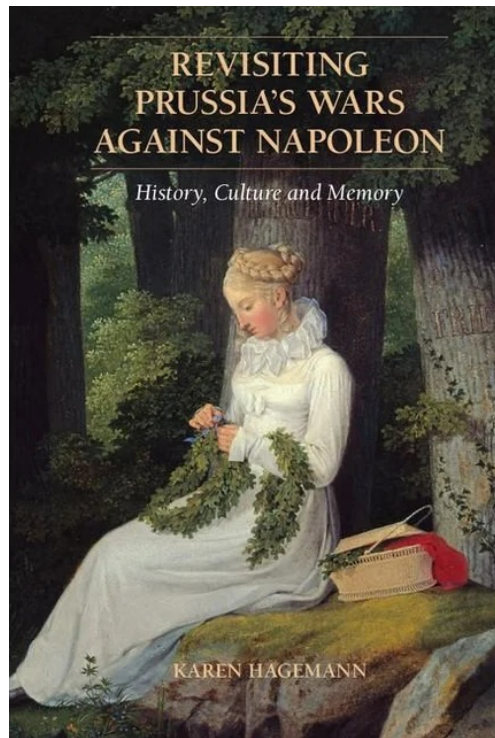


2015 Hans Rosenberg Book Prize Laudatio

Karen Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon: History, Culture and Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 2015)



Revisiting Prussia's Wars is a sweeping history of the Anti-Napoleonic Wars and their aftermath in 19th-century German memory. Skillfully combining political, military, cultural, and gender history, the book contributes to a new understanding of the importance and changing resonances of the Wars across a century and the upheavals of war, restoration, revolution, and national unification. *Revisiting* both revives serious analysis of the Napoleonic Wars and examines them from a new perspective (political culture) using new tools of analysis, including gender and memory studies.

Exploring both the content and conditions of the media production of memory, Hagemann teases out the complexities and nuances of competing narratives and alternative voices (in terms of region, politics, gender, and medium). Not only was there no single "German" experience or memory of the Wars; Hagemann convincingly shows that the strength of alternative

points of view lasted far into the 19th century and that the diversity of war experiences and memories were critical in shaping ideas about German nationhood. Indeed, contrary to standard accounts of the history, Hagemann argues that it was only late in the century during the German Empire that these diverse points of view came to be overwhelmed by a master monarchic-conservative and nationalist narrative. Gender imagery and themes were critical in the experiences of war and in the way nation and Volk came to be imagined in these discourses.

Revisiting's research is encyclopedic and unusual in its scope and depth, drawing on a rich and varied primary source base. It extensively mines literary sources (historical novels, war memoirs, poems), many of which will be new to readers, as well as academic histories, newspapers, pamphlets, sermons, songs, and military documents.

Hagemann was perhaps uniquely placed to accomplish the massive undertaking of *Revisiting*, which is a culmination of a career devoted to researching and rethinking the Napoleonic Wars and pioneering, in the process, the synthesis of political, military, and gender history. The book will be important in German historiography as an original synthesis and encyclopedic resource for the study of the 19th century and German memory culture in particular.

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