

OBITUARY

Thomas Nipperdey (1927–1992)

Gerald D. Feldman

On 14 June 1992, Thomas Nipperdey, Professor of History at the University of Munich, died of cancer at the age of 64. He leaves behind his wife, Vigdis, and four children. One of the most outstanding and productive of postwar Germany's historians, Nipperdey received his Ph.D. from the University of Cologne in 1953 and completed his *Habilitation* at Göttingen in 1961. After teaching in Karlsruhe and at the Free University of Berlin, Nipperdey took up his position in Munich in 1971. He was a frequent visitor to the United States, where he was a fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Princeton three times and a fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto.

Nipperdey was a historian of wide-ranging interests. His early work on the organization of German parties in the Kaiserreich has remained a classic study, but he also made important contributions to Reformation history, cultural history, and historiography. His writings on Luther, anthropology, and history, historical monuments, the development and function of associations (*Vereinswesen*) in Germany, religion, anti-Semitism, the *Sonderweg*, and the problem of relevance demonstrated his vast learning, originality and imagination, and passionate commitment. His most formidable and important achievement, however, is his three-volume history of Germany in the nineteenth century, of which the first volume was completed in 1983 (*Deutsche Geschichte 1800–1866: Bürgerwelt und starker Staat*, reviewed by Jonathan Sperber in the Spring 1991 issue of *CEH* and soon to appear in English translation), and the second in 1990 (*Deutsche Geschichte 1866–1918. Bd. I: Arbeitswelt und Bürgergeist*). The third volume (*Deutsche Geschichte 1866–1918. Bd. II: Machstaat vor der Demokratie*) appeared in July 1992. Nipperdey completed his final volume in a heroic struggle against the course of his painful illness, and it stands as a monument to his spirit and sense of calling.

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