

Zitierhinweis

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Insgesamt handelt es sich bei diesem Band um die Publikation eines umfangreichen Verlassenschaftsinventars, bei dem durch die günstige Quellenlage mit dem Vorhandensein der Haushaltsbücher und weiterer zugehöriger Dokumente eine fast als optimal zu bezeichnende Kontextualisierung möglich ist. So wird eine interessante Quelle für das Studium der materiellen Kultur des 18. Jahrhunderts zugänglich, der einführende Text und die reiche Bebilderung machen die Edition auch für ein breiteres Publikum interessant.

Graz

Burkhard Pöttler

Als badischer Militärmusiker in Napoleons Kriegen. Balthasar Eccardts Erinnerungen an die Feldzüge nach Österreich, Preußen und Russland 1805–1814, ed. Mireille GEERING. (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg, Reihe A: Quellen 57.) Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 2013. 226 S., 7 Bilder, 3 Karten. ISBN 978-3-17-023031-6.

The last few years in Britain, Germany and France have been dominated by the commemoration for the First World War. This year promises much the same as attention now shifts to the battles of Verdun and the Somme offensive. In the popular histories, radio and television programmes, much has been made of the suffering of the soldiers in the trenches of the Western Front. Examinations of the *Kriegsalltag* of the soldiers in the trenches, with its rats, mud and shelling, are vividly brought to life by the numerous diaries, letters, memoirs and works of literature. Yet, as Hew Strachan has pointed out, despite their reputation, without the trenches the casualties would have been much higher. More bluntly, the populist historian and journalist Max Hastings argued in a radio debate that the soldiers of Napoleon's *Grande Armée* that participated in the Russian campaign 1812 would have welcomed the security provided by the trenches.

As the commemoration of the Great War overshadows the bicentenary of the climax of the Napoleonic conflict the memoirs of Balthasar Eccardt are a reminder of the hardships suffered by soldiers of that earlier epoch. This volume presents two versions of Eccardt's military memoirs. The first was published just a year after the climactic Battle of Waterloo finally ended the Napoleonic Wars and includes more references to political events, such as the Congress of Vienna. The second account remained unpublished, but was likely produced thirty years after the first. It gives greater weight to the physical hardship that Eccardt and his comrades endured. The editors suggest that the works may have been based on a diary, a feature common to many veterans' accounts in the nineteenth century. Eccardt is at pains in this introduction to explain that his memoir is a form of *Denkmal* for his descendants; a theme common to many other veterans' published account. Having learnt the clarinet through the church, he joined the army of Baden in 1804. His first taste of military operations came during the Franco-Austrian war of 1805, when the Duchy of Baden was allied to Napoleon. The Austrians and their Russian allies were defeated before Eccardt reached the Austrian border, so his first experience of combat occurred later in the war with Prussia in 1806/07. He later served in the 1809 war against Austria, before participating in Napoleon's ill-fated invasion of Russia in 1812. It is this campaign, his capture by Cossacks during the retreat, and his subsequent experiences as a prisoner of war that dominate the narrative. The Russian campaign is second only to the Wars of Liberation (*Befreiungskriege*) in its importance to the historical memory of the Napoleonic Wars. Moreover, whilst the communicative memory of the *Befreiungskriege* is to a large extent dominated by Prussian narratives, that of the Russian campaign is more influenced by the experience of the so-called „Third“ Germany. The Prussian contingent, operating north of the main invasion force, escaped Russia largely intact. However, many of the military contingents of *Rheinbund*, including that of the Grand Duchy of Baden, formed part of the *Grande Armée* and suffered the same privations accordingly.

Much of narrative mirrors the accounts of other Napoleonic veterans. Eccardt writes of the difficulties of the march, the danger of sickness while campaigning and the frightful scenes that followed a battle. Within the context of the Russian campaign, he recounts the fearful nature of the retreat through the Russian winter and the suffering that followed his capture. Robbed, starved and assaulted by vengeful Russian peasants, he and his fellow unfortunates were transported into the Russian interior. He accused the local Jewish population of profiteering from the hardship of the soldiers by selling them food at inflated prices. This anti-Semitic representation of Eastern European Jews is common to many German accounts. Similar to other accounts, such as that of Karl Schehl, salvation came to Eccardt as a result of his musical ability and he was eventually made a *Kapellmeister* in the Russian army. Indeed, the possession of a useful skill improved the chance of survival following capture. It was with the Russian army that he returned to Germany, although not as a combatant, since he refused to serve against his *Vaterland*, by which he appears to have meant Baden, rather than Germany. His hopes that he would soon return home were dashed when his Russian regiment turned north to participate in the siege of Hamburg. Repeated requests to be released were denied and Eccardt feared being transported back to Russia. He eventually escaped to Mannheim after the surrender of Hamburg and re-joined his family in the summer of 1814.

Three introductory essays provide the historical context to Eccardt's narrative. Hans-Joachim Harder provides a brief history of the army of the Duchy of Baden during the Napoleonic Wars. That army expanded in the 1800s as a consequence of Baden's territorial expansion and to meet Napoleon's demands for manpower. This expansion was partly achieved by the integration of the militaries of smaller German states absorbed into the new Grand Duchy of Baden. The already mixed confessional nature of Baden society and of its military was thereby increased. Harder suggests that the religious tolerance and understanding for other cultures evident there was partly responsibly for Eccardt's adaptability while a prisoner in Russia.

Wolfgang Mährle's chapter examines the international background to the 1812 campaign. He points to the fragility of the alliance agreed by the two empires at Tilsit in 1807. „Ideological“ and geopolitical differences soon set them on a collision course. Mährle charts the deterioration of their international relations and the emergence of the Sixth Coalition in 1813.

Julia Murken places Eccardt's account with the framework of other German *Ego-Dokumente* of 1812. Here she draws on her own research into Bavarian experiences of the campaign and points to the richness of these sources for historians interested in the *Kriegsalltag*. For example, thousands of women and children accompanied the *Grande Armée*, but there is little mention of them in the official record. In the diaries and memoirs of the veterans, however, one catches glimpses of them. Other aspects, such as attitudes to violence, death and religious belief also find expression. Murken points out that there is little evidence of a generalised French *Feindbild* in the contemporary diaries. Such representations appear more frequently in the non-contemporaneous *Ego-Dokumente*, published years after the event. There is also little sense of German nationalism within Eccardt's account. Murken echoes the findings of Ute Planert, who has argued the *Befreiungskriege* did not act as an integrating force in the southern German states. More specifically, Eccardt's narratives provide important evidence as to the integrative function of military music and the role of musicians as entertainers whilst on campaign.

In conclusion, the volume provides a fascinating insight into the everyday experience of a soldier in the army of the Grand Duchy of Baden during the Napoleonic Wars. The inclusion of the two versions allows comparisons to be made between and is suggestive of the reworking of experience over time, whilst the introductory essays not only provide historical context, but also point readers in the direction of further literature on a defining German experience of the Napoleonic Wars.

Swansea

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