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Paul Sanders. *The British Channel Islands under German Occupation, 1940-45.* Jersey Heritage Trust. Jersey: Societe Jersiaise, 2005. xxviii + 284 pp. $41.25 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-9538858-3-1.

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The Peculiarities of Being under Both the Crown and the Swastika

While mainland Britain managed to stave off a German invasion in 1940, the Crown Protectorate Channel Islands (Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, and Sark) were not so fortunate. Of all the lands conquered by Nazi Germany, the Channel Islands were unique in a number of regards, not the least of which was that their titular government remained at war with Germany. Paul Sanders emphasizes repeatedly the uniqueness of the situation in the Channel Islands, frequently making the argument that the islands do not fit in neatly with the rest of occupied Europe. In the introduction, for example, he states that the occupation of the Channel Islands was "so unique, in fact, that it is extremely hard to put into words" (p. xv). In addition to stressing the distinctiveness of their situation, Sanders aims to reassess the resistance and collaboration that occurred in the Channel Islands. "My thesis is that the current 'over-focus' on collaboration in the islands is not merely a reaction to the comfortable myths of the past, but that it bears a relation with the current political context" (p. xvii).

The historiography of the Channel Islands during the Second World War has been marked by the question of collaboration. The official history, *The German Occupation of the Channel Islands* by Charles Cruickshank (1975), avoids the question altogether, which is typical of both the published histories of the time as well as private journals. Instead, historians have focused on the hardships islanders faced and how they managed to survive the occupation. In 1992, however, (what was then) the Public Records Office released a number of documents that had been sealed, and were originally meant to remain so until 2045. In the wake of these documents, questions about collaboration in the Channel Islands were raised, first by the press (both tabloid and broadsheet) and later by historians. Perhaps the best known and most controversial of these new histories was Madeleine Bunting's *The Model Occupation*(1995), which accused islanders of acquiescing to the point of collaboration with their occupiers. Sanders's work falls between these two extremes; he certainly addresses the issue of collaboration, but he also makes it abundantly clear that he believes Bunting has "over-shot the mark" (p. 259).

The heart of this book is in the second and third chapters, respectively titled "Collaboration? What Collaboration? " and "Resistance, Repression and Persecution." The extent to which the local populations collaborated with or resisted their invaders are central to the historiography of not just the Channel Islands, but, indeed, all of occupied Europe. These are emotionally charged subjects, and Sanders takes a tactful, nuanced approach when dealing with these issues. He argues that simply asking whether or not the islanders collaborated with their German occupiers is not useful: "Rather helpful in this respect is the typology of collaborations established by Werner Rings and Peter Davies which suggests a menu of the following: heart-and-soul collaboration, shield philosophy, conditional collaboration, tactical collaboration, submission on the grounds of superior force and wait-and-see collaboration" (p. 67). Sanders concludes that "collaboration in the Channel Islands came in a rather pure form," because the islanders did not engage in the heart-and-soul type, but rather submitted to the overwhelming force of the Germans (p. 74). He contends that the historians and journalists who have attacked the islanders for collaborating with their Nazi occupiers have been overly critical because they do not fully understand

the peculiarities of the Channel Islands.

This reviewer does not want to give the impression that the entire book is dedicated to questions of collaboration and resistance. The book is arranged topically, with chapters devoted to such issues as economics, the culture of survival, the occupying Germans, and the use of the islanders as a source of slave labor. *The British Channel Islands under German Occupation* is an excellent study that draws on a vast array of archival sources to examine a number of topics beyond collaboration and resistance. For instance, Sanders provides fascinating insights on the peculiarities of the economy and black market during the occupation. He deftly uses the stories of a myriad of islanders to illustrate his numerous points, and by doing so, he brings a great deal of humanity to his topic.

Although this is an excellent, meticulously researched book, this reviewer was slightly frustrated by the brevity of the introduction, which is just over three pages long. There is no discussion of the author's methodology or the historiography of the topic, either narrowly defined as the study of the Channel Islands or more broadly defined within the context of occupied Europe. This is disappointing for two reasons. The first is that Sanders has staked out a novel place in the historiography of the occupied Channel Islands, and it would be useful had he clearly articulated this. Second, this book (indeed the whole subject) is at the nexus of two subjects (the British home front and occupied Europe), and a discussion of the intersection of these two historiographies could have been fascinating. Beyond this, a lengthier introduction would have made the book more accessible. Just as Sanders seems to assume that his readers are acquainted with the historiography of the topic, he seems to believe that they will be familiar with the histories of the Channel Islands, studies that are fraught with peculiarities and idiosyncrasies even before one considers the complicating factor of occupation. This is slightly bewildering, as he spends much time arguing that the unique nature of the islands is essential to understanding the occupation. These minor criticisms aside, *The British Channel Islands under German Occupation* is a fascinating book that is essential reading for historians of the Channel Islands, and is well worth the attention of historians whose work is on either the British home front or occupied Europe.

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