

3 Gertrud Schubart-Fikentscher, *Die Unehelichen-Frage in der Frühzeit der Aufklärung*, (Ost-)Berlin 1967.

4 Pallaver, *Ende der schamlosen Zeit*, wie Anm. 2.

5 Georg Denzler, *Die verbotene Lust. 2000 Jahre christliche Sexualmoral*, München 1988.

V. G. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History. Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988.

This book is an ambitious attempt to trace the history of duelling practices from primitive times to the present. Kiernan's central aim is to account for the emergence and the demise of the modern duel peculiar to the West, and to determine its social functions. As he points out, the history of the topic has received insufficient attention by modern scholars of the nobility. This neglect is all the more surprising as the duel „distilled an essential part of the moral life of a class, a civilization, a long span of history“ (p. 326), and because it „became a unique point of convergence of political, social, artistic, and many other currents“ (p. 327).

Drawing largely on evidence from fiction and autobiographical sources, *The Duel in European History* is essentially anecdotal. This is one of its strengths as it makes for easy reading, and Kiernan's dramatic pose and sardonic wit add to the enjoyment. At the same time, however, the anecdotal nature of the book

is also one of its major drawbacks since it creates difficulties in extricating the main themes and the conclusions.

The modern duel, Kiernan asserts, was first fashioned by the military men of Renaissance Italy. Habits of duelling quickly spread to the rest of Europe, where they were elaborated during the chronic wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. „Both by law and by religion the practice was often heavily frowned on, if also often winked at, the more readily as it gradually took on a more refined character. (...) Eighteenth-century enlightenment threatened to undermine it, yet even after the French Revolution's thunderous condemnation of everything feudal or aristocratical [sic], the ensuing twenty years of European war seemed to revive and reinvigorate it, as though with the smell of fresh blood. It lingered on in Britain to near the middle of the nineteenth century, on the continent until the deluge of the Great War made bloodshed over petty private grudges meaningless. Meanwhile it had been carried overseas, especially to the Americas, by the expansion of Europe.“ (p. 7)

Kiernan insists that warfare and duelling sustained each other. The duel and its ideology of honour helped to preserve the warlike spirit, while war and patriotism contributed to maintaining the courage of duelists. But it remains unclear exactly how warfare contributed to the rise and spread of modern duelling. On the one hand, Kiernan argues, the duel was invigorated by wars (pp. 9, 135). On the other hand, he claims, long

periods of peace also favoured duelling as „an outlet for restless energies“, as in England after 1604, or in the periods after 1713 and 1815 (pp. 75, 102). Moreover, it is perplexing why the duel persisted for such a long time in „unmilitary England“ (p. 102), as well as in militaristic empires such as Germany.

The spread of urban modes of living, which supposedly made men more quarrelsome, is another factor behind the rise of duelling according to Kiernan. However, he never provides evidence that Europeans were in fact more „short-tempered“ during this period than previously. In the final analysis, though, Kiernan maintains that the most important factor for the advance of the duel was the „crumbling of the old feudal structure“ (p. 51), which produced psychological, political, and material strains, as well as internal fragmentation amongst the noble elite. Under such circumstances, duelling and its code of honour came to serve the aristocracy as an ideology which perpetuated myths of its descent from the ancient nobility of the sword, refurbished its claim to superior courage, and provided a bond against internal social divisions. The duel, Kiernan concludes, „was most at home in the more progressive countries, where aristocratic values were defending themselves under pressure from a more modern and encroaching social order“ (p. 7). Nevertheless, and in apparent contradiction, he also claims that „it flourished where aristocratic styles of living were still unimpaired“, or where „whole new noble classes

were coming into being and aping older ones“ (p. 94).

Kiernan links the slow but steady decline of the duel with the rise of capitalism. Hence, middle class Holland was the least inclined to duelling. In England, too, the comparatively early disappearance of the duel during the nineteenth century was a „concomitant of economic progress“ (p. 205). While duelling was always criticized, in France and the old continental monarchies it took two world wars to finally uproot the aristocracy and with it the duel. By this time duelling had everywhere become „vulgarly popular“ and as „concepts of war were being democratized, aristocratic honour [was] blown up into ‚national honour‘“ (p. 316). However, some inconsistencies remain in Kiernan's attempt to link the decline of the duel with the rise of capitalism. Thus, it is unclear why in Sweden – hardly one of the leading capitalist countries – the duel disappeared quickly after the seventeenth century, or how the Nazis could resurrect it during the twentieth. Moreover, I cannot help but wonder why the rise as well as the decline of the duel was concomitant with the emergence of capitalism.

Kiernan is at his best when explaining the function of duelling, and the social meaning it held for its defenders as well as its critics. While duelling was fundamentally irrational on an individual level, and not always voluntary, it did have various social benefits for the noble class as a whole. Above all, the duel sanctified the existing social

order by emphasizing the lines of division between nobility and the new upper middle class at a time when other customs, like conspicuous consumption, and tax-privileges (as in England) no longer provided for clear social distinctions. Duelling also functioned as a means to impress the lower orders. „If aristocracy was to survive and hold on to privileges that had less and less justification, it must distinguish itself by an appropriate carriage, which the man in the street could recognize as proof of superiority, however incomprehensible the code that duelling was linked to.“ (p. 136)

As heir to the feudal right of private warfare, the duel was also a symbolic claim to noble immunity from the law. Confronted with this constant reminder of the nobility's independent militaristic spirit, rulers made attempts to abolish duelling. But since it was also a means to channel rebelliousness and „the overflow of destructive impulses“ (p. 12) of private violence into more civilized and regulated outlets, most governments did allow duelling to survive until modern times.

Naturally, the duel meant different things to individual nobles. Sometimes duelling was preferred to the uncertainty and delay of the law; it could be a means to kill unwanted husbands or rivals. But all too often it was, according to Kiernan, little more than a consequence of boredom, drunken quarrels, or an explosion of temper. Disputes of this kind „suggest an infantile mentality, minds incapable of serious thought“

(p. 117). Although he tries to understand individual actors of the past on their own terms, Kiernan's book is full of vindictive remarks about the nobility as a class. For the most part, he asserts, it was a „useless class“ (p. 152) that „hid under a well-tailored exterior much raw egotism, and the necessity (...) of coercing and exploiting others“ (p. 136). Without providing evidence, Kiernan insists that, typical of a „parasitic upper class“, it would congregate „round the bottle for hours every day“ (p. 120), and that, presumably by the eighteenth century, it was „falling behind in education and intelligence“ (p. 115).

*The Duel in European History* is also filled with dubious assumptions about human nature and society. Thus, primitive man was not „over-vindictive“ but brutalized „by social advances, divisions into higher and lower classes as well as into kinships“ (p. 23). „Man“, Kiernan believes, is a social animal but also a „natural solitary“, and this dualism forced „him“ to polarize „his“ consciousness into a public and a private sphere.

Most astounding for a historian of Kiernan's stature is his consistent use of fiction and anecdotes as evidence of actual social practices and attitudes. For instance, to prove how contradictory were legal views in the eighteenth century, he cites a passage from Laclos' novel *Les liaisons dangereuses*, and insists that Goldoni's plays were typical of legal opinion in Venice (p. 167). It remains inexplicable to this reader, why the author would bother to support

an assertion that crowding together has „hysteria-inducing effects“ on humans with reference to Dermond Morris's *Naked Ape*, while modern theorists on social distinctions and private conflicts, together with the most recent works on the history of the European nobility, are conspicuously absent from the bibliography.

Overall Kiernan must be commended for his knowledge of fiction, his pioneering comparative approach, and for writing a readable book full of obscure and useful information. All of this will provide fertile ground for others to write complimentary histories of the duel based more securely in modern social theory and documentary evidence.

Karin J. MacHardy, Ontario

Christian Fleck, *Rund um ‚Marienthal‘. Von den Anfängen der Soziologie in Österreich bis zu ihrer Vertreibung*. Wien: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik 1990.

In den achtziger Jahren ist die Geschichte nach Österreich zurückgekehrt. Warum? Über die Gründe dafür könnte man spekulieren. Auch ist schon einiges geschrieben worden. Das Buch von Christian Fleck zählt dazu. Es handelt von den „Anfängen der Soziologie in Österreich“. Gibt es die überhaupt? Oder geht es nicht doch eher um Sozialismus? In den Anfängen, das kann der Autor zeigen, ging in dieser Hinsicht vieles durcheinander. Flecks *Geschichte der Soziologie* ist im

Kern die Geschichte von Paul Lazarsfeld und Marie Jahoda, einem jungen Wissenschafterehepaar, das von einem älteren Wissenschafterehepaar, von den Universitätsprofessoren Karl und Charlotte Bühler, gefördert wurde (Nepotismus?) und im Wien der dreißiger Jahren eine *Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle* aufbaute. Jahoda und Lazarsfeld waren Jungsozialisten. Zu den Kunden der Firma – die sozialwissenschaftliche „Innovation“ sollte nämlich profitabel betrieben werden – gehörten jedoch so honorige Namen wie Titze Feigenkaffee, Meisl, Bally Schuhe und Ankerbrot (S. 179). Der Aufsichtsrat der Forschungsstelle war sozialpartnerschaftlich zusammengesetzt.

Heute wird berichtet, erst unter dem Druck ihres sozialdemokratischen Parteichefs Otto Bauer habe das Ehepaar jene Studie begonnen, die später als eine Art Klassiker der Soziologie gehandelt wurde: *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal*. Die Knochenarbeit an diesem Projekt soll jedoch nicht von den späteren Autoren, sondern von einer weitgehend Unbekannten geleistet worden sein, „(...) die im Psychologischen Institut gerade wenig zu tun hatte“ (S. 171), von Lotte Danzinger. Die Autoren waren derweilen mit dem Abfassen einer Dissertation (Jahoda) beschäftigt, bei interessanteren Aufgaben unabhkömmlich (Lazarsfeld) oder einfach mit ihrer Zeit karrieremäßig gebunden (Ziesel), erläutert Christian Fleck.

Wenn Fleck österreichische Soziologiegeschichte *rund um ‚Marienthal‘* ansiedelt, dann ist das nicht nur Ausdruck