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Überleben im Dritten Reich: Juden im Untergrund und ihre Helfer (review)

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straightforward political interpretation based on processes of state formation after the Treaty of Westphalia. Eli Bar-Chen offers a focused institutional account of the missionary activities of the Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden (pp. 111–21). The book ends with a helpful “Epilogue” by Diane Pinto on “French and German Jewries in the New Europe: Convergent Itineraries?” (pp. 221–36).

But though the individual contents vary in quality, the volume’s value is considerably more than the sum of its parts, successfully entering the usefulness of this Franco-German comparison onto the historiographical agenda. The “Comments” accompanying each of the contributions consistently enhance the project in this regard, often exceeding the essays themselves in acuteness and originality. This is notably the case for Jakob Vogel (on Cohen), Ulrich Wywra (on Kaufmann), Sandrine Kott (on Cresti), Aron Rodrigue (on Bar-Chen), Peter Pulzer (on Birnbaum), and Nancy Green (on Aschheim). Indeed, with the exception of Cohen’s fine discussion, it is mainly the Commentators who apply the insights of social history, let alone those of the “new cultural history” or considerations of gender. Despite its strengths, the volume is situated away from the source of so much of the innovative recent work on nationality, belonging, citizenship, and identity, which derives from influences in literature, anthropology, and cultural studies. Finally, nine of the twenty-three contributors are women, which in itself seems an interesting sign of the times.

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Überleben im Dritten Reich: Juden im Untergrund und ihre Helfer, by Wolfgang Benz. Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 2003. 344 pp. €24.90.

In his editorial prologue to this important and interesting book, Wolfgang Benz adds necessary warnings that should accompany any thoughtful discussion of those instances when non-Jews helped Jews to survive in the Third Reich. Benz emphasizes that efforts to organize and finance the survival of Jews hiding in Nazi Germany was first and foremost an achievement of the Jews themselves, an example of Jewish resistance to National Socialism. Benz’s collection of essays also demonstrates that help for the Jews took many forms and differed enormously from case to case, depending upon the particular time period or the particular country in which aid was given. This collection of accounts about that period suggests that it is impossible to make generalizations about those people who helped Jews and that it is, above all, the history

of an eclectic group of relatively unknown individuals. According to Wolfgang Benz, approximately 10,000 Jews lived illegally in the Third Reich, half of them in Berlin. Of those Jews who were in hiding, only slightly more than 1,400 lived to see the end of National Socialism. While there were thousands of cases of solidarity with the Jews, very few Jews were successfully able to resist and to survive in the Third Reich.

Public interest in non-Jewish helpers who gave aid to the Jews has followed a traceable, historical course. The book *Die unbesungenen Helden*, published in 1957, became a metaphor for this group of individuals and marks the beginning of public recognition for some of them. The establishment of a financial foundation by Berlin Jews and the recognition of some of the more prominent helpers in the 60s and 70s often made heroes of these individuals rather than giving a dispassionate account of them and their life stories. Investigations such as the sociological *The Altruistic Personality* as well as the statistical collection and analysis of data by Benz's own group, the "Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung" at the Technischen Universität Berlin, mark the beginnings of a more differentiated and nuanced approach, one that buttresses anecdotal accounts with statistical data.

Through this fascinating collection of life stories, Benz makes it clear that to see only victims and perpetrators during this time would be as great a mistake as it would be to use the evidence of aid for Jews to minimize the genocide of millions during National Socialism. Benz and the other contributors to this collection add important information to the multi-faceted study of those who helped Jews and the multi-causal reasons behind their actions. Wolfgang Benz insists that these individual cases demonstrate that help for the Jews was possible and that there were alternatives to indifference to the suffering of others. Benz also states that while the martyrs of July 20, 1944 and the stories of communist resistance became symbols with which to legitimize the national identities of West and East Germany, these individuals were often overlooked, first, because they did not make a big deal out of themselves and, second, because their actions undermined the claim that in the face of Nazi terror, nothing could be done. Anyone interested in the concrete exercise of civil courage and the history of Jews in Europe during the period of National Socialism will want to add this valuable and immensely readable volume to their libraries.

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