H-Net Reviews
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Tim Kirk. *The Longman Companion to Nazi Germany (Longman Companions to History).* London: Longman, 1995. $78.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-582-06376-1; $41.60 (paper), ISBN 978-0-582-06375-4.

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This work collects basic information about Nazism and the Third Reich and presents it in a single useful source volume. As the title suggests, this is not a text that one reads, but a companion volume providing a wealth of invaluable background material that supplements other readings. Chronologies, brief descriptions of key concepts, statistical data, and short biographical identifications for the entire period from 1918 to 1945 are clearly and logically presented. This volume should be of particular interest to libraries and those who teach courses on Nazi Germany.

The organization of this reference guide is extremely straightforward and the reader can find a particular item with little effort. The sections are generally short enough that one can easily browse through them. The section headings, which cover all aspects of Nazi Germany, are as follows:

Section I - Politics and the State: the Weimar Republic and the Rise of Nazism. Section II - Politics, State and Party: the Third Reich. Section III - Economy, Society and Culture, 1918-1945. Section IV - Diplomacy, Rearmament and War, 1918-1945. Section V - Anti-semitism, Racial Politics and the Holocaust, 1933-1945. Section VI - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations. Section VII - Biographies. Section VIII - Bibliography. Section IX - Sources.

What makes this book so useful is the sheer amount of helpful data that it contains. The curious reader who wants to know the exact composition of the Weimar cabinets, the Weimar election results, dates for the establishment of the various concentration camps, backgrounds of Nazi party leaders, or the SS ranking system can find the information here. The section "Economy, Society and Culture, 1918-1945" contains a host of statistics on the general population, wages, prices, consumption, and even on the number of radio listeners. This section also includes information on women such as their wages in comparison to those of men, their employment over time by economic sector, and their numbers in higher education. The section "Diplomacy, Rearmament and War, 1918-1945" includes treaty provisions, rearmament statistics, information on the expansion of Greater Germany, and a lengthy chronology of diplomatic events. Chronologies that focus on specific issues such as Weimar politics, Third Reich politics, culture, and the Holocaust are sprinkled throughout the book. This makes the information considerably easier to locate and to digest. Rather than having to look through a single lengthy chronology for the date of the partition of Silesia between Germany and Poland, for example, one can go directly to the relevant section on diplomacy and search through a more directed chronology that also has the advantage of placing the event in its proper diplomatic context. Another section is devoted to a brief recapitulation of important Holocaust statistics, including the Jewish population in Germany, its economic status, and estimates of the total number of European Jews killed. Also useful for reference purposes are a glossary and a surprisingly comprehensive biographical section.

Any problems with the book stem from its brevity and the inevitably difficult choices that the author had to make. For example, there is no information on the wartime destruction of German territory, which is key for an understanding of the German homefront. Students and readers today are also especially interested in the casualties at Dresden and in the general question of the efficiency of the Allied bombing campaign. The cultural chronology identifies anti-Nazi highlights particularly well, but more could have been added on the cultural policies of the Third Reich, especially given the National Socialist obsession with manipulating, coordinating, and linking mass and high culture. This volume might have included, for example, data on Nazi medical and anthropological organizations and *Volksdeutsche* institutions, the number of movies churned out under the auspices of the *Reichskulturkammer*, or the number of Germans who took advantage of *Kraft durch Freude* vacations.

Overall, as a brief and affordable reference guide to the Nazi period, this book is unparalleled. Perhaps its greatest virtue is the ease with which one can pluck out information. Anyone who teaches a course that spends a significant amount of time on Nazism should consider obtaining this book for the data that it provides at one's fingertips. Those who teach upper division courses specifically on Nazi Germany may want to make this reference work available to their students, either through their library or as recommended reading.

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