

industry. The peasants and workers remained supportive of the Bolsheviks to stave off the worse threat of a White victory, but their initial enthusiasm had been replaced by expediency. When the Civil War came to an end, the natural concerns of peasants and workers reemerged, thus separating them from the increasingly authoritarian Bolshevik Party. Read contends that Lenin and his followers ignored the concerns of their constituency, stressing ideology over reality. Consequently, the chasm between the peasantry and the workers and the government widened. Even the advent of the New Economic Policy was not able to restore the earlier alliance.

The thesis is a very interesting one. Its development, however, presents several problems. As the author frequently acknowledges, research into peasant and worker attitudes is scanty. Much of his argument is based on perceptions rather than solid evidence. What may be merely coincidence is given the appearance of cause and effect. The paucity of primary source material cited suggests that the author has relied very heavily on a few studies done by others. There is relatively little reference to the archival material that has become available since the end of Communism.

The presentation is at times somewhat choppy. Sections on peasant and worker attitudes are interspersed within a general chronology of the period from 1917 to 1921. At times this chronology elaborates on facts that are well known. At other times, however, it assumes a sophisticated knowledge of the revolutionary era. Long introductory clauses are rarely set off by commas, making ideas hard to follow. The solid pages of text, interrupted only by an occasional map, make reading tedious.

There is much useful and interesting material to be found in this book. Faculty might easily and beneficially incorporate pieces of it into lectures on the revolution or on social history. However, I suspect that only the hardest graduate students will be sufficiently motivated to persevere to the end of the book.

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Michael Burleigh, ed. *Confronting the Nazi Past: New Debates on Modern German History*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. 198. Cloth, \$35.00. ISBN 0-312-16353-3.

Confronting the Nazi Past is a collection of eleven essays on the social history of Nazi Germany, covering such relatively neglected topics as forced labor, the persecution of "gypsies" and homosexuals, and high society during Nazi rule. Although the essays are uneven in quality, the book is nonetheless a valuable resource for both students and teachers.

Michael Burleigh, Distinguished Research Professor at the University of Wales, is the author of several acclaimed works on the Nazi period. In *Death and Deliverance* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), a study of the Nazi "euthanasia" program, Burleigh argued that the study of the Nazi period had entered a new era, characterized by the abandonment of various Marxist schools of thought and a turn away from "circular,

mechanical, and solipsistic" debates over the origins of the Final Solution and the modernizing effects of Nazi policies. Burleigh's own research has focused on professional elites--academics, physicians, psychiatrists--and their roles in the Nazi state, especially in the area of racial policy. He has stressed the continuity of the ideas and values of these groups, before, during, and after the Nazi period. In *Confronting the Nazi Past*, Burleigh has assembled a collection of essays intended to reflect this new research agenda.

Several of the essays present readable, thought-provoking views of neglected aspects of life in the Third Reich. For example, Jeremy Noakes's essay on high society provides a fascinating glimpse of a little-known area of life in the Nazi era. Hans-Georg Stunke's brief article on the persecution of homosexuals and Wolfgang Wippermann's excellent piece on the fate of two "gypsies"--one under Nazi rule and one living in postwar West Germany--both will provoke questions and discussion among students. Omer Bartov's article on the Eastern Front raises several controversial issues on the behavior of German soldiers, and should also inspire lively discussions.

Essays by Jill Stephenson--on women--and Avraham Barkai--on the persecution of Jews--are useful overviews, but of topics well covered in other textbooks and anthologies.

Other essays in *Confronting the Nazi Past* are more specialized or more narrowly focused. Paul Weindling's "Understanding Nazi Racism" and Burleigh's own essay on the euthanasia program duplicate each other to a degree, and both will present some problems for undergraduate students because of both the sophistication of their arguments and their lack of sufficient background material. Gotz Aly's "The Planning Intelligentsia and the 'Final Solution'" again repeats some of the themes in the Weindling and Burleigh essays and is written awkwardly. Ulrich Herbert's essay on the German working class and the related piece by Klaus-Jorg Siegfried on forced labor in the Volkswagen factory raise important questions and go some way towards answering them, but neither is likely to inspire as much student interest as several of the other articles.

Confronting the Nazi Past includes a selection of photographs, and each essay has a short reading list and boxes containing brief primary source excerpts, adding to the book's value as a supplementary text.

One caveat concerns the subtitle, "New Debates on Modern German History." Since so many of the essays share similar approaches, there are no real debates here. Teachers using this book will want to introduce students to alternative viewpoints, such as Christopher Browning's critique of the ideas of Gotz Aly (in Browning's *The Path to Genocide*, Cambridge University Press, 1992) and Claudia Koonz's views on women (in her *Mothers in the Fatherland*, St. Martin's Press, 1987).

When *Confronting the Nazi Past* becomes available in a paperback edition it should make an excellent supplementary text in courses on the Nazi period. Anyone interested in the direction of current research on Nazi Germany will also want to have a copy.