

important insights into the cultural and economic relationships created during the period. For example, Ondřej Klípa's article on Polish workers in Czechoslovakia offers a fruitful avenue for future research on the study of socialist labor contracts and international construction.

There are, of course, a few quibbles to be had. They range from the minor—the introduction promises a kaleidoscopic view, but many of the articles reinforce the heretofore dominant viewpoint of a time of stultifying grey—to the important: missing is a chapter offering an overview of the economic history of the era. This is unfortunate as economic projects and decision making are crucial to most of the contributions.

Fortunately, these quibbles do not diminish the importance of this work. The articles are of a high quality, and they collectively move us closer to understanding the complexities of normalization. Indeed, as with most edited volumes of this type, one of the most profound takeaways from the work is the heterogeneous nature of the subject. Normalization looked different depending on where one was standing. Moreover, what is perhaps most special about this volume, and reflective of the current state of Czech and Slovak history, is that Czech and Slovak scholars provide the bulk of the articles. The days of a bifurcated historical landscape, in which Czech-language and Anglophone scholars wrote primarily for their own respective audiences, is over. Such a revolution in historical collaboration guarantees a bright future for the field.

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Mueller, John F. *The Kaiser, Hitler, and the Jewish Department Store: The Reich's Retailer*

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Long relatively neglected in comparison to its French, British, and North American counterparts, the German department store only recently began to attract significant scholarly attention, and by now numerous works have appeared that assess its significance in the history of consumer culture, architecture and design, gender, urban history, business and economic history, and Jewish history. While Jews were prominent among department store proprietors in all of these countries, nowhere was their presence as strong as the German context, where all but one major chain was started by Jewish businesspeople and where associations between department stores and Jews coursed through political and cultural life for decades.

While the prominence and visibility of Jews among German department store families was well known, it was a dimension that few scholars had thematized until somewhat recently, with the exception of the story of the dispossession of Jewish-owned businesses by the Nazis, a topic compellingly opened up by Simone Ladwig-Winters's investigation into the Wertheim family and its post-1933 fate in her dissertation and subsequent studies in the later 1990s and 2000s. The latest contribution to this growing body of literature on German department stores is John F. Mueller's new book, a work that sets out to overturn what the author labels as common misconceptions about Germans "who happened to be of Jewish ancestry" in Imperial and Weimar Germany (1).

Mueller's work provides a chronological account of Jewish-owned department stores in Germany between the late-nineteenth century, when the department store emerged in its fully developed form, and the outbreak of World War II, by which time all German businesses had been taken out

of Jewish hands. At the center of this account lies the ceremonious 1910 visit of Kaiser Wilhelm II and Kaiserin Auguste Viktoria to Berlin's Wertheim emporium, a kind of official, imperial endorsement of this still relatively new form of retail, that here serves to emphasize the broader acceptance of the department store and its Jewish originators in German society and culture. The chapters follow a kind of rise-and-fall trajectory in which broader themes are interspersed with biographical and genealogical details about the founding families. Overall, the book, at least by implication, offsets the Kaiser's manifest approval of the department store and the originally Jewish Wertheim family, with whom Wilhelm had longstanding commercial ties, with Adolf Hitler's ravings about department stores, Jews, and un-German greed in his autobiographical screed *Mein Kampf*. Throughout the book Mueller justifiably emphasizes the provincial character of these businesses, toggling back and forth between the nationally and internationally prominent stores in Berlin (KaDeWe, Wertheim, Hermann Tietz) and regional powerhouses like Wronker, Knopf, and Schocken, some of whose fascinating stories have seldom been probed. He brings a great deal of social-historical and political context to his discussion, helpfully reminding readers of the rigid class system that persisted into the twentieth century that structured both shoppers' experiences and the terms of the Jewish store owners' integration. To that end, Mueller draws on an impressive body of source material, including interviews with former store employees, personal papers and correspondence, and to some extent commercial archives, which are seldom preserved and notoriously difficult to find.

Historiographically, Mueller comes out swinging, with stinging attacks on the existing historical literature (very much including my own contributions). These attacks—often disingenuous and unfounded—distract from his otherwise worthy aims. In short, he accuses his predecessors of exaggerating the resistance and opposition to department stores, of dwelling excessively on literary and theatrical representations (rather than more relevant source material, as if literature were not a window onto deeper cultural-historical problems), of obsessing over the non-issue of kleptomania and the “hysterical” shopper, and most of all, of downplaying Germans' very strong sense of attachment to their local department stores and missing the ways that Jewish retail entrepreneurs were in fact well integrated into German middle-class society despite occasional outbreaks of antisemitic violence or vitriol. Alas, sloppy footnoting and little appreciation for nuance undercuts the potential effectiveness of his critique.

Mueller stresses repeatedly that Jewish department store entrepreneurs wanted to be—and generally were—accepted as German by social peers, customers, and the general public, a claim few historians would dispute. While he does not exactly downplay antisemitism and anti-department store propaganda and activism—two overlapping but not identical spheres—he continually emphasizes their marginal character right up through the rise of the Nazis, arguing that “attitudes and beliefs were not as broad or ingrained as we believe” (192). Yet Mueller risks undermining his own argument because a good portion of the book is devoted to chronicling these allegedly marginal antisemitic and anti-department store outbursts. More significantly, what the author dismisses as historical noise was of central concern to his protagonists, one of whom, Salman Schocken, was a major supporter of the Zionist cause and underwriter of Jewish cultural renewal, a fact to which Mueller gives less attention than Schocken's alleged penchant for non-Jewish blonde mistresses. That Schocken could feel fully German while investing himself in the construction of a Jewish national homeland complicates the one-dimensional picture Mueller presents, especially for a younger generation of German Jews who often rejected the assimilationist tendencies of their elders.

This oddly titled—the titular Hitler barely appears—and disjointed book has a great deal to offer, but it relies excessively on strawmen in its argumentation, implying, for example, that existing treatments that call attention to the perceived Jewishness of the Jewish department store reassert a “Sonderweg” or centuries-long special path of German antisemitism. And having downplayed the reach of antisemitism and anti-Jewish attitudes in pre-Nazi Germany and even in the early years of the Nazi regime, he can only throw up his hands when it comes to explaining the lack of resistance to and wide popular support for Nazism's brutally murderous outcomes, which seem to come from nowhere. Just as Schocken felt at once fully German and committed to Zionism, many non-Jewish

Germans loved their department stores, harbored no explicit antisemitic feelings, and yet fully supported or participated in the Nazis' program.

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Naimark, Norman M. *Stalin and the Fate of Europe: The Postwar Struggle for Sovereignty*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019. Pp. 361.

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This is a book by a master historian of Eastern Europe. It is based on extensive archival research in Soviet/Russian, American, British, German, and Austrian archives and an easy familiarity with the major literature on the period in half a dozen languages. One would think one knows the issues and facts of the origins of the Cold War in Europe well, but Naimark puts together a book of seven case studies (the Borholm interlude, Albania/Yugoslavia, Finland, Italy, Germany, Poland, and Austria) that together give us new insights into how Stalin dealt with Europe after the war. Next to Stalin's policies, Naimark is interested in the role these individual countries played in attaining or failing to attain their postwar sovereignty, and the coming of the Cold War.

The most surprising result of this study is Naimark's contention that "there is very little evidence that Stalin had a preconceived plan for creating a bloc of countries in Europe with a common Soviet style system" (6, 8–17). His main concern was with Soviet postwar security, so Germany, Poland, and Finland were important to him. Interestingly (and based on Jonathan Haslam), Naimark speculates that Stalin's spread of influence into east Central Europe "may well have been related to the idea that increased Soviet 'space' would compensate him of the postwar asymmetry in nuclear weaponry with the West" (6f). Naimark is very impressed by European statesmen like Ernst Reuter in Berlin, Juho Kusti Paasikivi in Finland, Karl Renner and Leopold Figl in Austria, and Alcide de Gasperi in Italy who fought the Russian and local communists to attain the right to govern themselves after having lost their sovereignty in World War II (267f).

The individual case studies are the "meat" of this book. Naimark examines the Soviet occupation of the Danish island of Bornholm from the end of the war until April 1946, which had been taken due to its wartime occupation by the Germans. Danish politicians were not fighting the Soviets taking the island, but Soviet troops were unpopular with the local population. The chapter on Albania addresses the attempt of Tito's Yugoslavia to swallow the country. In the end, Stalin broke with Tito in 1948 due to Tito's aggressive policies in the Balkans region and Albania retained its independence under the wily Enver Hoxha. Finland was important to Soviet security due to the long border it shared with the Soviet Union. Stalin sent Andrei Zhdanov as his proconsul to Finland with the intention that the country that had sided with Nazi Germany during World War II and had taken part in the siege of Leningrad should "never again become the base for an invasion of the Soviet Union" (89). Paasikivi's foreign policy line was not to upset Moscow. Finland paid its reparations to the Soviet Union, did not participate in the Marshall Plan, and signed a "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Aid" with the Soviets in April 1948, giving the country more room to maneuver vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and not sharing the fate of Czechoslovakia, where the communists had managed to seize power in a coup a few weeks earlier.

Italy had a decisive election on 18 April 1948, which the communists hoped to win. The US (especially the CIA and the Italian American community) was heavily involved with