Männlichkeit: Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch [Masculinity: an interdisciplinary handbook], edited by Stefan Horlacher, Bettina Jansen and Wieland Schwanebeck, Stuttgart, Metzler, 2015, 388 pp., €69.95 (hardback), ISBN 978-3-476-02393-3

Stefan Horlacher, Bettina Jansen, and Wieland Schwanebeck's handbook *Männlichkeit: Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch* accomplishes what it sets out to do: to approach masculinity studies in an interdisciplinary and comparative way which not only reflects upon past scholarship but broadens the scope of European masculinity studies. Through the incorporation of a variety of academic fields, this handbook is a welcome contribution that informs complex discussions around masculinities, gender roles, and gender categories within German-speaking academia. One of the greatest successes of *Männlichkeit* lies in making the international knowledges and methodologies of masculinity studies accessible to a German-speaking readership. What makes this book a valuable addition to European and international researchers interested in masculinity studies, is the editors' and their team's excellent work in assembling profound contributions by renowned international scholars and translating them into German, thus making it workable for German-speaking students, scholars, and a broader general public.

In their introduction, the editors embed contemporary debates about masculinity within the grand narrative of crisis to spell out how the image of the 'alpha male' is continuously repeated, for example, in popular culture TV-series, block buster action movies, or advertisements. In this way, stereotypical images such as the hard-boiled cop, the lone hero fighting against injustice, or the fit, successful womanizer continue to function as desirable tokens to be sold to consumers in capitalist societies. To counter these simplifying mechanisms, the editors call for more scholarship that engages in interdisciplinary discussions that better contextualize complex masculinity-related phenomena and productively broaden definitions of gender. Horlacher, Jansen, and Schwanebeck see European masculinity studies as a point of pluralization and particularization at which a comparative approach is not only desirable but necessary. Accordingly, they view the future labor of masculinity studies, which analyzes the confluence of different social categories, in utilizing the knowledges of different disciplines, fields, and art forms.

Even though the handbook's foundation is deeply informed by and indebted to the pioneering work of Anglo-American scholarship in the fields of men's studies and masculinity studies, it explicitly focuses on the European academic landscape. The European perspective, according to the editors, has been underrepresented and underdiscussed in other surveys and overviews of the field. With their collection, the editors make a major contribution to an internationalization of this growing field of scholarship. This internationalization enables researchers to reexamine the influence of past developments and current paradigms, while it simultaneously encourages them to expand upon established modi operandi and to diversify the content of the discussions. *Männlichkeit* makes a significant step to include important epistemic impulses, such as intersectionality or interdisciplinarity, which broadens the scope of masculinity studies – by internationalizing the academic output – and allows the results to be operable for a broader audience.

The book sets out to offer a 'tour d'horizon' (p. 6) of the field. To the editors, this is best realized by structuring the book according to different angles from which to approach masculinity studies: geographical developments, disciplinary differences, and interactions with art. The editors' ambition to convey a holistic understanding of the state, themes, and problems

of masculinity studies in Europe is best achieved by comparing, connecting, and contrasting various perspectives and by not giving preference to one angle alone. In order to do so, Horlacher, Jansen, and Schwanebeck brought together a group of distinguished scholars who highlight the diversity and breadth of masculinity studies; among them, Todd W. Reeser (literary studies), Linda R. Owen (archaeology), Constanze Spieß (linguistics), Wolfgang Mertens (psychoanalysis), Holger Brandes (psychology), Richard Collier (law), Michael Meuser (sociology), and Bettina Uppenkamp (art history).

Part I, of three, provides an overview of the national and geographical variations within masculinity studies. Discussing, for example, the historical, societal, and political specificities of what masculinity is constitutive of in Russia gives valuable insights into how imperialism, nostalgia, Stalinism, and economic instability shaped a notion of masculinity that is marked by perseverance, nationalism, and a strong father figure. These regional histories, in turn, help to understand current political and academic developments. The contributions by Walter Erhart (German masculinity studies), Anne-Marie Sohn (Roman masculinity studies), and Alexander Wöll (Russian and Eastern European masculinity studies) further illustrate the usefulness of this approach. The contributors acknowledge the immense influence of Anglo-American scholarship and its role as a touchstone within the field, yet they powerfully underline the importance of presenting different histories of international masculinity studies from points of view other than the Anglo-American one. In this way, the book not only provides in-depth examinations of masculinity studies in different geographical regions that help to contextualize masculinity studies' regional specificities as well as global commonalities, but also emancipates European masculinity studies as a distinct field.

Part II brings to the forefront the handbook's applicability to researching masculinities by demonstrating the surplus of what the editors refer to as 'Methodenpluralismus' [pluralism of methods] (p. 5). The different sections, all authored by leading figures of each discipline, on, for example, archaeology, ethnology, pedagogy, law, sociology, or religion introduce the different approaches and methodologies in a very approachable way. And each chapter within this section highlights how our understanding of masculinities can be enhanced by scrutinizing masculinities from different angles and utilizing different sets of methodological tools. At the same time, the authors are quick to identify blindspots within their disciplines and call for a more complex engagement with gender and sexuality in their area of expertise. A good example of this practice is found in Michael Groneberg's chapter on Western philosophy, in which he not only criticizes the discipline's refusal to deconstruct concepts of masculinity, but calls out philosophy's denial of masculinity as a workable category as a whole. In his compelling argument, he spells out that, ultimately, Western philosophy is 'male' philosophy, i.e. that every subject that is philosophically thought is male; and that only slowly feminist philosophers gain voice and impact within the field (pp. 155–166).

Each section gives an overview of the discipline's engagement with matters connected to masculinity studies and identifies main research areas. These examinations elucidate the ways in which each discipline approaches cornerstones of masculinity studies such as hegemonic masculinity, gender roles and norms, male/female binary definitions, social (de)constructions. New spaces of understanding open up when researchers interested in, say, hegemonic masculinity and its relation to pedagogy are given the opportunity to use this book to also encounter the historical dimensions of hegemonic masculinity as well as theoretical ground- work on the matter by sociologists such as Connell or Bourdieu. Additionally, the reader is able to comprehend recurring themes such as violence, homosexuality, health, identity, or habitus from different perspectives and, thus, to get an idea of their complexity. Part II evidences the multi-layered and interconnected ways in which the handbook invites its readers to think about key concepts within masculinity studies. In this way, one can grasp the scope

of, for example, gender roles by studying the social, historical, geographical, and artistic dimensions of male-attributed figures such as 'father,' 'warrior,' 'husband,' 'comrade,' or 'lover.' By avoiding any attempts to mesh disciplines or use them in a prescriptive way, the editors present them next to each other. Thus, this handbook contributes to a productive and independent use of interdisciplinarity in an age when everything is somehow interdisciplinary.

Part III is devoted to the arts and the representation of gender and masculinity across different media platforms ('Erkenntnismedien' [p. 5]), such as literature, film, or the fine arts. Whereas the different literatures presented have a long history and literary studies and a longer tradition of analyzing and criticizing normative gender roles and stereotypes, the book furthermore presents other areas of artistic research that still struggle to establish these critical modi operandi in their disciplines. This part, too, balances between fields in which masculinity studies have been established, like cultural and literary studies, and fields that still struggle for masculinity studies to become part of their canon. In her article about masculinity studies within musicology, Katrin Losleben traces in an exemplary discussion of Beethoven's reception how questions of masculinity have entered musicology and how they have altered the scope of the discipline since the 1980s. Furthermore, she illustrates how categories of masculinity and gender identities continue to profoundly shape internal debates, for example, in analyzing opera staging and gender performances. Most importantly, however, she draws attention to the gap that exists in using categories of gender as analytical tools between the study of popular music and, what she calls 'more traditional fields' (p. 355). Giving visibility to novel or underdiscussed perspectives in this way is as much needed to introduce critical masculinity studies to their disciplines and to the researcher as it is needed to broaden the scope of masculinity studies, in general, by phenomena researched in these disciplines.

Horlacher, Jansen, and Schwanebeck's handbook is an important and necessary contribution to European masculinity studies that takes many steps toward self-reflexively and critically engaging in complex discussions about masculinity. The book gives an overview of the state of masculinity studies in Europe and thus illustrates the importance and productivity of masculinity studies that is decidedly European. Additionally, through its focus on interdisciplinarity, it encourages its readers to think about masculinities more profoundly and enables them to understand their far-reaching impact on culture, history, society, and politics. Even though decidedly queer issues as well as matters of race that question concepts of masculinity and masculinity studies itself should be included more visibly, as the editors themselves acknowledge in their introduction, this book, nonetheless, gives crucial impetuses for thinking about masculinities interjectionally for German-speaking scholars and students alike. With its strong emphasis on an interdisciplinary and comparative approach to its title-giving field of study, *Männlichkeit* contributes to forward-thinking, future-oriented scholarship that is interested in the complexities of general trends as well as local specificities.

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