

Finally, the book turns to the representations of the social within the new national scientific paradigm and the image projected by the authorities at the General Exhibition in 1906 Romania, and closes with the professionalisation of Romanian sociology in the inter-war period under the leadership of Dimitrie Gusti, who brought together all the loose strands of social theorising and anchored them steadfastly into a militant nation-building project.

The author is, in my opinion, beautifully successful in providing insight into the discursive confluences between local and transnational elites, into the dialogue between imperial/colonial and local/autochthonous knowledge in the East European borderlands, as well as into the vagaries of state modernisation projects. The great achievement of the book lies in the way the author captures the fracture between discursive representation and the realities on the ground, but also the very complex thought dynamics and sheer entropy out of which these representations emerged. As Cotoi puts it, ‘in this story individuals, texts, projects, sometimes even bacteria travelled, met, collided, wrote, and talked to each other in surprising places and on various topics’ (p. 242). What the book does very well is to convey a sophisticated image of the change and flux of revolutionary ideas and their metamorphosis into, or contribution to, state-building and nation-building processes: in other words, how ideas about the social emerged as a result of cross-pollination between international discourses and local voices, and how representatives of these ideas moved under the pressure of historical events and personal circumstances towards new social projects.

IRINA MARIN

Utrecht University, The Netherlands

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Bismarck's ewiger Bund: Eine neue Geschichte des Kaiserreichs, by Oliver F.R. Haardt (Darmstadt: WBG Theiss, 2020: pp. 944. £32).

In 1851, at the start of his diplomatic career, Otto von Bismarck wrote that ‘the stream of time flows inexorably along. By plunging my hand into it, I am merely doing my duty. I do not expect thereby to change its course’. Bismarck’s metaphor of himself as the boatman navigating the river of time was first used by Otto Pflanze in his 1961 biography (*Bismarck and the Development of Germany* [2nd edn, 1990]; rev. *ante*, cvi [1991], pp. 955–7) and more recently by Christopher Clark in his study on conceptions of time and history and their influence on the exercise of power in German history (*Time and Power*, [2019]; rev. *ante*, cxxxvi [2021], pp. 442–4). For Pflanze, the metaphor helped describe Bismarck’s political strategy; for Clark, it explained how a developing understanding of history as a process of permanent change motivated Bismarck to use the monarchical state to prevent the polity from succumbing to the new political forces of post-1848 Europe. Oliver F.R. Haardt’s study—a revised version of his Ph.D. thesis, completed under Clark at the University of Cambridge—likewise uses the stream of time metaphor to demonstrate how the German Empire’s federalism was an expression of, and subjected to, the currents of post-1871 German history.

The German Empire’s federalism has been of limited interest to historians, who have concentrated mostly on political processes or legal norms. Haardt

aims to overcome this by merging the ‘narrative approach of Anglo-Saxon with the analytical precision of German historical writing’ and narrate the empire’s federalism as a dynamic construct which stemmed from and structured the development of Germany’s political culture (pp. 12, 18). Three ‘narrative threads’ are pursued: first, the question of who governed the German Empire—the Kaiser, Chancellor, Reichstag or member states; secondly, the changing nature of German federalism and its consequences for the Weimar Republic and the establishing of the Nazi dictatorship; and thirdly, a systemic analysis of federalism with implications for contemporary federal structures, such as the European Union (p. 18). In addition, Haardt wants to highlight four processes that drove the ‘spectacular metamorphosis’ of the Reich: ‘centralisation of federal competencies, the “monarchisation” of the imperial office, the nationalisation of the *Bundesrat* [federal council] and the parliamentarisation of the *Reichsgewalt*’. According to Haardt, within these processes ‘the various monarchical and parliamentary, hegemonic and confederate, unifying and particularistic forces of the Empire’ struggled to ‘to retain ... [and] expand their power’, manipulating and using the federal structures for this purpose (p. 20). How, then, does the ‘stream of time’ help scholars to understand how post-1871 German federalism was subjected to temporal currents?

Haardt frequently stresses how Bismarck’s monarchical-federal conception of the new German nation state was an acknowledgment of the political moment of the late 1860s, with the notion of a *Fürstentbund* (league of princes) serving as an instrumental political fiction (p. 178). Indeed, Haardt argues that the ‘founding of the German Empire was Bismarck’s attempt to freeze time. Under his guidance, the process of unification transferred the constellation of forces of a particular historical moment in a presumed “eternal league” The means for this process was the Imperial Constitution’ (p. 803). Bismarck’s constitution had to be a construct flexible enough to incorporate the Southern German states, had to take over as many elements as possible of the former German Bund, but whose Emperor had to be *primus inter pares*, since an imperial monarch equipped with sovereignty would be opposed by other states (pp. 128–9). Moreover, the complicated nature of the constitution was also the result of the accepting of the constitution by all states and the founding of the nation state running asynchronously: effectively, the proclamation of the German Empire on 18 January 1871 created a state for a constitution that was in the process of being created and thus had to acknowledge other major states, such as Hessen, Baden, Bavaria and Württemberg, not, as ideally should be the case, the other way around (p. 44). The result was a constitution which lacked system and organising principles and should not be assessed as such (p. 184). Instead, the constitution mirrored the political constellation at the moment of its drafting, was marked by flexibility, but also did not provide direction for future developments, leaving all outcomes possible (p. 277).

As a result, once the Reich’s federal constitution was subjected to the ‘stream of time’, unforeseen institutional developments emerged, as two examples demonstrate. First, although the office of the Emperor was but ‘an accessory of the Prussian Crown’ (Paul Laband, p. 302), the subsequent expansion of its prerogatives in the legislative and executive domain provided the Kaiser with new powers which the constitution had not anticipated (pp. 314–16). This made the imperial office a separate constitutional entity at the federal level, resulting from structural institutional changes, not the conduct of its holders,

and was complete by the time of Wilhelm II's accession in 1888 (pp. 334, 341). This institutional perspective challenges the debate on Wilhelm II's powers, which has concentrated mostly on the last Kaiser's conduct. Secondly, the gradual formation of a Reich government aided the Reichstag to become a separate political forum, also in opposition to the Reich government (p. 389). This was complemented by the Reichstag's role through special committees in the pre-legislative process, membership becoming a full-time profession and changing political majorities which placed social and economic issues on the political agenda (pp. 496–7). Haardt therefore does not agree with Manfred Rauh's theory of 'silent parliamentarisation' but interprets the Reichstag's ascent as the result of unforeseen shifts in Germany's federal constitution (p. 599).

Inevitably, perhaps, the 'stream of time', or the evolving and unstable nature of the German polity, also forced confusion and manipulation upon this complicated federal constitution. The post-1871 debate on the legal nature of the German nation state concentrated on the relationship between the Reich and its member states (pp. 705–11). But this debate was dominated by legal positivism and failed because it provided a static and literal interpretation of the constitution which separated it from its social context (p. 729), confirming the political status quo. This was aggravated because its key proponents supported the existing social order, even if this went against their preference for a unitary state (pp. 735–40). Alsace Lorraine and the German colonies provided different arenas within the federal structure to pursue various political interests and powers. Although the former was annexed in 1871, it did not become a member state and its status remained unclear. Initially, it was governed via imperial orders, but from 1879 it was represented by a *stadtholder*, whose status remained unclear: he was subordinate only to the Emperor and Alsace Lorraine, thus contributing to a more unitary structure (pp. 783–8). For the colonies, the Reichstag sought to increase its influence by exercising its power of the purse (p. 793) but, without any constitutional arrangement, the Emperor effectively governed as a *Landesfürst* or sovereign (p. 794). Haardt concludes that such constant disputes over constitutional arrangements for these centre–periphery relations destabilised the centre (pp. 801–2).

By demonstrating how the coming and development of the federal constitution was subject to the 'stream of time', Haardt wants to move away from the normative assessments of the German Empire which characterised the debate on Germany's 'special path to modernity'. Instead, Haardt provides a comparison with the only two other federal polities during this period, the United States and Switzerland, and concludes that the German case was unique. Consequently, there can be no comparison, nor a deviation from a particular linear development, and thus no German *Sonderweg* (p. 823). Instead, Haardt prefers placing 'the eternal league in the stream of time' and seeks to draw lessons from its development. He stresses how the Weimar constitution provided more powers to the president and installation of a responsible federal government, but succumbed to doubts about the republic's legal nature, Prussian hegemony, and frequent changes of government (pp. 824–30). The Nazi dictatorship benefited from antipathy against federalism and centralised for its own genocidal purposes. Such scepticism persisted after 1945 and only gradually receded when the benefits of federalism were acknowledged. Whereas Haardt's supervisor Clark ends his analysis in

a reflection on how uncertainties over the future made temporal notions disintegrate into an inescapable presentism, Haardt formulates lessons from German federalism for the future of the European Union, including a strong European Commission, clear constitution, a reliable decision-making process, supreme court and addressing of its democratic deficit (pp. 848–57).

Haardt has provided scholarship with an important contribution to our understanding of German federalism since 1871 and nineteenth- and twentieth-century federalism overall. The book is commendable for providing a new master narrative of the German Empire, merging the temporal turn with political and constitutional history. It integrates and engages with recent and older scholarship and sources and will thus also retain its value as a vast compendium of knowledge on debates on German federalism. This reviewer therefore hopes that the study will be translated into English, which will make it available also to non-German speaking academic audiences. A translation will enable the author to address three drawbacks of this edition. First, the text would benefit from more rigorous editing, leading to a more disciplined and even-handed text that brings out key arguments better. For example, the chapter on the ascent of the Reichstag encompasses two hundred pages, constituting nearly a quarter of an 857-page text that consists of nine chapters. Secondly, the study needs a more consistent application of its methodology. In the introduction, Haardt argues that his study will be a cultural history of the federal constitution and refers to Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger's work on the Holy Roman Empire (pp. 11–12). This would have required a study of the role performativity played in mediating the federal nature of the constitution, just as Andreas Biefang did for the Reichstag during the Bismarck era (*Die andere Seite der Macht* [2009]), a work which Haardt only briefly mentions (p. 427). Thirdly, it is not necessary for Haardt to leave the comparison between Switzerland and the United States until the conclusion; in fact, the argument is strengthened when comparison of key features is made instantly. These points are not meant as fundamental criticism, but suggestions for improvement of what is in all other aspects a major contribution to scholarship.

FREDERIK FRANK STERKENBURGH

Utrecht University, The Netherlands

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The Americanisation of Ireland: Migration and Settlement, 1841–1925, by David Fitzpatrick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020; pp. 254. £29.99).

In this, his last book, David Fitzpatrick provides scholars with an important in-depth study of return migration to Ireland during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In typical Fitzpatrick style, this book switches between wide methodological considerations, detailed statistical analysis of Leitrim's Americans, and introductions to the diverse individuals who made up this group of 'Americans' in Ireland. The book seeks to provoke scholars into complicating the range of influences at play in Ireland between 1841 and 1925, moving beyond the 'Anglicisation' of Ireland to consider the multiple impacts of the high rates of migration to North America, principally to the United States, over multiple generations. Scholars have previously acknowledged the