

GERMAN HISTORY IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA, 1490–1790 NINTH TRANSATLANTIC DOCTORAL SEMINAR

Seminar at the GHI, April 9–12, 2003. Co-sponsored by the GHI and the BMW Center for European Studies, Georgetown University. Conveners: Roger Chickering (Georgetown University) and Richard F. Wetzell (GHI). Moderators: Astrid Eckert (GHI), Amy Leonard (Georgetown University), Christof Mauch (GHI), Claudia Ulbrich (Free University, Berlin), Lee Palmer Wandel (University of Wisconsin, Madison).

For the ninth time, the Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar in German History brought together sixteen doctoral students from North America and Germany to present and discuss their dissertation projects with one another and with faculty mentors from both sides of the Atlantic. This year's seminar was dedicated to early modern German history from 1490 to 1790.

The first panel was devoted to two papers on aspects of urban history in the early modern period. Björn Christlieb examined city correspondence from the southwestern region of the Holy Roman Empire in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, in order to uncover the symbolic meanings of the stylized language used by city councils and their scribes. Michaela Fenske presented her dissertation project on early modern market culture, which seeks to analyze the forms of power, economic exchange, and entertainment at a fair and cattle market through a micro-study of Hildesheim, which is primarily based on the surviving *Marktprotokolle* from 1650 to 1717. The discussion focused on the crucial role of language in both the city missives and the *Marktprotokolle*; the relationship between written and oral culture; the uses cities made of written forms of communication; the advantages and disadvantages of microhistory as a historical method; and the fluidity of the power relationships at work in the conflicts examined in both papers.

The seminar's second panel dealt with relations between confessions and the question of religious tolerance. Jesse Spohnholz's paper examined practical strategies for coexistence in the town of Wesel, a major refugee center for Calvinists fleeing the Low Countries, in the period 1568 to 1578. By examining how the immigrants maintained church discipline and governed charity institutions and schools, Spohnholz sought to reveal the daily tactics that the different religious groups used to informally demarcate the boundaries that divided them, even as they preserved the appearance of religious unity wherever possible. Richard Ninness's paper

studied the Prince-Bishopric of Bamberg in the period 1517–1648, focusing on high-level officials drawn from the imperial knights, who were Protestant during the Reformation. Challenging the notion of a polarization between Catholics and Protestants, Ninness stressed the economic, familial, friendship, and patronage ties between Protestant and Catholic members of the Bishopric's elite. Much of the discussion dealt with the confessionalization thesis and the criticism it has been coming under for some time. Participants in the discussion also argued that religious identities were diverse and changing rather than stable and uniform; that one ought to distinguish between different types of Catholicism; and that pragmatic and partial forms of religious tolerance could exist in the absence of "religious tolerance" as a general principle.

The third panel examined early modern rulers and their consorts. As part of a dissertation investigating the position held by the wives of Protestant territorial rulers in the second half of the sixteenth century, Pernille Arenfeldt presented a case study of the conflicts that characterized the marriage of Elizabeth, Duchess of Saxony, to Johann Casimir, Count Palatine. Princely women, like Elizabeth, Arenfeldt argued, had considerably more room for political maneuver and influence than historians have recognized. Mary Venables examined the rule of Ernst the Pious of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg (1601–1675), arguing that although Ernst did not intend to be a political or religious innovator, he responded to the social and spiritual dislocation of the Thirty Years' War by extending the orthodox Lutheran understanding of a regent's authority to develop a vigorous program for renewed churches, schools, and public life. Among the issues raised in the discussion was the difficulty of determining whether a particular historical case is exceptional or representative. Even if politically influential women were an exception, however, it was argued that there were enough of them that mainstream political *Strukturgeschichte* ought to account for them by overcoming its separation of politics and family. Also discussed was the impact that the shattering experience of the Thirty Years' War had on notions of identity and on religious views on sin and suffering.

The fourth panel was devoted to international relations in the seventeenth century. Daniel Riches's paper examined the increase in Lutheran-Calvinist confessional tension that adversely affected Brandenburg-Swedish diplomatic relations in the late 1680s and early 1690s. He argued that although Brandenburg and Sweden shared a real desire to get along, religious issues—including those dividing Protestant sects—still had significant potential to create international tension as the seventeenth century came to a close. Bernd Klesmann's paper analyzed seventeenth-century declarations of war. These declarations, he argued, were directed not just at the adversaries but also at the general public, and continued to

be shaped by highly formalized practices with partly medieval traits until far into the modern era. In the discussion, it was noted that Riches's paper revealed the important role of contingency in history, but the question was also raised to what extent the views of the particular diplomats were actually representative of collective mentalities. It was also pointed out that Klesmann's argument that seventeenth-century declarations of war were directed at the general public called into question the sharp break between old-regime and post-French Revolution warfare that is posited by modern military history.

The fifth panel brought together two very different papers on the general theme of "civilizing missions." Inspired by world-systems analysis, Luke Clossey's paper examined early-modern Jesuit missions as a macrohistorical phenomenon. After outlining the extent of German involvement in the Jesuit missions in Mexico and China, Clossey explored the missionaries' motivations by analyzing the letters of aspiring missionaries to the Jesuit general in Rome, concluding that most missionaries were motivated by a concern for self rather than the desire to convert others. Astrid Ackermann examined late eighteenth-century fashion journals. Despite their fundamentally international orientation, these journals propagated a national taste, the boycott of foreign goods, and, in the German case, a national costume believed to be traditional. Ackermann therefore concluded that these journals expressed a national consciousness, the molding of a national identity for women, and opportunities for women to become nationally involved. Much of the discussion of Clossey's paper focused on the question regarding to what extent it is possible to determine the motives of historical actors and on the broader issue of what kinds of questions historians should be asking. The discussion of Ackermann's paper dealt with the relationships between fashion and gender, between fashion discourse and the Enlightenment, and between local clothing production and national fashions.

The sixth panel explored aspects of environmental history. Marie Luisa Allemeyer's paper examined how the sixteenth and seventeenth-century inhabitants of the Frisian coastal zone perceived the danger they were exposed to by nature—the sea—and what strategies they developed to cope with these dangers. Focusing on struggles over the maintenance and the management of the dikes, Allemeyer argued that these struggles provide significant insight into the society, politics, and mentality of the coastal communities. Warren Dym studied prospecting traditions in Freiberg in the Erzgebirge from 1650 to 1765, seeking to explain the paradoxical fact that members of the Freiberg Mining Academy, which institutionalized research in the earth sciences, continued to patronize the practice of divining. Dym argued that when Enlightenment philosophers challenged mining beliefs, miners and officials defended tradition by

elevating divining in social and epistemological status. Participants in the discussion posed the question whether the conflicts between local inhabitants and central authorities described by Allemeyer and those between local customs and Enlightenment thought described by Dym could be understood as conflicts between popular and elite culture. The authors were also asked about the role of economics in the coastal communities and in mining. Finally, the discussion called attention to the larger historiographical context of the decline of magic and raised the question of how the divining rod was successfully distanced from magic.

The seventh panel brought together two papers on the history of early modern science, alchemy in particular. Andrew Sparling's paper explored how the German chemist and alchemist Johann Rudolph Glauber (1604–1670) understood and configured experience and authority in the texts he wrote and published. Interpreting Glauber's work as a distinctive form of seventeenth-century cultural life, Sparling sought to demonstrate that there were multiple ways of approaching the study of nature in early modern Europe. Renko Geffarth studied the eighteenth-century secret order of the Golden Rosicrucians (*Gold- und Rosenkreuzer*) in order to explore the conjunction of early modern protoscientific thought, alchemy in particular, with a nonconformist religious movement. The Golden Rosicrucians, he argued, provided its members with the opportunity to practice nonorthodox beliefs in a framework that was at once organized and private. The discussion placed Sparling's paper in the context of the "new" history of science, which has come to regard the boundaries between popular beliefs and science as fluid, and placed Geffarth's paper in the context of the "new" history of religion, which encourages the study of religious practices outside the major confessions. Especially with regard to the Rosicrucians, the discussion also reflected on the difficulties of drawing clear distinctions between public and private, between what is open and what is hidden.

The eighth and final panel examined eighteenth-century politics and courtly life. Christopher Bauermeister studied the electorate of Hanover, which has been characterized as "backward" when compared to other eighteenth-century German states, chiefly because of the dominance of the landed elite. After examining Hanover's reform discussions and administrative practice, however, Bauermeister concluded that Hanover showed evidence of the same sort of progressive reform that took place in the more "typical" enlightened absolutisms. Martin Knoll's paper on the princely hunt in eighteenth-century Bavaria examined a privilege that gave the prince a legal monopoly on important ecological (game) and socio-economic (the subjects' property and services) resources. Seeking to analyze the role of the princely hunt in courtly life, in the larger society, and in the ecological environment, Knoll integrated methods and ques-

tions from the cultural history of courtly life, rural social history, and environmental history. The discussion raised definitional questions about major historiographical concepts such as Enlightenment, absolutism, and cameralism, and about the complicated relationship of absolutism and cameralism to the Enlightenment. In particular, discussants wondered whether the “enlightened” Hanoverian administrative reforms did not in fact bring increasing disenfranchisement for the subjects. Finally, the discussion called attention to the ever-present danger of being too influenced by one’s sources and possible ways to remedy this.

In the concluding discussion, participants reflected on the intellectual terrain covered by the seminar as a whole. They noted the prominence of cultural history and the linguistic turn, often in the form of cultural-history approaches to other topics, such as urban history, environmental history, or the history of science. Participants also commented on the regularity with which the discussions had turned to fundamental hermeneutical issues. By contrast, topics that had been prominent in the early modern session of the seminar in previous years, such as straightforward political, social or economic history, were not as much in evidence this year. The seminar was characterized by an ideal combination of serious critical engagement and a collegial and supportive atmosphere. Most participants indicated that they plan to remain in contact with colleagues they met at the seminar. The announcement for next year’s Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar, which will be devoted to the period 1790 to 1890 and will take place in Tübingen, can be found in the “Announcements” section of this *Bulletin*.

Richard F. Wetzell

Participants and Their Topics

ASTRID ACKERMANN (Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena), *Der nationale Blick der frühen europäischen Modejournale*

MARIE LUISA ALLEMEYER (Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte, Göttingen), *Gott schuf das Meer, der Friesen die Küste—und die Küste den Friesen? Lebenswelten der Küstenbevölkerung in der Frühen Neuzeit zwischen Macht und Meer*

PERNILLE ARENFELDT (European University Institute, Florence), *Negotiations Between Husband and Parent: A Case of Conflict in the Lives of Princely Women*

CHRISTOPHER BAUERMEISTER (Purdue University), *Enlightened Paternalism: The “Idiom” of Hanoverian Reform Ideology*

BJÖRN CHRISTLIEB (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg), *Die ‘Ehrbarkeit’ der Städte: Politische Handlungsspielräume im Spiegel städtischer Kommunika-*

tion (Städtische Korrespondenznetze im Südwesten des Reiches im späten 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhundert)

LUKE CLOSSEY (University of California, Berkeley), *The German Indies: Central-European Involvement in the Early Modern Jesuit Missions*

WARREN DYM (University of California, Davis), *Shaking Hans and the Deeply Learned: Prospecting Traditions at Freiberg, 1650–1765*

MICHAELA FENSKE (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen), *Marktkultur in der Frühen Neuzeit: Wirtschaft, Macht und Unterhaltung auf einem städtischen Jahr- und Viehmarkt*

RENKO GEFFARTH (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg), *Religion und Hierarchie: Der Orden der Gold- und Rosenkreuzer als geheime Kirche im 18. Jahrhundert*

BERND KLESMANN (Universität Zürich), *‘Man hört die Rechte nicht/bey Trommeln und Trompeten’. Zur Europäischen Kriegserklärung des 17. Jahrhunderts*

MARTIN KNOLL (Universität Regensburg), *Umwelt—Herrschaft—Gesellschaft: Die landesherrliche Jagd Kurbayerns im 18. Jahrhundert*

RICHARD NINNESS (University of Pennsylvania), *Gegenreformatatorische Fürstbischöfe und ihr Dilemma: Protestantismus und die Entfremdung des Stiftsadels im Hochstift Bamberg*

DANIEL RICHES (University of Chicago), *The Rise of Confessional Tension in Brandenburg’s Relations with Sweden in the Late Seventeenth Century*

ANDREW SPARLING (Duke University), *Johann Rudolph Glauber: Experience and Authority in Early Modern Alchemy*

JESSE SPOHNHOLZ (University of Iowa), *Calvinist Discipline and the Boundaries of Religious Tolerance: The Exile Church in Wesel, 1568–1578*

MARY NOLL VENABLES (Yale University), *Ernst the Pious and the Lessons of the Thirty Years’ War*