

The extensive endnotes are impressive in their depth and reveal the meticulous work of a scholar who has spent years immersed in the archives. The events reconstructed from these materials were shrouded in secrecy and deliberately obscured by the agents involved, which created a major analytical challenge. This makes the work Michels undertook all the more impressive. The book is at its strongest when the narrative pauses to address these issues and assess the nature and contents of several contradictory sources. Some may find the selected phrases and words frequently reproduced in their original languages a distraction. Though experts in the field will welcome Michels' precision, students without a working knowledge of German, Latin, Italian, and Hungarian might be intimidated by these insertions.

This deep archival work lays the foundation for future studies, many of which are suggested by Michels in the conclusion. That ordinary Hungarians sought their fortunes with the Ottoman sultan rather than the Habsburg emperor may come as a surprise to those unfamiliar with the complicated positions taken by the residents of the former Kingdom of Hungary in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The romanticized popular rebels described by Michels are known in Hungarian historiography as the legendary *kuruc* freedom fighters. They were a staple of twentieth-century nationalist children's literature and textbooks. In subsequent studies, an important task will be to disentangle the complicated positions occupied by these and other similar rebels in the collective memory of the region. A related task that remains for future scholars is the reconstruction of popular attempts to become subjects of the sultan before and after these revolts. Indeed, archival sources reveal the willingness of Hungarian and Transylvanian noblemen and commoners to shift their allegiance to the sultan throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Another important topic for further research is the Ottoman perspective on these events, highlighted by Michels himself as a necessary complement to his own outstanding piece of scholarship.

doi:10.1017/S0008938922001297

## **Protestantischer König im Heiligen Reich. Brandenburg-preussische Reichs- und Konfessionspolitik im frühen 18. Jahrhundert**

**By Renate Wieland. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2020. Pp. 570. Paperback €119.00. ISBN: 978-3428152674.**

Alexander Schunka

Freie Universität Berlin

Three hundred years ago, in the early 1720s, the Holy Roman Empire stood on the verge of a civil war. Originating from confessional disputes within the Rhenish Palatinate, the Catholic emperor and his allies faced a more or less united Protestant front with Brandenburg-Prussia and Hanover-England at its head. While the war could eventually be avoided, the political strife before and after this major confessional crisis laid important foundations for the rise of the Hohenzollern state as first and foremost an opponent of the Habsburgs in the empire.

This important book derives from a doctoral dissertation at the University of Freiburg. It analyses the pre-history of the well-known Prussian-Austrian dualism of the eighteenth

century. Based on traditional methodology of political history, it brings together two historiographical traditions that have long existed rather separately: the historiography of Brandenburg-Prussia on the one hand, and of the Holy Roman Empire (*Reichsgeschichte*) on the other. However, the topic of this work is not the well-known antagonism between the Habsburgs and the Prussians at the time of Frederick the Great, but Brandenburg-Prussia's place in the empire in the earlier eighteenth century as well as its ambitions to become the unifier and safeguard of Protestants vis-à-vis a Habsburg monarch who saw himself as the head of the empire but happened to be a Roman Catholic.

Based on substantial archival sources from Berlin and Vienna, the book consists of more than 500 pages of text. It follows a chronological approach and focuses in particular on the years between 1715 and 1728. The long-lasting imperial debates about the multi-confessional situation in the Palatinate feature prominently. At the same time, the book is not strictly about the Palatinate crisis but more about the political emancipation of the Prussian monarchy that included an evolving opposition against Habsburg-Catholic imperial rule, together with aspirations to become the leading power of Protestants in the empire – Lutherans and Calvinists alike. From a Prussian angle, this involved bridging at least two fault lines, namely an internal multi-confessionalism within this composite state (where a Reformed dynasty had long favored a Calvinist clientele while ruling over a majority of Lutherans and even over some Catholics) as well as tackling the contradiction between imperial politics in the *Corpus Evangelicorum* (the body of Protestant estates at the Imperial Diet) while claiming a special position as kingdom after 1701.

The introduction (Part A) summarizes the German historiography of the last 150 years concerning the relationship between the Holy Roman Empire and Brandenburg-Prussia ca. 1700. Part B, then, presents the pre-history of the confessional conflicts over the Palatinate (and elsewhere) between the infamous peace treaty of Rijswijk in 1697 and the year 1715. This section already makes clear that most confessional conflicts as well as the antagonism between Berlin and Vienna did not originate during the rule of King Frederick William I but were inherited from his predecessor. Part C looks at contemporary approaches to imperial politics from a federalist angle, with a special focus on the *Corpus Evangelicorum* and the imperial courts. The next part (D) analyzes the attempts to restrict the influence of these courts, especially the Vienna-based Aulic Council, on Prussia. It appears that in several cases the Hohenzollern king put pressure on the Catholic minority in his own country, using Catholics as a bargaining chip against the emperor.

Part E runs to more than 220 pages and is not only the longest but certainly the most important part of the book. It deals with the core period of the work between 1715 and 1728. The chapters lay out in great detail how the diplomatic crisis between Berlin and Vienna intensified and eventually cooled again after 1724, due to the involvement of individual actors, politics at the Imperial Diet (namely the *Corpus Evangelicorum*), the imperial courts, the participation of Hanover-England, and printed political propaganda. Succession issues within the empire (the Jülich-Berg crisis), international politics, Irenic negotiations to unite Lutherans with Reformed Protestants, and finally the problem of the Pragmatic Sanction to secure the Habsburg dynasty, all added to the complications that were finally resolved in 1728 with an official alliance between the Emperor and the King of Prussia. What looms large over this multifaceted crisis are certainly the confessional divisions in the Palatinate, but these chapters (as well as the whole book) situate the implications of the Palatinate conflict in the wider imperial politics of the time.

The final part contains a lengthy but interesting excursus on a particular political pamphlet from the early seventeenth century (the “Stralendorf'sches Gutachten”) and its after-life in the eighteenth century, underlining one major argument – namely, how confessional positions and identities were always ready to be activated throughout this period to serve political ends. This chapter could have well been a separate article and published elsewhere. The book concludes with a concise summary – more concise, in fact, than most of the chapter conclusions that end each section of the work.

Taken as a whole, the present book is certainly a very informative, meritorious work which sheds light on an under-researched period in the history of the Holy Roman Empire from a strictly political angle. (Cultural exchanges between Prussia and the Habsburg lands during the period under examination are not within its focus, and the theological implications of confessional dialogue are presented sometimes rather superficially.) Of course, not everything in this story is completely new, but it has not yet been told in such great detail. And unlike in the older, usually quite biased research, now it is not easy to tell anymore who is the good guy and who is the bad guy – which makes it hard for the modern reader to take sides with either the Prussian King or the Holy Roman Emperor.

On a more critical note, the book is not an easy read. It would have benefited from a clearer structure and stronger focus, and a more convincing narrative including accessible language (and fewer typos), in order to attract a readership beyond the die-hard specialist.

doi:10.1017/S0008938922001303

## **The Dynastic Imagination: Family and Modernity in Nineteenth-Century Germany**

**By Adrian Daub. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2021. Pp. 253. Paperback \$29.00. ISBN: 978-0226737874.**

Mary Jo Maynes

University of Minnesota

Adrian Daub's book can at times be a frustrating read for historians expecting analysis of family history as it is generally approached in our discipline. Daub does warn readers at the outset that this is not a book about "real families," and the book's title is clear on its goal to explore dynasty as an idea, an imaginary, rather than a set of practices.

What Daub does offer is an intellectual-historical exploration of the pervasive engagement with notions of "dynasty," generally in tension with notions of "family" of a more nuclear sort, as they operate across a range of works written during the long nineteenth century. The tension between these two notions is at the heart of Daub's analysis, and of his provocative wider claim that this tension has never disappeared: "as Western societies more generally become more stratified, isn't our claim to be nondynastic a delusion? And isn't it quite possible it was never more than that?" (6)

Most of the works Daub examines were authored by German men; the usual suspects are all there, including Goethe, Hegel, Wagner, and Freud, among many others. Indeed, Daub's method itself evokes the intellectual dynasty that is Daub's own, as a scholar of European comparative literature, an analogy that Daub no doubt intended, although he does not make this positionality explicit.

Daub delves deeply into the lives and thought of his selected subjects, in chapters that range across many aspects of dynasty and family as intellectual (and political) constructs. He examines German conservative critiques of the displacement of dynastic ideals by bourgeois and individualistic notions of family during and after the French Revolution in chapter 2. Chapter 4 links Hegel with many alternative lines of descent. Directly by way of pupils and proselytizers, and less directly through the Young Hegelians, Hegel turns up as a progenitor of a diverse array of heirs and heiresses, including many early German feminist writers.