Introduction

'Civil war' and 'failed state-building' have become ubiquitous terms in modern political parlance. They evoke heart-rending images of mass displacement, bombed out civilian dwellings, and feuding militias in Syria or central Africa. Yet wars between countrymen have marked the history of all continents. Of the 1,650 global conflicts recorded by the Correlates of War Project for the period 1816–2007, close to ninety per cent either fell into this category or started out as civil wars before foreign powers intervened.[1] Much of this aggression was fuelled by competing claims on territory, which assumed special symbolic and political significance when nineteenth-century nationalists made the acquisition of 'homeland' one of their central objectives. Germany became an early battleground, as the first major spike in territorial revisions prior to the world wars coincided with Prussia's annexation of several German states and the seizure of territory from two other nations (Denmark and France) during the foundation of the *Kaiserreich*.[2]

The military unification of Germany in 1864–1871 offers powerful confirmation of the dictum, then, that 'nation-state formation represents a crucial source of war in the modern world'.[3] A great deal of intellectual energy has been expended on uncovering the way in which armed struggles against external 'others' strengthened national awareness in Germany and other countries. Through the mobilisation against foreign enemies, historians have argued, nations implemented ideals of martial citizenship and

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[1] See 'Chronological List of All Wars' (Appendix A) at http://cow.dss.ucdavis.edu/data-sets/cow-war.
[2] Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz, 'Territorial Changes and Militarized Conflict', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32 (1988), p. 108; Nadav G. Shelef, 'Unequal Ground: Homelands and Conflicts', *International Organization* 1 (2015), pp. 1–31; Charles S. Maier, 'Transformations of Territoriality 1600–2000', in Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz, eds, *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien* (Göttingen, 2005), pp. 32–55.
[3] Andreas Wimmer, *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 26.

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bonded over shared hardship, whether on the battlefield or the home front. Sophisticated though the best scholarship in this vein is, there have hitherto been remarkably few efforts to understand the cognitive response of nineteenth-century Germans to the leading manifestation of modern conflict, namely civil war.[4] When their governments stopped fighting foreign enemies and instead turned on each other in 1866, how did contemporaries perceive military action against fellow Germans and who supported the war effort? To what extremes were they willing to take the fight? If these questions have received limited consideration so far, that is because many scholars dispute that Prussia's war on the German Confederation in 1866 amounted to a proper civil war. According to the doubters, 1866 represented a cabinet executed with neither much popular input nor passion. 'In contrast to the élite', writes James Sheehan, 'there was little public enthusiasm for war in Prussia or in the other German states'.[5] Echoing contemporaneous eyewitnesses like Friedrich Engels and Russian Chancellor Prince Alexander Gorchakov, Thomas Nipperdey goes even further in arguing that the ejection of Austria from the emerging Second Empire was a 'German revolution' forced on the people by Prussia's minister president, Otto von Bismarck.[6] Although defenders of this interpretation concede that Austria and Prussia's dysfunctional rivalry and the self-centred politics of the smaller monarchies in the German Confederation had long fuelled a desire for reform, they emphasise that the public at large had little cause to rejoice about a 'federal war' (*Bundeskrieg*) instigated by one conservative regime against others.[7] Since the armies of Austria, Prussia, and their respective allies were matched relatively evenly, nobody could say for certain which

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[4] Cf. Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1792–1918* (Stuttgart, 1992); Ute Frevert, *Die kasernierte Nation: Militärdienst und Zivilgesellschaft in Deutschland* (Munich, 2001); Frevert, 'Das jakobinische Modell: Allgemeine Wehrpflicht und Nationsbildung in Preußen-Deutschland', in Frevert, ed., *Militär und Gesellschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 17–47. See also Karen Hagemann, *'Männlicher Muth und Teutsche Ehre': Nation, Militär und Geschlecht Zur Zeit der Antinapoleonischen Kriege Preußens* (Paderborn, 2002).

[5] James J. Sheehan, *German History 1770–1866* (Oxford, 1989), p. 900.

[6] Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck 1800–1866* (Dublin, 1996), p. 714; Friedrich Engels, *The Role of Force in History: A Study of Bismarck's Policy of Blood and Iron* (tr. by Jack Cohen, London, 1968), pp. 64–65; Theodore Hamerow, *The Social Foundations of German Unification, 1858–1871* (vol. 2, Princeton, 1972), p. 244.

[7] Jörn Leonhard, *Bellizismus und Nation: Kriegsdeutung und Nationsbestimmung in Europa und den Vereinigten Staaten 1750–1914* (Munich, 2008), p. 733; Geoffrey Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War: Austria's War with Prussia and Italy in 1866* (Cambridge, 1996); Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte* (vol. 3, Munich, 1995), pp. 292–3; William Carr, *The Origins of the Wars of German Unification* (London and New York, 1991), p. 135.

side would win. The German nation's headlong plunge into what promised to be a protracted civil war foretold pain and tragedy regardless of the outcome.[8]

When the campaign lasted a mere seven weeks and ended with a decisive Prussian victory, commentators began to speak of a 'war between brothers' (*Bruderkrieg*), a squabble involving antagonists connected by consanguinity but not belonging to the same society or country.[9] More popular still became the name 'Austro-Prussian War' in Prussia to emphasise the ontological independence of the two states without the inconvenient reference to the taboo of fratricide.[10] To the extent that commentators acknowledged fratricidal proclivities, they often blamed them on Russian, Papal, and French intrigues, which had supposedly steered the German nation into 'light-headed' self-destruction. It thus became possible to imagine the flaring up of internecine tensions as not having been a domestic affair at all.[11]

However, there is something unsatisfactory about this reading of the populace's supposed aversion to civil war in 1866. If the violent resolution of the 'German Question' started out as a dispassionate exercise in high politics, as commentators at the time claimed and many historians have done since, how do we explain the thousands of reservists who voluntarily left their homes at great personal risk to join the retreating army of Electoral Hessen?[12] Or the anti-Prussian 'hysteria' reported from Württemberg's capital Stuttgart?[13] Or, finally, the repeated threats made by irritated Prussian officers in occupied Saxony to execute uncooperative notables?[14] This study posits that a closer look at the full range of encounters and experiences reveals 1866 to have been a civil war, and that accepting such an interpretation has far-reaching implications for the study of state- and nation-building in modern German history.

Obviously some careful unpacking is called for to render my thesis usable. For a start, 1866 was a civil war only in a limited sense because

[8] On these fears, see Harald Biermann, *Ideologie statt Realpolitik: Kleindeutsche Liberale und auswärtige Politik vor der Reichsgründung* (Düsseldorf, 2006), p. 209.

[9] Mark Hewitson, *Nationalism in Germany, 1848–1866: Revolutionary Nation* (Basingstoke, 2010), pp. 345–6.

[10] Christian Jansen, *Gründerzeit und Nationsbildung 1849–1871* (Paderborn, 2011), pp. 202–3.

[11] Nikolaus Buschmann, *Einkreisung und Waffenbrüderschaft: Die öffentliche Deutung von Krieg und Nation in Deutschland 1850–1871* (Göttingen, 2003), pp. 270–2.

[12] Robert Friderici, *1866: Bismarcks Okkupation und Annexion Kurhessens* (Kassel, 1989), pp. 60–1, 101.

[13] Karl Heinrich Höfele, 'Königgrätz und die Deutschen von 1866', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 17 (1966), p. 399.

[14] Richard Dietrich, 'Preußen als Besatzungsmacht im Königreich Sachsen 1866–1868', *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 5 (1956), pp. 274–6.

claims about opponents' consanguinity were limited to German-speaking
contingents and did not extend to the Slavic units on both sides of the
political divide.[15] Italy's alliance with Prussia against Austria pushed the
conflict beyond the borders of the German Confederation, making
the distinction between domestic and foreign blurrier still. To clarify the
primary ethno-national focus of the chapters that follow, 1866 will hence-
forth be referred to as the 'German War'. The placement of the intra-
national conflict centre stage comes with the further qualification that the
phenomenological conditions that shaped the implosion of the German
Confederation were not necessarily the same as the driving forces behind
modern civil wars. The conduct of war has dramatically evolved in the
intervening century-and-a-half due to the abandonment of nineteenth-
century conventions. Today the terms 'civil war', 'insurgency', and 'revo-
lution' are often used interchangeably in popular media, but before the
First World War, 'civil war' represented a discrete undertaking conducted
in the main by regular armies under the command of (self-proclaimed)
sovereign entities, notwithstanding exceptions like the uncoordinated
post-*Risorgimento* uprisings in southern Italy. Furthermore, in contrast to
the insurgencies and civil wars during decolonisation, earlier conflicts were
fought less frequently for control of the political centre and rather more for
independence through secession – Prussia's declaration of war on her
former partners in the German Confederation being a notable example.[16]
The 'new wars' of the twenty-first century have come to differ yet again
from both preceding epochs because their objective is not the creation of
stable political structures but rather the augmentation of local warlords'
spheres of power at the expense of the state. Herfried Münkler has there-
fore aptly called them 'wars of de-statitization'.[17]

Significant as differences between these evolutionary stages undoubtedly
are, they should not obscure the fact that civil wars also share common
features across time and space. Apart from the consanguinity of the
protagonists, political scientists count among them a significant degree of
popular involvement and a minimum threshold of deadliness set at one
thousand deaths per annum.[18] The German War meets both criteria, as

[15] Höfele, 'Königgrätz und die Deutschen von 1866', p. 395.
[16] See Stathis N. Kalyvas' stimulating survey of evolutionary stages in 'The Changing Character of
Civil Wars, 1800–2009', in Hew Strachan and Sibylle Scheipers, eds, *The Changing Character of War*
(Oxford, 2011), pp. 202–19.
[17] Herfried Münkler, *The New Wars* (tr. by Patrick Camiller, Cambridge, 2005), pp. 16–22.
[18] Cf. Peter Waldmann, 'Bürgerkriege', in Wilhelm Heitmeyer and John Hagan, eds, *Internationales
Handbuch der Gewaltforschung* (Wiesbaden, 2002), p. 368.

the first chapter will demonstrate at greater length. Suffice it for the moment to contemplate the following statistics: 5.8 Habsburg, 4.5 Prussian, 2.6 Hanoverian, and 2.5 Saxon soldiers, respectively died per 10,000 inhabitants in a mere seven weeks. The death toll may have fallen short of the levels reached in the American Civil War (20.2), arguably the world's first total war, but it was certainly comparable to the casualties the Kingdom of Piedmont and the Papal States suffered during Italy's wars of unification in 1859/60.[19] It is fair to conclude, then, that the German War was a conflict of some intensity and magnitude.

State-Building through Conflict

The nineteenth century was a period of both frantic state- and nation-building in Germany. Governments steadily expanded their functions in society and so did the appeal of the national idea. The two processes overlapped where the founding of political nations went in tandem with the formation of state bureaucracies, but they were not mutually dependent. Sub-national sovereign entities like the monarchy of Bavaria played as active a role in the modernisation of police, justice, and tax regimes as the centralised systems of administration in Britain and France. In fact, local potentates often promoted reforms of this nature precisely to forestall national unification by revolutionary firebrands or ambitious dynasties. In consequence the term 'nation' acquired a double meaning in some German principalities, signifying an abstract fatherland belonging to all Germans as well as the dynastic territories ruled by the Wittelsbachs or Hohenzollerns. Either way, nations owed their existence less to a hazy quest for unity than collective identities embedded by centuries of conflict. These patterns of contestation could lead to tolerance of cultural pluralism, but under duress they could also bring about a polarisation of opinions and, *in extremis*, civil war.[20] To understand why the latter scenario

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[19] Dieter Langewiesche, 'Zum Wandel von Krieg und Kriegslegitimation in der Neuzeit', *Journal of Modern European History* 2 (2004), p. 17.

[20] Cf. John J. Breuilly, 'Sovereignty and Boundaries: Modern State Formation and National Identity in Germany', in Mary Fulbrook, ed., *National Historians and European History* (Boulder, 1993), pp. 94–140, esp. 99–117; Michael John, *Politics and the Law in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford, 1989), ch. 1; John, 'The Napoleonic Legacy and Problems of Restoration in Central Europe: The German Confederation', in David Laven and Lucy Riall, eds, *Napoleon's Legacy: Problems of Government in Restoration Europe* (Oxford and New York, 2000), pp. 83–96; Manfred Hanisch, *Für Fürst und Vaterland: Legitimitätsstiftung in Bayern zwischen Revolution 1848 und deutscher Einheit* (Munich, 1991); Marita Krauss, *Herrschaftspraxis in Bayern und Preußen im 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt a. M. and New York, 1997). More generally on national identity as a product of friction, see John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (London, 2005), esp. pp. 4–6.

eventuated in 1866, it is necessary to illuminate the issues at stake in the German War.

At the political meta-level, 'small German' (*kleindeutsch*) propagandists made Prussia out to be the champion of liberal nationalism's demands for a beefed-up federal executive, the repeal of internal customs barriers, and parliamentary rule. Although liberals felt rudely let down by the Prussian monarchy since the revolution of 1848 and suspected that Bismarck antagonised Austria merely to break out of the constitutional deadlock the crown faced in parliament, the bulk of them lined up behind Bismarck when the government proceeded to introduce a German customs union and consolidated all territory north of the river Main into a 'semi-constitutional system with supplementary party-political features' (Wolfgang J. Mommsen).[21] For 'great German' (*großdeutsch*) federalists loyal to the Confederation, on the other hand, the prospect of the Hohenzollerns lording it over the rest of Germany was anathema, even if they were just as reluctant to submit to outright Habsburg domination. They instead wished to preserve a maximum degree of autonomy for the member states of the Confederation.[22]

Such calculated appeals to different images of nationhood before 1866 traded on old grievances that lay at the heart of the German Question and therefore affected all Germans in one way or another. For centuries the locus of sovereignty had been contested in central Europe. A complex and fragmented collection of patrimonial polities, the Holy Roman Empire claimed supreme authority before 1806 and represented the highest instance of appeal, but the day-to-day functions of government were exercised by intermediate powers such as princes, imperial knights, and the church. The latter lacked the capacity to develop fully as long as subordinate structures of privilege such as corporate estates could count on the Empire to preserve their privileges.[23] Only Napoleon's

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[21] Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Imperial Germany 1867–1918: Politics, Culture, and Society in an Authoritarian State* (tr. by Richard Deveson, London, 1990), p. 5.

[22] Cf. Abigail Green, 'The Federal Alternative? A New View of Modern German History', *Historical Journal* 46 (2003), pp. 187–202; Nicholas Hope, *The Alternative to German Unification: The Anti-Prussian Party: Frankfurt, Nassau and the Two Hessen 1859–1867* (Wiesbaden, 1973); Heinrich Lutz, *Zwischen Habsburg und Preußen: Deutschland 1815–1866* (Berlin, 1985); Maiken Umbach, 'History and Federalism in the Age of Nation-State Formation', in Umbach, ed., *German Federalism: Past, Present, Future* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 42–69.

[23] Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire* (2 vols., Oxford, 2012); Peter H. Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire 1495–1806* (London, 1999); Wolfgang Burgdorf, *Reichskonstitution und Nation: Verfassungsreformprojekte für das Heilige Römische Reich Deutscher Nation im politischen*

emancipation of the larger territorial states at the expense of the church
and Empire cleared the path for a centralisation of administrative power
under the aegis of their monarchs. Freshly saturated by the absorption of
mediatised church lands and patrimonial estates, the rulers of Baden,
Bavaria, Württemberg, and other Napoleonic 'collaborator regimes'
sought to integrate their heterogeneous new subjects by unifying govern-
mental responsibilities and dividing the state into new regions and
localities of administration. Hanover and Prussia soon followed suit
after securing substantial territorial gains at the Congress of Vienna.
State-builders' concerted assault on traditional regional and corporate
identities in the Restoration Era thereby drew attention away from the
artificiality of existing territorial borders and simultaneously kept sover-
eignty out of the hands of the successor to the Empire, the German
Confederation.[24]

Nevertheless, the fruits of this reconfiguration of authority
remained ambivalent. Confessional jealousies previously contained by
local checks and balances increased with administrative centralisation.
Moreover, confrontations between centre and periphery continued to
occur despite state-builders' best efforts to break down internal com-
munication barriers; the East Frisian problem in Hanover and the
Palatinate's long-term resistance to Bavarianisation were two of the
better known examples of geographical outliers' claim to a right of
self-determination on grounds of ethno-historical incompatibility with
the dominant identity of the state. Paradoxically, the very emphasis
placed on bureaucratic efficiency and a more modern distribution of
sovereignty, which included the issuing of constitutions and the con-
vening of assemblies as limited concessions to post-Revolutionary
notions of citizenship, highlighted the strictures state 'particularism'

Schrifttum von 1648 bis 1806 (Mainz, 1998). On the Holy Roman Empire's formative impact on
subsequent federalist discourses in Germany, see the contributions in Georg Schmidt and
Dieter Langewiesche, eds, *Föderative Nation: Deutschlandkonzepte von der Reformation bis zum
Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2000); Otto Dann, 'Der deutsche Weg zum Nationalismus im Lichte
des Föderalismus Problems', in Oliver Janz, Pierangelo Schiera, and Hannes Siegrist, eds,
Zentralismus und Föderalismus im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Deutschland und Italien im Vergleich
(Berlin, 2000), pp. 51–68; Wolfram Siemann, '"Der deutsche Bund ist nur die Continuität des
Reichs . . .": Über das Weiterleben des Alten Reiches nach seiner Totsagung im Jahre 1806',
Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht 57 (2006), pp. 585–93.

[24] Jürgen Müller, *Deutscher Bund und deutsche Nation 1848–1866* (Göttingen, 2003); Brendan Simms,
The Struggle for Mastery in Germany 1779–1850 (Basingstoke, 1998); Christopher Clark, 'Germany
1815–1848: Restoration or Pre-March?', in John J. Breuilly, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Germany:
Politics, Culture and Society, 1780–1918* (London, 2001), pp. 40–65; Helmut Rumpler, ed.,
Deutscher Bund und deutsche Frage 1815–1866 (Munich, 1990).

was placing on the movement of people, goods, and ideas within the Confederation.[25]

On the credit side, however, particularism resonated with federal discourses that held that the 'cultural nation' neither required nor benefited from a cohesive nation-state. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe memorably summed up this mode of thinking in 1828 when he asked rhetorically: 'What makes Germany great but the admirable culture of her people (*Volkskultur*) that has evenly penetrated all parts of the empire? Is it not true that the separate princely capitals are its carriers and patrons?'[26] Still unsettled by the upheavals of the Napoleonic Wars and the unstable allegiances of the populations transferred in the course of this event, even reform-minded Prussian officials prioritised the consolidation of a harmonious state-community over German nation-building writ large.[27] To be sure, when given the chance to become the national leader, the Hohenzollerns set their sights on the bigger prize after 1848. But the threat of losing their sovereignty only intensified the quest of other kingdoms in the Confederation to present themselves as a polycentric alternative by propagating the notion that Germany consisted of 'tribes' (*Stämme*) connected by common memories, lifestyle as well as dynastic leadership, and that each larger state was an advocate for the tribal concerns of Swabians, Bavarians, Lower Saxons, and Saxons, respectively. According to Abigail Green, this state-sponsored tribalism developed considerable traction in the mid-nineteenth century and the transfer of sovereignty onto an as yet non-existent nation-state therefore seemed increasingly difficult to achieve by peaceful means alone.[28]

Ordinary citizens perhaps did not follow the finer details of these debates, but they certainly understood, or at least sensed, that a choice was required of them once civil war had become unavoidable. They had to decide whether to support the war effort and, if their answer was affirmative, how to follow up their intent with actions. Some choices

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[25] See Irmline Veit-Brause, 'Particularism: A Paradox of Cultural Nationalism', in J. C. Eade, ed., *Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Canberra, 1983), pp. 33–46. On particularism, see also Dan S. White, 'Regionalism and Particularism', in Roger Chickering, ed., *Imperial Germany: A Historiographical Companion* (Westport, CT, 1996), pp. 131–55; Volker Sellin, 'Nationalbewußtsein und Partikularismus in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert', in Jan Assmann und Tonio Hölscher, eds, *Kultur und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt a. M., 1988), pp. 241–64.

[26] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethes Gespräche mit Eckermann* (ed. by Flodard Baron von Biedermann, Leipzig, 1909), p. 428.

[27] Matthew Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture 1806–1848* (Oxford, 2000).

[28] Abigail Green, *Fatherlands: State-building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, 2001).

could be quite innocent, like the aforementioned reservists who volun-
tarily joined their units to defend home and fatherland. A far more
dangerous catalyst of rising belligerence were the rumours that spread
about alleged crimes committed by each side. The Prussian government
lost much good will among Hessen-Kassel's population when reports
started circulating that their captured sovereign, Elector Friedrich
Wilhelm I, had been sent to cholera-infested Stettin in hopes that he
would die there.[29] Neither was the Prussian public's credulity strained
by allegations that Bavarian civilians were mutilating wounded enemy
soldiers and that the German inhabitants of the Bohemian industrial
town of Trautenau, located just one mile from the Prussian border, had
tricked Hohenzollern forces into their city in order to kill them with
boiling oil.[30] In other words, civilians were no mere bystanders in
the war of 1866 and the contemporary media were wont to play up
this fact regardless of the doubtful veracity of many allegations. For the
combatants in the field, the fratricidal violence committed by German
'brothers' had a spiralling effect whose pull proved difficult to escape.
'I felt peculiar slashing at people who had never done me any harm',
explained one Prussian veteran later, 'but not only duty but also the
instinct of self-preservation and revenge for [my] fallen comrades
demanded it.'[31] It was similarly far from hyperbolic licence when one
Hanoverian poet wrote after the capitulation of his compatriots that the
'blood of the brothers, war's dark tribute, has chained us even more
tightly to them.'[32] In all its various manifestations the German War
produced emotional attachments that cast their shadow on the future.

State-Building after Civil War in Regional, National, and Transnational Perspective

The exceptional violence of German history in the first half of the twen-
tieth century has been a focal point of historiographical enquiry for a long
time. The so-called 'critical school' that emerged after the Second World
War and became firmly established during the Fischer Controversy of the

[29] Friderici, *1866*, p. 101.
[30] Matthias Blazek, *Die Schlacht bei Trautenau: Der einzige Sieg Österreichs im Deutschen Krieg 1866* (Stuttgart, 2012), pp. 24–5, 37, 42–5, 58–62.
[31] Albert Koch, *Das Kriegstagebuch des preußischen Gefreiten Albert Koch aus dem West- und Mainfeldzug des Jahres 1866* (ed. by Hartwig Stein, Frankfurt a. M., 2009), p. 57.
[32] Anon., 'Der trauernde Gardejäger', collection of printed poems from the file 'Geschichtliches: Hannover und England', A[rchiv des] F[riederiken-] S[tifts], Hannover, p. 25.

1960s was inclined to attribute the excesses of Nazism to long-term pathologies inherent in German nation-building. While this paradigm has shown a remarkable persistence and 'remains very much alive if no longer quite as robust as it once was', the peaceful reunification of the two Germanies in 1990 has pushed less belligerent continuities into the limelight which do not conform with the causal models of the 'critical school'.[33] The first major post-unification historian to react against the one-sidedly negative interpretation of the Second German Empire as a mere precursor of the Third Reich, Nipperdey posited with a wealth of supporting evidence that every epoch has its own meaning and value.[34] Since Nipperdey's death in 1992, this revisionist reading of the nineteenth century has gained much ground to the point that the Second Empire now appears in recent scholarship as an oasis of relative stability and successful nation-building wedged between two troubled periods of transition: at the one end the antagonism of *kleindeutsch* and *großdeutsch* nationalism in the German Confederation and on the other the travails of Weimar democracy.[35]

In and of itself there is no reason to quibble with this periodisation: as the following chapters will show, the Bismarckian empire's mechanisms of integration went a long way towards defusing the contentious issue of where sovereignty in Germany resided. It is therefore tempting to blame aberrations on moments of overt crisis during which people took up arms and nationalism became polarising. Yet there are good reasons to heed Donald Bloxham and Robert Gerwarth's injunction not to lose sight of long-term trends in the way Germans and indeed Europeans more generally related to political violence in the late nineteenth- and twentieth centuries. What has been notably lacking in debates about German nationalism is an investigation of possible connections between the civil war-like circumstances of national unification and the troubles of the

[33] James J. Sheehan, 'Paradigm Lost? The "Sonderweg" Revisited', in Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz, eds, *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien* (Göttingen, 2006), p. 157.

[34] Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866–1918* (2 vols., Munich, 1990–92). See also Richard J. Evans' insightful review in 'Nipperdey's Nineteenth Century', in Evans, *Rereading German History: From Unification to Reunification 1800–1996* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 23–43.

[35] Cf. Siegfried Weichlein, *Nation und Region: Integrationsprozesse im Bismarckreich* (Düsseldorf, 2004); Weichlein, 'Saxons into Germans: The Progress of the National Idea in Saxony after 1866', in James Retallack, ed., *Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830–1933* (Ann Arbor, 2000), pp. 166–79; Erwin Fink, 'Symbolic Representations of the Nation: Baden, Bavaria, and Saxony, c. 1860–80', in Laurence Cole, ed., *Different Paths to the Nation: Regional and National Identities in Central Europe and Italy, 1830–70* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 200–19.