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Kristie Macrakis. *Surviving the Swastika: Scientific Research in Nazi Germany.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. xii + 280 pp. + 16 pp. of plates. $60.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-19-507010-1.

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Recent studies on National Socialism's control of German public life between 1933 and 1945 have considered, among other topics, how Germany's most esteemed professions dealt with the dictatorship. While the legal, engineering, and medical professions have been well examined, scientific associations have remained for the most part unexplored. Professor Macrakis's revised dissertation on the *Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft* (KWG) during the Nazi era thus constitutes a welcome addition to the already significant body of English literature on professionals in Nazi Germany. Moving beyond a simple focus on the key figures of the KWG, the eight-chapter monograph considers the wider implications of the strained relationship between the sciences and the state, particularly as it affected the specific research fields represented in the KWG. Indeed, as the author makes clear in her introduction, the KWG was not a "Nazi" society as such; rather, it functioned as an umbrella organization devoted to representing major branches of science.

In Part One of the study (the first two chapters), Macrakis introduces the KWG, which was founded in 1912 with four initial institutes (chemistry, physical chemistry, biology and experimental therapy), before tracing its course through World War I and the Weimar Republic. As Macrakis demonstrates clearly, a power struggle between the KWG and the state was not unique to the Nazi era. Rather, the KWG and the government had long battled for control over the KWG's funding and autonomy. During the Weimar Republic, for example, the KWG rejected close identification with Prussia, despite the efforts of the Prussian Ministry of Education to rein it in. Yet even as it distanced itself from the Weimar state, the KWG thrived, thanks in no small part to the support of industrialists who understood the potential benefits to be derived from politically independent research.

The rest of the book (Part Two) analyzes closely the KWG's relationship to the National Socialist regime. Based on Macrakis's careful research, one can safely conclude that the competing designs of Nazi leaders allowed the KWG a surprising amount of freedom in some fields of research as well as in its day-to-day operations. In examining the question of the KWG's "opposition" to Nazism, Macrakis carefully differentiates passive resistance from truly active political resistance (as in the case of the memorial service for Jewish chemist Fritz Haber, who died in exile in 1934). Such judicious clarification is marred only occasionally by less careful language. For example, the statement that Haber "chose" to emigrate (p. 68), although not inaccurate, suggests that his other options were equally viable. The author slightly overstates a few generalizations as well. For example, she cites the ballistic V-2 rockets (p. 96) as an example of technology favored early on while ignoring the fact that the V-2 suffered for several years from the very divisions and conflicts within the Party that allowed the KWG to survive.

The only substantial critique I would make concerns the somewhat "specialist" tone which limits the accessibility of this study. This goes beyond the fact that some basic words remained untranslated. While the author masterfully summarizes Nazi policy toward science and in the process dispels certain myths (such as that of physicists Starck and Lenard both wanting the presidency of the KWG), she does not always make clear why certain scientific branches were left untouched by the Nazis. In Chapter Six, for example, which discusses the survival of basic biological research, Macrakis explains clearly the compromises the biology institute members made. Why the Nazis chose to leave virus research "untainted by racist or ideological conception" (p. 118), however, is less clear. The relevance of independent funding in this matter is well-documented, but its background is confusing. Did certain Nazi leaders see in virology a potential weapon, and therefore tolerate it, or did ideologues believe that mutations of the drosophila flies bore

relevance to eugenics?

One is nevertheless left at the end of Professor Macrakis's study with a clearer sense of the complexities that German scientists faced under the Nazi regime. The question of morality, inherent in all examinations of the Nazi period, remains here necessarily ambiguous. The fact that many scientists did not join the party yet worked on projects in Germany raises elementary questions of moral responsibility, regardless of the work in which they were involved. Somewhat relatedly, this study also poses interesting theoretical questions about a broader "totalitarian" relationship between the sciences and the state. How does "Lysenkoism" under Stalin compare with the Nazi emphasis on "German" physics? Of course, these questions are not part of Macrakis's thesis (although she does touch on such issues briefly in her discussion of atomic scientists), but the reader should keep them in mind as he or she confronts this valuable study.

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