

Abstract

This paper examines the interpretations of Bismarck's diplomacy, 1871-1890, by eight leading historians who viewed the Bismarckian Era from different vantage points and in different time periods. Following an introduction on the period, one chapter examines the interpretations of three authors of standard diplomatic texts, Robert Balman Mowat, Sidney Bradshaw Fay, and Rene Albrecht-Carrie. A chapter each is devoted to Joseph V. Fuller, Luigi Albertini, William L. Langer, William N. Medicott, and Alan John Percival Taylor. A final chapter presents conclusions about the historians' views of Bismarck's diplomatic career.

The interpretations of the individual historians ranged from high praise for Bismarck's diplomacy and statesmanship on the one hand to condemnation for his duplicity, treachery, and spreading the seeds of war on the other hand. All the historians agreed, however, that Bismarck was the prominent figure in the international history of the late nineteenth century. Collectively their views show the significance of his policies in the crucial half-century before the First World War.

vi., 118 pages

Keywords: History, Bismarck Diplomacy, International History