

Buch als Einstieg in die Beschäftigung mit der Universitätsgeschichte zwischen den 1880er und 1920er Jahren. Zugleich bietet es sich durch seine klare Struktur, die schnelles Orientieren ermöglicht, und ausführliche Hinweise zur Transkription bzw. Datierung sowie ein umfangreiches Register enthält, für die Lehre an. Jene Aufsätze, die sehr spezielle Aspekte diskutieren, erfreuen mit Sicherheit den mit der Materie vertrauten Leser. Mit anderen Worten: für die Bibliotheken ist der Sammelband unentbehrlich und für den Einsatz in der Lehre in Auszügen zu empfehlen. Für private Bücherregale wird er im Hardcover wohl Vielen zu preisintensiv sein.

**Friedrich Meinecke. Akademischer Lehrer und emigrierte Schüler. Briefe und Aufzeichnungen 1910–1977, eingeleitet und bearbeitet von Gerhard A. Ritter (Biographische Quellen zu Zeitgeschichte, Band 23), München: Oldenbourg Verlag 2006, S. 510 Seiten.**

Rezensiert von  
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Recent interest in the German historiography of the 20th century has produced a variety of monographs about the most prominent historians who lived through the First World War, the Weimar Republic, the Nazi period and the foundation of the German post-war republics. Gerhard A. Ritter has decided to publish a wide-ranging selection of sources, mainly letters,

that document the relationship which continued after the war between Friedrich Meinecke and those German historians who attended his seminars in Strasburg, Freiburg and Berlin as students and graduated before being forced to leave Germany for political or racial reasons from Eckhard Kehr (January 1931) to Hans Rothfels (Summer 1939) and Hedwig Hintze (August 22, 1939). Ritter has indeed made the right decision. His long introduction (pp. 13-111) is thoughtful and well-informed, but the variety of situations and feelings expressed in the letters outshines Ritter's effort to downplay both Meinecke's hesitations and contradictions along his exceptionally long and active life and his students' diverging careers and political attitudes. Ritter has collected letters mainly to Meinecke written by 12 of his students and friends: Hans Rothfels, Dietrich Gerhard, Gerhard Masur, Hajo Holborn, Felix Gilbert, Hans Baron, Helen Wieruszowski, Hans Rosenberg, Hedwig Hintze, Eckhart Kehr, Hanns Günther Reissner, Gustav Mayer. They are arranged according to the author in this order. This arrangement emphasises as a result the personal relationship between Meinecke and the individual author, in some cases even after Meinecke's death (Dietrich Gerhard and Gerhard Masur corresponded with Antonie Meinecke after his death), while it fails to provide clues on the development of the issues raised in the correspondence. Included are also letters exchanged between Meinecke's former students from the 1950s and 1960s and letters from Hans Rosenberg to the editor from the 1970s. A total of 979 documents have been published, in many cases for the first time, and carefully annotated. The criteria for the choice from

a still larger corpus are not mentioned: the reader only learns that these letters are “an extremely interesting source” (p. 8) for both the history of historiography and the political sciences in Germany. One could not agree more. Nonetheless, it is an open question if other unpublished documents in the corpus would have met the requirement of being “interesting”.

Variety and diversity are the main features (and the merit) of this volume. The careers abroad of Meinecke’s students have been so dissimilar that individuality overshadows the collective picture of a group of scholars educated in the same milieu and casts substantial doubts on the notion that there ever was such a thing as a “Meinecke Schule”. Success and failure mix in the correspondence, fear for the future and self-confidence follow one another. The reader will be able to compare the different ways in which émigré historians came to terms with America and the American system. In 1946 Rothfels reported to Meinecke that at the University of Chicago “the German element is strong and respected” (150) and stressed that his course on “historic thought”, as Rothfels called it, devoted substantial attention to Ranke, Spengler and Meinecke himself. While Rothfels saw himself as the propagator of German historical culture in the USA and was happy to arrange the publication of one of Meinecke’s essays, that he had himself translated “not without pains”, in an American journal, Dietrich Gerhard was willing to acknowledge that America had educated him (p. 179): the experience of American otherness, especially in the Middle West where he could eventually find a position, had had a positive impact on his understanding of European history.

It is implicit in this assumption that those who did not share the same experience might have gained in intellectual finesse, but certainly missed the personal contact with a strong antiauthoritarian tradition. Hajo Holborn and Gerhard Masur accepted their new American identity so much that Holborn refused to consider his comeback to Germany in a letter to Meinecke in 1946 written in English (p. 246-248). It is tempting to think that when writing to Meinecke: “I believe it to be my function in life to finish the task of helping to educate and train a new generation of college teachers of European history in this country and I feel that by doing this I shall contribute at least indirectly to maintaining or rebuilding German historical research” (248) the linguistic form conveyed as much as (and probably more than) the content. In 1958 Felix Gilbert thanked Hans Rosenberg for sending him a copy of *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy and Autocracy* in a letter written in English: what could be a better evidence of achieved integration into the American academy and its discourse? Individual careers and attitudes were reflected by the different ways his former students chose to address Meinecke in their letters. Rothfels shifted from “Sehr verehrter Herr Professor” in the 1920s and 1930s, when political tension with Meinecke was high, to a “Lieber, verehrter Herr Meinecke” and “Lieber Herr Meinecke” that expressed warm affection and a claim to an equal footing with his Doktorvater. Gerhard never got beyond a “Hochverehrter, lieber Herr Professor”, while Masur found it obvious to begin his 1950 letter with the awkward “Mein hoch verehrter lieber Herr Geheimrat”. For Holborn the shift from addressing him as

“Sehr verehrter Herr Geheimrat” to the casual “Dear Meinecke” (in 1945) and the likewise relaxed “Sehr verehrter, Lieber Herr Meinecke” (in 1951) mark an increasing self-awareness in his relationship with Meinecke and the German culture. Rosenberg stuck to the respectful address “Hochverehrter, lieber Herr Geheimrat” that fits with the combination of admiration and detachment apparent in his biographical sketch of Meinecke (pp. 387-389, clearly written after 1954, not, as indicated on page 387, after 1948). Hedwig Hintze and Helene Wieruszowski, notable exceptions in an all-male society of historians, used addresses like “Verehrtester Herr Geheimrat” that indicate the deep gulf separating Meinecke from them. Very few letters from Meinecke are printed in this collection. Despite this asymmetry and the formal distance between the Doktorvater and his former students, the letters to Meinecke suggest that he forged a bond of scholarly and human attachment that fascinated men and women from all corners of life, social as well as social and political. They suggest too that personal and scholarly integrity made up the continuing appeal of Meinecke’s personality in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s until his death in 1954, rather than his achievements as a historian who, as Rosenberg had it in a seminar paper delivered at the London School of Economics in 1935, “accepted the democratic Republic as an historical necessity without being driven, however, to the conclusion that a fundamental revision of the traditional historical standards of value had become an urgent demand”<sup>1</sup>. In many different ways his former students introduced innovations in subjects and approaches that Meinecke made possible by

his living as a candid scholar and selfless researcher. Ironically, an increasing distance in methodological and interpretive issues went hand in hand with a growing human affection.

Note:

- 1 Quoted in Winfrid Halder, “Being accustomed to march with the stronger battalions, the German science of history was fully prepared to become reconciled with Hitlerism.” Eine zeitgenössische Sicht zum Verhältnis von deutscher Geschichtswissenschaft und Nationalsozialismus: Hans Rosenbergs Referat an der London School of Economics im Mai 1935, in: *Storia della storiografia*, 51 (2007), p. 103.

**Miroslav Hroch: Das Europa der Nationen. Die moderne Nationsbildung im europäischen Vergleich (= Synthesen. Probleme europäischer Geschichte, Band 2) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005, 279 Seiten.**

Rezensiert von  
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Der tschechische Historiker Miroslav Hroch zählt seit geraumer Zeit zum erlesenen Kreis der Klassiker unter den Theoretikern auf dem Gebiet der historischen Nationalismusforschung. Der Veröffentlichung seiner Studie „Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegungen“ bei den kleinen Völkern Europas im Jahr 1968 (erschieden 1985 in einer erweiterten Fassung auf Englisch mit dem Titel „Social Preconditions