

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

Spiegelman's *Maus* are excerpted and analyzed. Compelling poetry, such as "Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway Car," is also reproduced here. In a chapter dedicated to monuments and memorials, the reader is presented with photographs of the Warsaw Ghetto monument and the Treblinka memorial and is challenged to consider whether death camps should be left to decay or be restored and maintained as tourist sites. Section II also explores Holocaust photography and film.

The book's third section addresses "Other Genocides," each introduced by an informative essay that places events in the Ottoman Empire, Bosnia and Kosovo, and Rwanda in their historical and cultural context. As with the Holocaust sections, these chapters include compelling documents.

The book's final chapter, entitled "Ethical Questioning," is particularly valuable. Here Smith offers insightful commentary in essays such as "Is Prejudice a Prelude to Annihilation?" "What is a Choiceless Choice and the Extent of Moral Blame?" "What are the Limits of Forgiveness and Reconciliation?" "How Have Christians Responded to the Holocaust?" and "What is the Relationship Between Ethics and Remembrance?" These engaging commentaries raise more questions than they answer, and no doubt that is Smith's goal.

Each of the book's chapters opens with a concise, accessible essay that lays the foundation for the documents that follow. Two of the volume's most useful features are the thought-provoking questions linked to each of the documents and cross-references that tie each document to others in the book. The volume also includes timelines and glossaries specific to each instance of genocide. A teacher's guide written by Paul Fleming is available from the Tennessee Holocaust Commission and provides additional helpful material.

*The Holocaust and Other Genocides* is most appropriate for undergraduate students, although it could be used with advanced high school students. Helmut Walser Smith has assembled an outstanding array of documents and essays that treat genocide with the gravity it deserves and that challenge the reader to consider this subject from a variety of different perspectives.

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**Christopher Read, ed. *The Stalin Years: A Reader*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Pp. xviii, 241. Paper, \$22.95; ISBN 0-333-96343-1.**

Christopher Read contributes a very good study of the years Joseph Stalin dominated the Soviet Union. In a short, yet exceptionally written first chapter, Read deals with the "main currents of interpretation of Stalin and the Stalin years." Read summarizes his strategy and the focus of his book in his "Preface," emphasizing what he is going to do and presents his two-fold aim—he leads "a self-contained journey