

and fear. Room should have been made to explore these areas, as they contributed to his mental state.

I also have issues with the book's organization and the absence of much of Luther's actual life. But there is little doubt that Luther saw the world as refracted through the prism of his faith. He lived during a revolutionary time, a time of transition from the medieval to the modern world. The strength of this brief life is its focus on Luther's views on aspects of Christianity; its weakness is the narrowness of his approach. My advice: Don't discard your weathered copy of Bainton's classic biography.

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Robert Mallett. *Mussolini and the Origins of the Second World War*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003. Pp. ix; 266. Cloth, \$75.00; ISBN 0-333-74814-X. Paper, \$24.95; ISBN 0-333-74815-8.

Taking advantage of newly-released archival materials Robert Mallet has entered the debate on the role played by Fascist Italy in the background to the Second World War. The results confirm *Il Duce's* aggressive policies and challenge recent Italian scholarship, particularly that of Renzo De Felice, that denies Mussolini's expansionist goals. Resenting Italy's secondary imperial status, Mussolini's fascist *imperium* was ideologically distinct from previous Italian leaders, recalling the glories of the Roman empire. Mallett insists that such a policy meant war against Britain and France to secure key strategic points in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Such a policy was not possible without substantial rearmament and compatible allies. Prior to 1935, such an ally was not to be found.

Admired by many for crushing Bolshevism and finally securing a concordat with the Roman Church, Mussolini even prepared to fight Hitler over the question of Austrian independence. Having promised his people international greatness, however, Mussolini abandoned Austria in favor of imperial conquest in Africa. Italy's assault on Ethiopia set in motion a series of events that contributed greatly to the outbreak of the Second World War. The League of Nations began its slow collapse, and Italy moved closer ideologically to Nazi Germany. The Rome-Berlin Axis was difficult and unequal, and Hitler ordered the assault on Poland even before signing the Pact of Steel, but Mussolini was a victim of his own doctrine. Italian fascism viewed war as the means to ennoble great nations. Given Italy's military and economic weakness, such a policy required an ally. The only ally that supported such a world view was Nazi Germany. Despite the many problems, Mussolini remained faithful to this relationship, as he believed that such a partnership was the only means to secure his greater fascist empire.

Mallett's assessment of Italy's role in the events leading to the Second World War is thorough and compelling. He does not attempt to provide an economic or cultural connection. This is a purely political argument, and one that is presented with strength and style. Mallett expands the argument made in his previous study, *The Italian Navy and Fascist Expansionism, 1935-1940* (1998), insisting that the first concern of Italian foreign policy was to end its "geopolitical imprisonment" in the Mediterranean. The Allied blockade, imposed in September 1939, only strengthened Mussolini's determination to support Germany. Taking advantage of historical material available in Italy and abroad concerning Mussolini's actions between 1933 and 1940, Mallett wades through the perceived duplicity and public confusion that characterized Italian foreign policy at the time and provides new insight into Mussolini's objectives.

Mussolini and the Origins of the Second World War would be an excellent choice for supplemental reading in any upper-division university course on modern Italy or the Second World War. An even more compelling choice would be to use Mallett's book in those courses that seek to teach students how to prepare a well-researched, well-argued, well-written historical monograph. Even Mallett's pro-Italian bias should provide fuel for class discussion.

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Helmut Walser Smith, ed. *The Holocaust and Other Genocides: History, Representation, Ethics*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002. Pp. xxii; 262. Paper, \$27.95; ISBN 0-8265-1403-0.

There is no shortage of Holocaust-related literature on the academic textbook market, but when it comes to works that offer a comparative approach to genocide, instructors find little of value. *The Holocaust and Other Genocides* is a notable exception. Helmut Walser Smith's concise volume is a treasure. Filled with primary source material related to the Holocaust, Armenian genocide, events in Bosnia and Kosovo, and Rwanda, the book's format provides students with the tools they need to think deeply about some of the twentieth century's worst crimes.

The first half of the book is dedicated to the Holocaust. Section I, entitled "History of the Holocaust," opens with images of Jews in the medieval period and an anti-Semitic statement from Martin Luther. Subsequent documents include photographs from 1930s Germany; excerpts from the Nuremberg Laws; a 1943 German railway schedule that shows how many passengers were transported and to where; and an excerpt from a Warsaw Ghetto diary.

Section II, entitled "Representations of the Holocaust in the Arts," addresses the use of language and prompts the reader to consider how it can be manipulated. Also discussed in this section is the literature of the Holocaust. Elie Wiesel's *Night* and Art