Nikolaus Buschmann. *Einkreisung und Waffenbruderschaft: Die öffentliche Deutung von Krieg und Nation in Deutschland 1850-1871.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003. 378 S. EUR 44.90 (kartoniert), ISBN 978-3-525-35142-0.

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In *Einkreisung und Waffenbrüderschaft*, Nikolaus Buschmann explores the complicated and ambivalent ways the media shaped visions of the nation in the German lands between 1851 and 1871 by interpreting military conflict. This book is based on Buschmann's 2002 Tuebingen dissertation, in which he argued that war cannot be understood simply as a method of physically fighting to create the nation. State-on-state conflict provided a semantic field in which ordinary citizens argued about its ideal form and meaning via newspapers and journals. While this claim may not strike some Anglo-American scholars as a particularly earth-shattering insight, Buschmann is traveling in the footsteps of German scholars such as Ute Frevert. They are adding a distinctly cultural twist to military history in the Federal Republic, particularly with regard to violence as a way of creating stable group identities. What Buschmann discovered in this analysis is that traditional categories such as *grossdeutsch* and *kleindeutsch* do not adequately represent the multifaceted visions of the nation inspired by war reportage in mid-nineteenth-century Germany.

At a theoretical level, Buschmann's book represents an engagement with cultural studies from a continental social science perspective. He cites media studies debates within the German academy, arguing that scholars need to accept violence as a central, constitutive aspect of modern society. These include theorists as diverse as Jürgen Habermas, Klaus Mertens, and Winfried Schulz. They explore how mass media enabled ordinary citizens to negotiate the meaning and utility of violence for the nation via the public sphere. To some degree they all accept the "post-modern" notion that knowledge and power are negotiated over time, but they take this insight from Kant and Weber, not Foucault and Lyotard. Buschmann talks a good deal about elective affinities and ideal types as opposed to discourse and metanarratives.[1]

In nine sharply circumscribed chapters, Buschmann demonstrates that the media was essential to shaping German opinions of modern war precisely because most fighting took place beyond Prussian and Germanic borders. Media outlets interpreted war differently depending on their political orientation, religious affiliation, or geographic location. Buschmann also shows that contemporary observers recognized that new technology combined with the nationalist ideology made warfare more hideous than ever before. They worried about where this might lead. The media in German lands legitimated war as a nation-building tool in various ways. What all the media outlets had in common, Buschmann maintains, is that they taught people to see the world in terms of "us" and "them." They proclaimed the right of

all peoples to defend themselves against other ethnicities. Some argued that nations had religious missions, still others transferred sacrality from the church to the nation, and further periodicals demonized other nations in (Eastern) Europe in ways that anticipated the racial warfare of the twentieth century. Buschmann's point that these strategies cannot be encapsulated in a *kleindeutsch* versus *grossdeutsch* dichotomy seems plausible.

We can get a better idea of what he means by examining his chapter on religion, denomination, and the nation. Buschmann does not accept the notion that Protestants were always nationalists while Catholics advocated a more universal solution to Germany's international predicaments. He shows that Protestant and Catholic newspapers both argued that nations had religiously inspired missions. Conservatives in both camps tended to see war as punishment of the nation sent from God in response to the increasing secularization and rationalization of life. On the other hand, more progressive Catholic and Protestant periodicals *saw* a religious dimension to nation-building. They suggested to readers that God wanted them to fight for Germany, intimating that religious and national missions overlapped. Members of both faiths worried about national unification turning into another Thirty Years' War, and they hoped that the conflict against France would finally unify evangelicals and Catholics. Obviously, this never happened, but we do get an image of Christians on both sides of the Reformation struggling to understand what warfare meant to the nation.

To recover this insight, however, the reader has to plow through many nine-line sentences and some stiffly organized, factually driven chapters. Understanding Buschmann's argument requires a deep knowledge of media studies and debates about violence and postmodernity specific to the Federal Republic (this reviewer had to mobilize inter-library loan to learn about theorists he had never encountered before), and I fear that may limit this study's appeal. Secondly, the reader will also need a solid grounding in the political and social history of the German lands between 1850 and 1871; this would not be a friendly book for scholars of England or France wishing to do comparative work. This is definitely a tome intended for (Germanist) specialists.

Note

[1]. It is fascinating to compare Buschmann's approach to earlier studies dealing with media, violence, and identity by Anglo-American scholars such as Judith Walkowitz. In her book, *City of Dreadful Delight* (London: Virago Press, 1992), Walkowitz utilizes newspaper accounts to show how narrations of sexual danger shaped people's perceptions of London and the dangers of modern society, using Michel Foucault as her conceptual basis. Buschmann does not utilize the critical tradition represented by Foucault, Frederic Jameson, or Homi Bhabha, but he comes to remarkably similar conclusions.

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