



Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany, and Italy in the Decade after World War I
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Charles S. Maier

The author of fourteen books, Charles Maier is one of the most prominent contemporary scholars of European history. *Recasting Bourgeois Europe*, his first book, pre-

sented an unparalleled analysis of the crucial decade in Europe after 1918. Based on extensive archival research in each of the three countries, the book examined how European societies progressed from a moment of social vulnerability to one of political and economic stabilization.

Recasting Bourgeois Europe accomplished two major historiographical goals simultaneously. First, Maier provided a comparative history of three different European societies for a period when common developments demanded an approach other than that of the usual national histories. Second, he rethought the political structure of the European interwar period. Although most accounts presented the 1920s as a time characterized by illusory attempts to return to a prewar political equilibrium, and doomed to succumb to the Depression and the dictatorships, Maier suggested instead that the stabilization of the 1920s, vulnerable as it was, foreshadowed the more enduring political stability achieved after World War II.

The immense and ambitious scope of this book, its ability to follow diverse but unified histories in detail, and its effort to make stabilization, and not just breakdown, a historical problem have made it a classic of European historiography.