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allem die ästhetischen Ansprüche des Sammlers beleuchten. Hilfreich für weitere Forschungen sind ein akribisches Quellenverzeichnis und eine Bibliographie der Sekundärliteratur. Ein ausführliches Personen- und Sachregister dient der schnellen Information.

Rolf GEISSLER, Berlin

Andreas PEČAR, Die Ökonomie der Ehre. Höfischer Adel am Kaiserhof Karls VI. (1711–1740) Darmstadt (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft) 2003, VI–432 S. (Symbolische Kommunikation in der Vormoderne).

In his 2002 Cologne dissertation, ›Die Ökonomie der Ehre‹, Andreas Pečar deals with the position of nobles at the court of the ›last Habsburg‹ Charles VI (1711–1740). Pečar studies the nobles connected to the court, first by focusing on the resources they needed to enter court and the advantages generated by court office, then by assessing their place in the norms and forms of ceremony at court, and finally by discussing the court as a starting point for noble representation.

Pečar combines analytical and conceptual perspectives with knowledge of archival sources. The attempt surely is not new: most recent continental European and American contributions to the history of the early modern court were influenced by Norbert Elias' model; in addition, works by authors such as Clifford Geertz, Niklas, Luhmann, and Pierre Bourdieu were increasingly drawn into the field of court studies. Typical for many studies using such authors, however, was a propensity to accumulate theoretical perspectives without critically assessing either the frequently awkward fit among these perspectives, or the equally troublesome relationship of their major contentions with the archival legacy of the court. Pečar shows mastery in both fields: he does not passively use these authors, but combines and adapts their concepts in an intelligent way, using them to clarify and strengthen the outcomes of his research. Pečar first inverts the habitual perspective: casting aside Elias' thesis of the ›domestication‹ of the nobility at court, he concentrates on the factors attracting nobles to the court. Why did nobles go to the court, and how would they, instead of the ruler, use it to further their interests?

In the first section on resources, Pečar points out that in the early eighteenth century great wealth was a precondition for high office at court. Before reaching the higher echelons of court office, nobles had to go through a long and costly *cursus honorum* which could include diplomatic missions (far from the courtly centre and invariably costly) or offices in the administrative councils of Habsburg monarchy. All nobles had to start as chamberlain *(Kämmerer)*, many would climb to the rank of councillor *(geheime Rat)*, yet only a relatively small group would reach high court office and the ultimate reward of the Golden Fleece. Even among the most vested and successful courtiers, financial benefits cannot have been the only or even the major motivation for court service. Court nobles frequently served as creditor to the emperor, and although the rewards for loyal service could be enormous, many hoped in vain for rich pensions.

At court, the emperor and his noble servants engaged in a dignified public presentation that strengthened the prestige of both vis-à-vis the other courts of Europe, and their agents present in Vienna – and also in the eyes of the *Untertanen*, witnessing the frequent *Solennitäten* of Charles' court in Vienna. Pečar gives a balanced view of court ceremony, and leaves room for a world less rigid and punctilious than the norms dictating ceremony seem to imply. He shows that the emperor could substantially influence the hierarchies at court by the timing of his nominations to the ranks of chamberlains and councillors, but underlines that Charles' ceremonial decision-making was largely motivated by tradition. The same dominance of tradition was present in the emperor's *repraesentatio maiestatis*. Charles, moreover, apparently was not bothered by the situation that the major dynasties of court nobles

constructed palaces surpassing the *Hofburg* in splendour – a fact noted with delight by Montesquieu during his travels. The last chapter of ›Die Ökonomie der Ehre‹ discusses the nobles' palaces in Vienna at some length, and shows how they fitted into a general effort to represent dynastic status.

Pečar concludes that the court helped nobles to convert economic capital into social and cultural capital (hence the title, »Die Ökonomie der Ehre«); thus, it allowed the major dynasties of court nobles to consolidate and prolong their exalted status. Clearly, then, the court was more than a means the ruler could use in his interest; it reflected a mutually beneficial interdependence between emperor and nobles. Pečar's presentation of Charles VI's court fits well into the fundamental revision initiated by Robert Evans in his epoch-making 1979 ›Making of the Habsburg Monarchy‹.

This convincing study shows minor shortcomings and omissions. A book about choices and strategies, where the court is seen largely as a medium nobles could use to reach further goals, tends to give a somewhat bleak image of human interaction. The author stresses in his introduction (p. 18) that interaction at court frequently was *Selbstzweck*, yet his book on the whole seems to stress that it was mostly *ergebnisorientiert*. A slight dose of Johan Huizinga or Clifford Geertz could have improved the balance between these poles. Pečar could profitably have included the noble women at the court of the empress or dowager-empress in his book; this would not seriously have changed the direction of his argument, but it would have done justice to the marked presence of these semi-autonomous courts, with their *Hofdamen* and *Sternkreuzdamen*, in Vienna. Finally, while Pečar's choice to limit his study to the reign of Charles VI is fully justified, and may have strengthened the cohesion of his book, it leads to a somewhat static image. In Maria Theresa's later years, the court reached even higher numbers than under Charles, yet by that time its functions were undergoing serious changes. If Pečar had extended his book to include the more turbulent situation under Maria Theresa, his analysis of the costs and benefits of court office could have obtained even greater acuity. These remarks, however, reflect wishes more than criticisms. Pečar's well-founded book challenges many misunderstandings in court history, and it is an important contribution to the history of the Habsburg court.

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Colin Jones, Dror Wahrman (Hg.), The Age of Cultural Revolutions. Britain and France, 1750–1820, Berkeley (University of California Press) 2002, XIII–293 S.

Der vorliegende Sammelband mit seinen elf Beiträgen dokumentiert ein transatlantisches Tagungsprojekt, das zunächst den ambitionierten Titel trug: »Dissolving Boundaries: Historical Writing towards the Third Millennium«. In der Druckfassung nun wurde der Titel in signifikanter Weise zugespitzt: Aus den Grenzen, die zu überschreiten waren, ist nun vor allem die Epochengrenze um 1800 geworden, die zur Diskussion steht, und dies aus dem Blickwinkel der neueren, kulturwissenschaftlich orientierten Geschichtswissenschaft, wie sie sich in den achtziger und neunziger Jahren des 20. Jhs. vor allem im anglo-amerikanischen Raum etabliert hat.

In kritischer Anknüpfung an das ältere sozialgeschichtlich fundierte Paradigma der Modernisierung, die sich in der industriellen Revolution in England und in der bürgerlicher Revolution in Frankreich Bahn brach, wird hier der Zeitraum zwischen ca. 1750 und 1820 erneut in den Blick genommen. Dies allerdings – so die Herausgeber Colin Jones und Dror Wahrman in ihrer pointierten und lesenswerten Einführung – im Wissen um die grundlegende Kritik an dieser stark vom Marxismus her orientierten Einteilung und Einschätzung des historischen Wandlungsprozesses, wie sie namentlich von Autoren formuliert wurde, die der »Postmoderne« zuzurechnen sind, und im Blick auf die Problematik des