

Subproject 3:

NATIONS, BORDERS, IDENTITIES: The Memories of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in Austria and Germany (1815 - 1945)

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Abstract

This study is part of the larger project "*Nations, Borders, Identities: the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in European Experiences and Memories*" and explores how the wars against Napoleon were remembered in the German-speaking area between 1815 and 1945. This brings to consideration not only a central theatre of the wars, but also a region composed of a great number of larger and smaller territorial states that were pursuing very different political interests and which were marked as well by the antagonism between Protestantism and Catholicism. On the one side stood the great powers of Prussia and Austria, competing with each other for dominance while at the same time contributing decisively to the defeat of the French. On the other side were the states belonging to the Confederation of the Rhine, formed by Napoleon in 1806 and remaining his ally until 1813. By way of example, this study explores, in addition to Prussia (with the centres Berlin and the Mark, Silesia and the Rhineland), Bavaria, Saxony and Austria (with Vienna as the centre and Lower Austria surrounding it, and Tyrol). The central focus of the study will be historical novels. These sources will be evaluated with the following questions in mind: What collective images of the self, the alien and the enemy were conveyed through the memories in these texts? To what extent did they support the construction of regional and national identities? What differences, shared characteristics and reciprocal influences can be established? Who were the producers of these written memories and what interests were they pursuing?