique des droits fondamentaux est aussi au centre des préoccupations d'écrivains et publicistes badois, en particulier J. G. Schlosser. S'appuyant sur des textes antérieurs d'une dizaine d'années à la Révolution, K. GERTEIS (Trèves) confirme que la critique de l'absolutisme, sous des formes du reste très différenciées, a ouvert la voie aux conceptions constitutionnelles qui fondent l'Etat de droit, notamment en excluant la législation civile et judiciaire des compétences de l'exécutif.