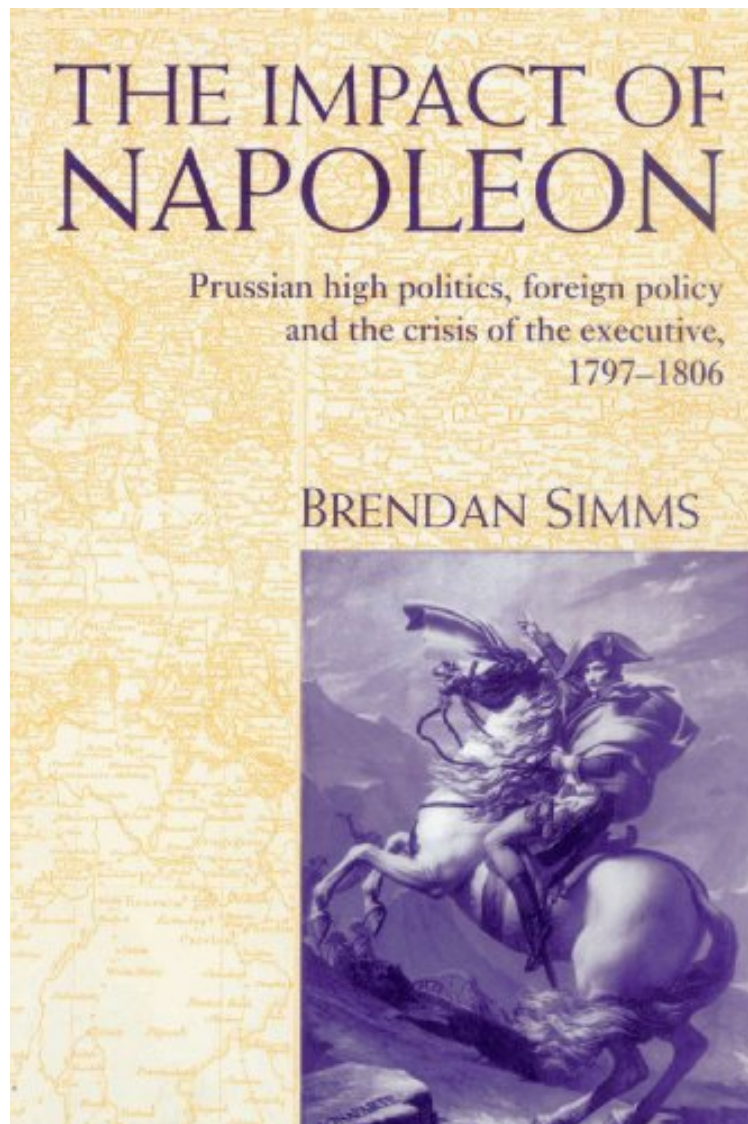


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The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797-1806

Brendan Simms

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Brendan Simms : The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797-1806 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797-1806:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. very detailed analysysBy The Geezerit's a really detailed analysys of

the historical situation of Prussia and of the logical thinking of the men that ruled the country at the time. It helps to understand the political and military logic that caused Prussia to unite the country that became Germany and the reasons of the birth of Prussian militarism and of German concerns about her geopolitical situation. It's from this time that we can trace the seed of 1914 World War. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Return to the primacy of foreign policy By A. Stavropoulos Brendan Simms' "The Impact of Napoleon" is one of the best historical texts I have ever read. The author presents a cogent and persuasive argument that Prussian foreign policy from 1797-1806 was not influenced in any major way by domestic politics, correcting a mistake that German historians have been making since they began writing on the subject. He shows that there was no "Pro-French" lobby in the court, and that the ministers changed policies to suit the wishes of the king. Simms shows how foreign policy was firmly in the hands of the King, Frederick William III, and the ultimate decision rested with him. Simms shows how the Prussian system of government (put in place by Frederick the Great) led to disaster in the hands of a weak and timid king, when confronted by Napoleon. The book is broken up into a section on the Prussian system, and to a section on how the system and the individuals in it reacted to events. There is an epilogue explaining how the horrible defeat at Jena led to a reevaluation of the system and its reform in favor of a more professional and independent governmental system and foreign ministry. For anyone who is interested in Napoleonic diplomatic history or in German history this is a must-have book.

This book examines Prussia's response to Napoleon and Napoleonic expansionism in the years before the crushing defeats of Auerstadt and Jena, a period of German history as untypical as it was dramatic. Events are analyzed at the level of high politics, foreign policy and the reform of the executive. The book also addresses matters of general theoretical concern such as high politics, geopolitics and the "primacy of foreign policy". In doing so it goes beyond anything that has been attempted before, and presents a comprehensive and nuanced picture of Prussia before 1806.

"...this study's first-rate account of the mechanisms of politics and foreign affairs in old regime Prussia makes Simms' work a welcome contribution to the historical literature." Steinhoff, H-Net s"Simms has certainly provided much food for thought and his challenge to the current interpretation is likely to provoke a lively response." Peter H. Wilson, International History "This book has many strengths, among them thorough research in printed and archival sources; excellent discussions of the relevant historiography and significant contributions to its debates; a clear, sound exposition and justification of the topic and the problems involved; a smooth, readable style; an orderly...organization; and an important, controversial interpretation forcefully presented." Paul W. Schroeder, Central European History From the Back Cover This book examines Prussia's response to Napoleon and Napoleonic expansionism in the years before the crushing defeats of Auerstadt and Jena, a period of German history as untypical as it was dramatic. Between the years 1797 and 1806 Prussia shocked Europe not by her assertiveness but by her acquiescence, not by her contempt for international norms but by trust in such norms long after they had been abandoned by her neighbours. Throughout this period the main fear of Prussian statesmen was French power, rather than revolution from below. This threat spawned a foreign-policy debate characterised by geopolitical thinking: the belief that Prussian policy was conditioned by her unique geographic situation at the heart of Europe. Similar thinking underlay a parallel debate on the organisation of the executive: Prussian politicians felt that a swifter and more balanced process of decision-making was needed.