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C.F. Rueter, D.W. de Mildt. *Die westdeutschen Strafverfahren wegen nationalsozialistischer TÖ¶tungsverbrechen 1945-1997. Eine systematische Verfahrensbeschreibung mit Karten und Registern.* Amsterdam and Maarssen: APA Holland University Press, 1998. xv + 323 pp. ISBN 978-90-6042-056-0.

Reviewed by Frank Buscher (Christian Brothers University)

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This book is part of the series *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, which has been publishing the verdicts West and East German courts have handed down since 1945 in trials involving Nazi homicides. The purpose of this volume is twofold. It is primarily intended as a *Findhilfsmittel* for researchers who wish to examine the over nine hundred West German proceedings during the period 1945-1997. It enables users to research the many different aspects of Nazi crimes and their punishment in West German courts, and it guides them to the complete judgments published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Vols. I-XXII covering the years 1945 to 1965 have been published and are also available on CD-ROM; Vols. XXIII-L for the years 1966 to 1999 are to be published during the next seven years). Its second purpose is to provide information about the intensity and direction of the five-decade-old West German effort to punish Nazi homicides.

The book begins with a brief but very valuable introduction on the history of such trials and the changing priorities of the West German judiciary. The editors caution that their documentation is by no means complete. It is limited to cases of homicide; these include not only murder and manslaughter but also bodily injury, unlawful detention, crimes against humanity, and perversion of justice, as long as these latter offenses resulted in the death(s) of the victim(s). Second, it only deals with *NS-Toetungsverbrechen* committed during the Second World War. Third, in some cases, the trial records have been completely destroyed. The judgments of the courts have remained unkown. Thus, a small number of cases could not be included in this documentation.

The editors used a variety of sources for this guide. For the period before 1959, they relied for the most part on detailed reports by the West German *Laender* and an index maintained by the Federal Justice Ministry. They also consulted the appropriate German periodicals and the decisions of the Supreme Court for the British Zone. For the period since 1959, data provided by the Central Office for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes (*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen*) in Ludwigsburg have been the most important source. These have been complemented by reports in the West German press. All in all, the editors claim, this documentation is more complete than those produced by West German authorities.

The first part of this guide consists of descriptions of the trials (*Verfahrensbeschreibungen*). These are listed by year and in chronological order. The descriptions provide vital information such as the trial court, file number, date of the judgment, date and exact location of the crime, country where the crime was committed, the victims, nationality of the victims, participating agencies, the nature of the crime (there are eleven catagories), the defendant(s) and verdicts. The remaining parts of the book permit the user to search by using specific criteria. For example, one can conduct searches for a certain defendant, location, Nazi agency, group of victims, facts of the case etc. Researchers will find that the West German *Datenschutz* prevents the editors from listing the full names of the majority of the defendants. For example, the notorious *Gebietskommissar* for Slonim is listed only as "Err., Gerhard," although his full name has been published in other books. This, however, is the only shortcoming. All in all, this is a very useful book for anyone with an interest in Nazi Germany, Nazi crimes, the Holocaust and West German war crimes trials. It is an excellent guide through the maze of hundreds of West German court verdicts.

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