

To counter this theory, he cites works dealing with fascist claims to racial superiority, its denigration of Slavs and Africans, as well as its outright anti-Semitism. He concludes that Mussolini and his henchmen were fully aware of the consequences of their anti-Semitic legislation and had laid the basis for a "Final Solution" in Italy (pp. 123–24). In his chapter on popular opposition and resistance, the author dismisses scholarly claims that there was a German popular resistance movement, and observes that the idea of a *Volk der Widerständler* would have been described more accurately as a *Widerstand ohne Volk* (p. 134).

In his final chapter the author restates at some length his reason for adopting a comparative approach to problems of dictatorship and concludes that aspirations to dictatorship will always be with us in one form or another. Because of this ever-present danger, he contends that the study of the past and the present mutations of democracy and dictatorship remains a task of superior political and historical importance (pp. 147–51).

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Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich: Sprache — Rasse — Religion. By Uwe Puschner. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft. 2001. Pp. 464. EUR 65.00. ISBN 3-534-15052-X.

Although many scholars working on the intellectual origins of National Socialism have shown a keen interest in *völkische* ideology, and several have gone to pains to trace its origins back to Imperial Germany, there has been little effort to study the array of *völkisch* movements that took shape during the Kaiserreich. These movements turned around a variety of agendas: religious rebirth, economic growth, racial and linguistic purity, anti-Semitism, anti-Slavism, eugenics, internal colonialism, and even diet and health. Many and varied, these movements lacked both an overarching organization and consistent ideology, but they persisted in sundry forms into the Weimar Republic and, according to Uwe Puschner, they prepared much of the ground for radical right-wing nationalism and National Socialism.

Well-documented, nicely illustrated, and exhaustively researched, Puschner offers his readers an overwhelming amount of detail about the seemingly countless associations in the Kaiserreich that championed an idea of the German *Volk*. He contends that, taken together, these associations constituted an important *völkische Bewegung*, one that has been overlooked by scholars such as George Mosse, who privileged the role of "thinkers" while trying to understand the ways in which older notions of the German *Volk* helped to shape National

Socialism. Puschner does a fine job in bringing these many associations to life, illustrating their heterogeneity, underscoring the competing and often contradictory motivations that shaped them, and introducing some of their more colorful members to his readers. In some ways, his book offers a nice addition to the arguments Mosse and others offered long ago, but the organization and presentation of the material leaves much to be desired.

Puschner's book is divided into chapters devoted to language, race, and religion, followed by a shorter final chapter focused on unsuccessful efforts to create either an overarching organizational structure or a political party that would represent the varied interests of the many individuals and associations in his book. Roger Chickering made the connection between associations promoting the German language and nationalist movements quite clear many years ago, and Puschner seeks to build on this insight by illustrating the range of associations that were engaged in promoting linguistic purity. Within these associations, the rhetoric of race was not initially linked to biology and the adjective *völkisch* was not tied to anti-Semitism; but these connections grew as efforts to preserve the language became wrapped in the rhetoric of survival and championed by more radical nationalists. In this sense, associations devoted to promoting the purity of the German language provided some of the key impulses to a more general *völkisch* worldview, and they continue to provide historians with a means for tracing out the ways in which that worldview shifted and changed as the century drew to a close.

Puschner offers similar insights into the associations devoted to religion and race. Efforts to define a German religion ranged widely from groups interested in embracing particular forms of Christianity to various kinds of paganism. But they shared a desire to distance Germans from Rome and, increasingly, a tendency to define Germans, Germanness, and German religion with an apocalyptic, antiegalitarian, and highly racialized language. Indeed, despite the tripartite structure of the volume, race and racists receive the majority of the author's attention. The section on race is by far the longest, including discussions of anti-Semitism, Gobineau associations, the yellow threat, the *Schutzvereine*, eugenics movements, *Heimat* movements, proposals to build garden cities, body cults, arguments about the need for *Lebensraum*, and much more. But here, as in the other sections, Puschner's exposition often overwhelms his analysis as his lists of names and associations become unwieldy.

Unfortunately, his central chapter headings — language, race, and religion — function more as rubrics than guiding concepts. Under each we find a cacophony of individuals, associations, magazines, and journals promoting notions of a German *Volk*, but their importance seems to lie in their mere existence, and documenting that existence remains his primary contribution. Without a clear analytical framework, however, the many details about the *völkische Bewegung(en)* that emerge in his story fail to do more than confirm much of what we already

know about the contentious roles language, race, and religion played in nationalist associations around the turn of the century. And, despite introducing us to a range of relatively unknown actors in the Kaiserreich, it does little to help us better understand the character of Imperial Germany which, this reviewer suspects, was articulated more through the inconsistencies in these movements, their lack of an overarching ideology and organization, and their many failures, than through their consistencies and their links to similar movements decades later. Scholars seeking information about *völkische* associations or the people who created them will find much in this volume of interest. Those seeking insights into either the links between National Socialism and the Wilhelminian era or the character of Imperial Germany, however, will find little that is new.

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Eros and Inwardness in Vienna: Weininger, Musil, Doderer. By David Luft. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2003. Pp. xiv + 257. \$35.00. ISBN 0-226-49647-3.

Reviewing David Luft's fine *Robert Musil and the Crisis of European Culture* when it appeared in 1980, I remarked that it was a pity that Luft had not explored the connections between Musil's thought and Otto Weininger's bizarre, but highly influential, views about female sexuality and the demand for sexual continence on the part of men. With this new book, David Luft endeavors to fill that gap adding Heimito von Doderer in the framework of a discussion of the conflict between two ideologies, scientific materialism and philosophical irrationalism, to form a picture of how eroticism emerged as a central theme in Viennese thought from the fin de siècle to the early days of the Second Republic. Luft thus continues one important strain in the work of Carl Schorske, whose analysis of the previous generation is presupposed. His provocative thesis about Viennese eroticism is: "Weininger recoiled from the dominance of the natural sciences in the intellectual world of liberal Vienna, Musil embraced it, and Doderer tried to find a way beyond it" (p. 28). Not unsurprisingly, then, Musil turns out to be the central figure in the study, which in fact revolves around the question of what becomes of ethics after Nietzsche. Luft takes this question to be one that was forced upon the alienated generation that grew to maturity after 1900, whose experiences were formed by the Russian Revolution, the disastrous introduction of universal suffrage in the western half of the monarchy, and the virtually total polarization between Christian Socials and Social Democrats that had developed by then. Weininger's, Musil's, and Doderer's views about the meaning of the profound tension between sexuality and the