

Extracts from the major reviews to date (January 2012 – June 2015)

Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire 1493-1806*, 2 vols (Oxford, 2012)

Volume 1: From Maximilian I to the Peace of Westphalia, 1493-1648 (ISBN-10: 0198731019; ISBN-13: 978-0198731016)

Volume 2: From the Peace of Westphalia to the Dissolution of the Reich, 1648-1806 (ISBN-10: 0199693072; ISBN-13: 978-0199693078)

Both volumes are also published as e-books and as part of Oxford Scholarship online. A paperback edition appeared in November 2013. A German edition will be published by the Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft and Philip von Zabern in September 2014.

‘... scholars ... will concur in their debt to Whaley’s magnum opus ... [it] stands apart as the most authoritative account of the early modern empire.’ (C. Ingrao, *ChoiceReviews.online* (Association for College and Research Libraries, a Division of the American Library Association, August 2012.)

(http://www.cro2.org/default.aspx?page=about_oat&pid=2870833, accessed 17 September 2012)

‘...the most comprehensive work on the subject in recent times and will almost certainly achieve the rank of a standard work – and not only in the anglophone world... a singular monument of Anglo-Saxon learning ... a model of historical scholarship ... a monumental work ... recommended not only to scholars but also to students and anyone interested in history ... Whaley’s style makes reading his book a pleasure.’ (Wolfgang Burgdorf, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8.xi.12

(<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/buecher/rezensionen/sachbuch/joachim-whaley-germany-and-the-holy-roman-empire-so-tiefgruendig-kann-deutsche-geschichte-sein-11953292.html>, accessed 5.i.13).

‘...a monumental history of the Holy Roman Empire which far surpasses everything that has been written about the subject to date. German history between the Reformation and Napoleon has never been written in such a lively, multi-faceted, source-based, and coherent manner ... a history that embraces the whole of [German] culture, religion, economy and society.’ (Gustav Seibt, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27.iii.13)

‘Whaley sees the Reich as a continually reforming, diverse but legally ordered polity, rather than some kind of bizarre monstrosity or collective fiction. His two volumes are exceptionally well written and highly nuanced and reflect the latest scholarship. Indeed, they represent a huge personal achievement they will provide a standard of scholarship against which all future works will be measured.’ (Alan Sked *Reviews in History*, 6 September 2012)

(<http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1315> – accessed 6.ix.12);

‘... its complexity and sophistication ... [the] stupendous breadth and depth of Whaley’s knowledge. The two volumes are full of incisive chapters on topics as diverse as economic policies, religious reform movements, court culture ... skilfully crafted and engrossing narrative...’ (Michael Schaich, *Times Literary Supplement*, 20.vii.2012)

‘The massive achievement of this superb and authoritative study is to rescue the Holy Roman Empire from the condescension of history... It is hard to overestimate the scale of Whaley’s achievement. The Holy Roman Empire was a labyrinth of hundreds of tiny princedoms, duchies, bishoprics and independent city states, each with its own jurisdictions and special patterns of allegiance. Yet Whaley effortlessly weaves them together... The scholarship in this book is profound, with the bibliography alone stretching to some 70 pages. Whaley’s two volumes total nearly 1,400 pages, yet it is a surprisingly easy read. Above all Whaley has rewritten the course of German history by suggesting that there was nothing about German society, culture or political structure that created the conditions for 20th-century authoritarianism.’ (Peter Osborne, *Daily Telegraph*, 28.iii.12)

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/9160915/Germany-and-the-Holy-Roman-Empire-Volumes-1-and-2-by-Joachim-Whaley-review.html> - accessed 7.ix.12);

‘Whaley’s account is one of the best works on early modern German history. From the first page to the last, it shows how German history can be presented as both a history of Emperor and Empire, and a history of common culture. It will immediately establish itself as a standard guide to its subject.’ (Georg Schmidt, Friedrich Schiller University, Jena)

‘Overall brilliantly successful ... a detailed account of two hundred years of German history ... In a thousand details the monograph is more knowledgeable than other English-language accounts of German history ... and in numerous respects it is more knowledgeable than many a German handbook ... Whaley demonstrates a stupendous knowledge of German history. The reviewer believes this book is the most important English-language work on pre-modern German history for at least two decades.’

(Axel Gotthard, *Sehepunkte* xii, April 2012)(<http://www.sehepunkte.de/2012/04/20876.html> - accessed 6.ix.12);

‘[Whaley’s] work, though different in emphasis and organisation, stands equal with the major German speaking syntheses today existing such as by Horst Rabe, Karl Otmar von Aretin, Heinz Schilling, or Georg Schmidt. His detailed knowledge of the vast relevant research literature, in German or in any other language, on topics ranging from the later fifteenth to the early nineteenth century is breath-taking. As such, this work is a must-read for all students of Early Modern Germany unless they work on specific issues of social and demographic history ... The superior quality of Whaley’s synthesis is beyond question. This is a masterpiece that demands close attention and respect.’

(Robert von Friedeburg, *H-Soz-u-Kult*, 29.i.13) (<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/type=rezbuecher&id=18016>, accessed 29.i.12)

‘...surpasses [all previous works in English] in its scope, precision and carefully thought-out conceptual framework. There is also currently no work in German that can compete with this magnum opus in terms of wealth of information and its profound understanding of the structures and dynamics of the Old Reich ... a history of the Reich that is embedded in context both of its territories and of the international situation, which presents accomplished portraits of the main historical actors and illuminates their family and social milieu, which strikes a convincing balance between structure and detail ... The attraction of the work lies in its combination of political and social history, of institutional history and the history of mentalities, of intellectual, theological and cultural history, in all of which fields the author is equally at home.’

(Heinz Duchhardt, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 1/2013, 201-11)

‘An enterprise of this magnitude requires a steady hand on the tiller, as the author steers between the rocks of historiographical controversy and the shoals of submerged detail Whaley accomplishes his argosy with poise and style. These two volumes, which will undoubtedly become a first point of reference, are a remarkable achievement of which the author should feel justly proud.’ (Tom Scott, *English Historical Review*, cxxvii (August 2012), 984-7

(<http://ehr.oxfordjournals.org/content/127/527/984.full.pdf+html?sid=ff6b1c5f-b98d-4604-908e-33dba1f92974> – accessed 5.i.13)

‘...an overall account whose methodological reflection, thematic range, and wealth of detail are unparalleled ... these two volumes will quickly become standard works ... their particular form, combining sections on historiography and methodology, structural history and the history of events, has no counterpart in the German-language historiography ... Whaley presents the development of the Holy Roman Empire from the late Middle Ages to its dissolution, debates older and more recent models of interpretation, identifies thematic priorities, and describes lines of historical development without passing over individual events. The text also presents a wealth of regional features and episodes in context which demonstrates the author’s outstanding grasp of the detail of both imperial history and German regional history.’

(Stefan Ehrenpreis, *German Historical Institute London Bulletin*, vol xxxv, no. 1, May 2013, pp. 39-54)

(<http://www.ghil.ac.uk/publications/bulletin.html>)

‘... successfully combines an expert’s love of detail with a clear view of the large picture ... Whaley’s work offers the reader a comprehensive view ... which pursues a consistent line throughout. [It] can be recommended without hesitation as a valuable handbook for history teachers, students and journalists ... the work is recommended to anyone interested in the historical-political development of Germany in Europe...’ Willi Eisele (former president of the Bayerischer Geschichtslehrerverband)

Review published simultaneously on four German websites:

www.ahf-muenchen.de/Buchanzeigen (No. 008 of 7.vi.2013)

www.bglv-ev.de (under Rezensionen/Besprechungen)

www.bpv.de (under Buchbesprechungen/Aktuelles)

www.bund-freiheit-der-wissenschaft.de (under Rezensionen)

‘... impressive and lucid synthesis... a rich and informative narrative that encompasses all of the major and many of the minor research questions posed across the last five decades.. a work of impressive scholarship and considerable erudition... These two volumes put the Empire firmly back into German history. They provide a richly detailed, judiciously balanced discussion of the last three centuries of the Empire’s existence.... Whaley’s history is a must for anyone with a serious interest in early modern Germany.’

(Peter Wilson, *Central European History* 46 (2013), pp. 407-13.

‘...A full and fresh assessment of more than three hundred years of German history... the best political and institutional history of the Reich in any language ... Whaley seems to have read and digested everything. For this astonishing achievement alone one must be grateful....As a general treatment of three centuries of legal and institutional history Whaley's volume will stand as a monument of erudite revisionism that, within its self-imposed limits, could hardly be improved..

H. C. Erik Midelfort, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, xliii No. 4 (2012), pp. 1225-7.

This two-volume monograph represents one of the most impressive histories of the Holy Roman Empire written since World War II. Focused primarily on the institutional history of the Empire from the 1495 Diet of Worms to the Empire's dissolution in 1806, Whaley offers a coherent overview of the enigmatic and multi-faceted political entity at the heart of early modern Europe. Over the course of roughly 1500 pages, Whaley cogently charts the development of key institutions within the Empire such as the Imperial Chamber Court, the Imperial Diet, and the Imperial Circles, all while maintaining an equally clear focus on the daily political life of the numerous localities and territorial states that made up the Empire. His main argument focuses on the flexibility of the Empire's political system. Whaley sees the Empire not as a "monstrosity," but rather as an evolving polity with a specific German identity that operated successfully for centuries. To trace how the Empire remained functional throughout the early modern period, Whaley crafts his narrative around a series of political, social, and religious reform movements that reshaped the Empire at crucial moments. According to Whaley, each reform movement presented a particular challenge to the Empire, but eventually, the imperial estates resolved each conundrum through a policy of accommodation and compromise. In Whaley's opinion, this approach kept the Empire's institutional and constitutional viability intact by allowing for the continual development and reinvention of the Empire's political structure. The first volume of Whaley's study stretches from the reign of Maximilian I to the Peace of Westphalia. It touches on all the standard high points: the imperial reform movement of the 1490s, the advent of the Protestant Reformation, the unsuccessful attempt to end confessional conflict through war during the 1540s, the Peace of Augsburg, the emergence of confessionalization, and finally the Thirty Years War. The strength of Whaley's approach lies in his synthesis of a vast array of secondary sources and his ability to shed new light on well-known topics. Despite his emphasis on the unity of the early modern Empire and the consistency with which new reform movements emerged throughout its existence, Whaley nonetheless retains a traditional chronology in dividing his two volumes at 1648. Picking up where the first volume left off, his second volume charts the Empire's development after the Peace of Westphalia, a period that has often been seen as one of slow decline and ossification for imperial institutions. Taking particular issue with the traditional "Prussian-German" view of the Empire's backwardness, Whaley argues that the Empire remained a dynamic political actor throughout its last century and a half of existence. According to Whaley, this period saw the emergence of a distinct "German 'ideology' that had no use for ideas of nation states and the like: an awareness of varying levels of identification, from locality to Reich, a multiplicity of interlocking and overlapping

‘fatherlands’ expressed in the contemporary formula of ‘unity in diversity.’” (vol. 1, 14) For Whaley, this common identity explains the Empire’s survival and operation throughout the eighteenth century, right up to its dissolution in 1806. It holds the key to understanding why the Empire held together, even as some of its larger states moved to establish themselves as more independent political actors. Both volumes contain good maps and an extremely useful glossary of technical terms, while the bibliographies offer a treasure trove of riches. Whaley’s two volumes mark an immense accomplishment and should be read by any scholar working on the early modern Empire or early modern politics in general. They represent the most comprehensive history of the Empire available in English and are sure to generate debate for decades to come.

Christopher Close, *Archive for Reformation History/Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, Supplement: Literature Review, xlii (2013), pp. 8-9

‘Joachim Whaley’s magnificent new two-volume study ... sets out precisely wherein the Old Reich’s distinctive character lay and enables us to appreciate the reasons why it held the loyalties of so many for so long... Whaley’s range is breathtaking ... The reader is securely guided through the ... complexity ... The whole is presented with admirable lucidity, free of jargon ... fine accounts of religious, economic and social matters ... Whaley’s treatment enables one to see Things in their broader social context better than it often the case in more specialised studies ... [he] has a wonderful knack for the telling detail ... Whaley’s monumental and magisterial study will assuredly quickly become – and deservedly long remain – a standard authoritative handbook for anyone concerned with the subject.’

John L Flood, *The Modern Language Review*, cviii (2013), 989-93

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5699/modelangrevi.108.3.0989>

‘Joachim Whaley’s magnificent book gives readers the best, most persuasive available account in any language of the revisionist case. He turns the old view on its head... He displays a remarkably wide-ranging knowledge of German culture during the three centuries covered by his book... Whaley is especially strong on religion and culture ... The stance is insistently antiteleological; the tone, judicious and urbanely argumentative ... This is a bracing book of ideas and arguments, sustained over 125 chapters and almost 1,500 pages. It is both scholarly and very readable.’

David Blackbourn, *Common Knowledge*, 2014, 20(1) 143-4.

<http://commonknowledge.dukejournals.org/content/20/1/143.full.pdf+html?sid=dacb8da2-82d9-4548-868c-1b47a0fb57be>

‘This monumental study ... rests on an impressive body of knowledge, not least on knowledge of the secondary literature ... religious, philosophical and cultural history are joined with political and constitutional history ... the extraordinary readability of the two volumes, probably partly a result of the division of the argument into relatively short chapters, makes this text an enjoyable read for specialists, students and enthusiasts from many different fields.’

Laura Anna Macor, *Historia Philosophica. An International Journal*, 11, 2013, pp. 158-60

<http://www.libraweb.net/sommari.php?chiave=5>

‘Whaley negotiates a vast bibliography, which includes the history of institutions, to offer an excellent tool that is both a compass for orienting oneself among the various issues and itself a starting point.’

Michaela Valente, *Archivio Storico Italiana* (2013)

‘One of the most impressive and helpful scholarly monographs of 2012... In this landmark study, Whaley provides a historical overview in which he evaluates narratives and interpretations, that are revealing about the thinking of the period but also in view of some modern views and theories. Chapter by chapter, he tests the validity of perceptions and the sense of identity Germans began to develop in the 16th century – not least in opposition to wider European aspirations and claims. By questioning patterns of established thought Whaley manages time and again to add new insights to the interface of subject areas such as theology, politics, the economy and social issues ... His study will be as useful to the established scholar as it is to the novice seeking to understand the influences and concerns that shaped the ... Empire.’

Ulrike Zitzlsperger, *The Year's Work in Modern Language Studies*, lxxiv (2014)

‘... a massive and exceptionally successful project that offers a comprehensive view of the Holy Roman Empire... From the point of view of Austrian history, the author is constantly concerned to reflect critically on the relationship of the [Habsburgs’] German hereditary lands, as well as Hungary and Bohemia to the Empire. The volume is encyclopaedic in scope... the author demonstrates great breadth and expertise in pursuing his themes of political, cultural, constitutional and social history... In view of its balanced approach and profundity the volume will occupy an unchallenged place in the libraries of scholars next to the work of Aretin and the major handbooks of German and European history... This work is also exceptionally well written and it represents an awesome achievement on the part of the author...’

Martin Scheutz, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* (1/2014, 230-1)

‘...two large, learned and impressive volumes... Whaley has mastered to an admirable degree the immense bibliography and dispersed historiography of Germany and the empire ... His work is the most comprehensive picture of [the empire] ... he has studied as few others have done, the very rich recent literature on institutions ranging from the imperial Diet (Reichstag) the imperial courts of law, and the regional jurisdiction (*Kreise*) that served as a dispersed executive, down through the territorial principalities to the rich pastiche of local forms of governance. From this labor is constructed the most complete and convincing picture of how the German lands were governed ... Whaley’s magnificent achievement provides the proper framework within which [constructing a new social history of Europe] should be undertaken. No historian, working alone, could ever exhaust the promise presented by his volumes, but it is nonetheless the best other alternative to the waning of national history.... It is time for the feeble whines about the German *Sonderweg* to depart.

Thomas A. Brady, *Journal of Modern History*, lxxxix (2014), pp. 471-473.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/10.1086/675482.pdf?acceptTC=true&jpdConfirm=true>

‘This tremendous book turns all traditional schools of thought on their head! Here the Holy Roman Empire is no longer a monster that struggled with failure, indecision and inertia between 1500 and 1806. On the contrary it now emerges as a past model of existence, whose particular pre-modern differentness needs to be understood and appreciated. This two-volume ‘Whaley’ is the fruit of prolonged and thorough research and impresses with its many hundreds of pages of reader-friendly freshness. From the external perspective of British scholarliness Whaley has written a successful standard work of German and European history. It expertly combines politics culture, religion, society and economy. For contemporary readers in a world characterised by globalisation and the decline of the state, the Holy Roman Empire that disappeared two centuries ago is a rather surprising source of fascination.

The original English edition of 2012 was received enthusiastically by critics worldwide. The German translation of this standard work now makes it available to a wider audience.’

Prof. Dr. Bernd Schneidmüller, Universität Heidelberg

Original German text:

„Dieses großartige Buch stellt alte Urteilskartelle auf den Kopf! Hier ist das Heilige Römische Reich Deutscher Nation kein Monstrum mehr, das sich in Erfolglosigkeit, Unentschlossenheit und Stillstand zwischen 1500 und 1806 dahinschleppte. Vielmehr tritt es jetzt als ein vergangenes Lebensmodell hervor, das gerade in seiner vormodernen Andersartigkeit verstanden werden will. Dieser zweibändige „Whaley“ ist die Frucht langer gründlicher Forschungen und besticht über viele hundert Seiten durch leserfreundliche Frische. Mit dem Außenblick britischer Gelehrsamkeit ist hier ein Standardwerk zur

deutschen wie zur europäischen Geschichte gelungen. In ihm werden Politik, Kultur, Religion, Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft gekonnt miteinander verwoben. Gerade im Umbruch unserer Gegenwart mit aktuellen Erfahrungen von Globalisierung und Entstaatlichung fasziniert das vor zwei Jahrhunderten untergegangene Heilige Römische Reich auf ganz unerwartete Weise.

In der internationalen Kritik wurde die englische Originalausgabe von 2012 begeistert aufgenommen. Die deutsche Übersetzung macht dieses Standardwerk jetzt einer breiteren Lesergruppen zugänglich.“

Prof. Dr. Bernd Schneidmüller, Universität Heidelberg

Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, prepublication publicity for the German translation, September 2014

[http://www.wbg-](http://www.wbg-wissenverbindet.de/WBGShop/php/Proxy.php?url=/wbg/products/search/show.51816.whaley.html#51816)

[wissenverbindet.de/WBGShop/php/Proxy.php?url=/wbg/products/search/show.51816.whaley.html#51816](http://www.wbg-wissenverbindet.de/WBGShop/php/Proxy.php?url=/wbg/products/search/show.51816.whaley.html#51816)

‘In the best Anglo-Saxon tradition Joachim Whaley has not just written a history of the Reich but a monumental total history of the period between the Middle Ages and the Napoleonic era in the context of the constitutional framework of the German territories: the Old Reich. It is a detailed, thematically broad and comprehensive survey of three hundred years of German history, which examines intellectual and religious history as much as it does the ‘mini ice age’, the witch craze or problems and innovations in the government and administration of the individual territories of the Reich. Whaley does not view the early modern era as a period of decline. On the contrary, he illuminates the extraordinary flexibility and durability of the structure of the Reich and its momentous history.

These two volumes offer an historical survey of roughly three centuries such as I have never before encountered. Joachim Whaley has produced a masterpiece. He has not overlooked anything at all. The two volumes are perfectly researched and the price [for the German edition] of 130€ is more than reasonable. Anyone interested in modern history and in particular the history of Germany must read this work.’

From: www.fachbuchkritik.de October 2014

(http://www.fachbuchkritik.de/html/das_heilige_romische_reich_deu.html)

‘...a recognised authority in the field... stupendous and enviable knowledge of the scholarly literature ... [offers] a counterpoint to the decline narratives [of the empire] that still dominate [German historiography]’

Gabriele Haug-Moritz, University of Graz
Zeitschrift für historische Forschung (2014)

‘... a pleasure to read A panorama of three hundred years of Germany history ... with typical Anglo-Saxon brio, Whaley shows how the efforts to create an intellectual and political framework in the pre-constitutional era had lasting effects to the present.’

Joachim Frank

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger 1.x.2014

‘There is no similar comprehensive and multi-perspectival account [of early modern German history] ... the publication of these volumes is a major event for German historians too... With its encyclopaedic aspiration, the mass of information he offers concerning political, legal, religious-intellectual, administrative, educational and economic developments, as well as the numerous perceptive judgements which correct previous research, Whaley has produced a standard work on the history of the early modern Old Reich, which stands on its own in the international scholarship on this subject. ...He has produced a thoroughly scholarly and intelligent work that combines a wealth of information with an ability to formulate original arguments and revise received scholarly opinions.’

Christoph Kampmann

Historische Zeitschrift vol. 299, no. 3 (December 2014), 696-707.

Den anregend und überzeugend verfassten Texten mit den anschließenden Anmerkungen folgt ein umfangreiches Verzeichnis überwiegend deutschsprachiger Literatur. Ein Register von Aachen bis Zwinger (Dresden) schließt die vielschichtige und gleichwohl die großen Linien nie außer Acht lassende Darstellung benutzerfreundlich auf. Eingefügte Karten veranschaulichen wichtige politische Gegebenheiten.

Insgesamt ist dem Verfasser damit eine auch durch Dichte und Tatsachen beeindruckende, das Heilige römische Reich sachgerecht anerkennende Leistung gelungen. Sie verbindet Politik, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft und Geistesgeschichte in vorzüglicher Weise. Möge sie trotz ihres gewichtigen Umfangs als „die wichtigste Veröffentlichung eines englischen Historikers zur vormodernen deutschen Geschichte seit Jahrzehnten“ auch viele deutsche Leser finden.

Gerhard Koebler

<http://www.koeblergerhard.de/ZIER-HP/ZIER-HP-04-2014/WhaleyJoachim-DasHeiligeRoemischeReich.htm>

‘[Whaley] gives an impressive account of the confusing variety of events ...it is a great achievement that he has introduced the English-speaking public to German history before the twentieth century in such a comprehensive manner and that he shows so decisively how the old national narrative has been revised. The sheer volume of the material that he employs also commands respect.’

Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 11.xii.14

‘The new standard work on the period in which people still spoke of “German liberties”.’

Jens Jessen
Die Zeit 11.xii.14

Historiografie ist immer auch eine Frage der Perspektive. Das gilt insbesondere für die deutsche Geschichte, mehr noch, wenn diese Geschichte von einem nicht-deutschen Autor nacherzählt wird. Bereits 2012 in England erschienen, gehört Joachim Whaleys Publikation "Das Heilige Römische Reich deutscher Nation und seine Territorien", die nun auch in deutscher Sprache vorliegt, zu den umfassendsten "ausländischen" Werken über die Historie der deutschen Länder zwischen 1500 und 1800.

Schon der Titel verrät, worum es Whaley geht - um eine Darstellung eines Deutschlands der Territorien und damit eines einzigartigen politischen, konfessionellen, wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Beziehungsnetzes, das wiederum durch den Dualismus von Kaiser und Reich gekennzeichnet war. Mithilfe behutsam gesetzter Marksteine, begonnen beim Augsburger Religionsfrieden über den 30-jährigen Krieg bis hin zur Zerstörung des Reichs durch Napoleon, führt der Verfasser den Leser durch 300 Jahre deutscher Verfassungs-, Religions- und Identitätsgeschichte. Und es ist sicher kein Untergangsepos, das Whaley hier darlegt, sondern eine Chronik der permanenten Krise, dank der sich aber erst ein politisches System dieser Art bilden und weiterentwickeln konnte.

Was die Quellen betrifft, so besticht der Apparat durch eine unerschöpfliche Fülle an Titeln, darunter zahlreicher deutscher Autoren. Whaley hat sie gründlich studiert, in seinen Diskurs integriert und damit auch die Frage der Perspektive bestens gelöst.

Christoph Rella
Wiener Zeitung 21 April 2015

http://www.wienerzeitung.at/themen_channel/literatur/buecher_aktuell/740925_Roemisches-Reich-deutsche-Nation-neue-Perspektive.html

Joachim Whaley's two volumes on the Holy Roman Empire constitute what is undoubtedly the best work on the topic currently available on the European market ... Whaley surpasses all [others]... He ... overcomes the prevalent tendency of writing the history of the Empire in separate political, constitutional, religious and economic terms ... he displays an astonishing eye for detail... No other piece of scholarship can match the attention to detail paid to such a wide variety of different aspects of the history of the Holy Roman Empire as can be found in Whaley's magnum opus. Whaley stands out, as his predecessors in writing the history of the Empire had primarily concentrated on political history alone."

Michael North

German History June 2015

<http://gh.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/06/18/gerhis.ghv063.full.pdf+html>

Further reviews in *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, *Traunspiegel*, *Badische Zeitung*, *Damals* and others.