

undermine a tourist economy heavily reliant on German visitors. Salzburg, which is closer to Munich than Vienna, was a prime target for this sanction, but the festival's cosmopolitan audiences held up, and there was some recognition in Vienna that the festival was of sufficient national importance to merit support despite the straitened economic circumstances. Rehr was eventually removed from his position only following the German annexation of Austria in 1938. He survived the war, despite an indirect association with the 1944 bomb plot that landed him in Ravensbrück. He returned to Salzburg after the war, re-engaged with local politics despite his health problems, and died in 1947 leaving a tremendous legacy.

This is a meticulously researched and comprehensive study of the Salzburg Festival's origins and early development over a period of some twenty years between the wars. The history itself occupies some 400 pages and is followed by extensive appendices containing pictures and documents. It is one of the book's strengths that the detailed account of plans and negotiations is interwoven with the turbulent political and economic history of Austria (and Europe) between the wars. Amidst all this, it sometimes seems that – despite his prominence in the title – Rehr gets less of a look-in, and we get little sense of him as a man, still less as a politician. The main narrative ends with a testament to his commitment, under Gestapo interrogation, to Austria and to democracy. That commitment was presumably tested in 1933, when Rehr responded to the government's use of procedural chicanery to suppress parliament with a pious speech blaming opposition “obstruction,” a position echoed in the text by an explanation setting out – albeit in the subjunctive mood – the “difficult” choices facing the Austrian chancellor. We get little or no sense of Rehr's response to the violent coup d'état of the following February, and as party leader in Salzburg Rehr remained an important figure in the dictatorship.

Even so, Kriechbaumer's study of the festival's early years is, in many respects, a model of cultural history and deserves a wide readership.

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## **Bestsellers of the Third Reich: Readers, Writers, and the Politics of Literature**

**By Christian Adam. Translated by Anne Stokes. New York: Berghahn Books, 2021. Pp. xii + 297. Cloth \$135.00. ISBN: 978-1800730397.**

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One of the most widely-known facts about books in Nazi Germany is that many were publicly burned or banned. The book market underwent tremendous upheaval in 1933, as scores of Germany's best authors and publishers were forced to leave or found themselves unable to work. But although many Nazi authorities issued lists of banned books, the market remained largely in the hands of non-state actors. Christian Adam examines this period of literary *Gleichschaltung* from a different angle, asking what books were available between 1933 and 1945, and which genres and authors were widely read and popular. Adam also evaluates the success of Nazi leaders' attempts to create their own literature, asking to what degree this period saw the emergence of literature reflecting Nazi values, which was both popular and critically well-received. Adam's study was originally published in German in 2010 under the title *Lesen unter Hitler*, and is now available in a lively, very readable English translation.

In order to evaluate which books were widely read, Adam focuses on bestsellers, which he defines as all books that sold more than 100,000 copies during the Nazi period. He identified around 350 books sold in Nazi Germany that met this test. These 350 books represented a very broad sampling of literature, ranging from how-to books and the most varied types of nonfiction, through pulp fiction, high-brow literature, illustrated books, humor, genre fiction, *Heimat* books, and Nazi propaganda. He divides these bestsellers into ten book categories; the bulk of his book is devoted to a discussion of these ten types of books, along with their authors and readers. Adam is particularly interested in reconstructing how literature from this period can be “viewed from the standpoint of the readers who lived under National Socialist rule” (3). Adam offers a sense of what was available to German readers and popular with them. But how readers saw this literature is much harder to uncover, although the author draws on interviews with people active in the book trade or who were avid readers in Nazi Germany, along with the unique but always fruitful evaluations of bestsellers included in the diary of Jewish philologist Victor Klemperer.

For each category of books, Adam discusses selected bestsellers of the genre. His discussion neatly summarizes each book’s content and includes a short analysis of the author’s biography and political orientation during the Nazi period and his or her fate after 1945, as well as publisher, sales figures, and reception by the Nazi literary establishment. The cumulative effect of all these individual book and author summaries is almost as if the reader had been given the opportunity to do an extended browse through a bookstore in Nazi Germany, accompanied by an informative bookseller, surveying what was available to the German reading public. We learn that some of the most popular works of the period fell into the category of “factual novels” (71), historical docudramas that focused on raw materials and the life and accomplishments of German scientists and engineers. Karl Aloys Schenzinger’s novel *Anilin* (1937), a “gripping yarn” about the discovery of aniline dye and German chemistry, sold almost one million copies and was “the most successful narrative text in the Third Reich” (71). Other nonfiction novels about raw materials and German technical innovators also sold well, as did a bestseller on naturism (nude sunbathing), advice literature for new mothers, and novels set during World War I that depicted the war experience in thrilling terms. Humorous literature (often regional in focus) could be found among the bestsellers, as were pre-1933 favorites like Karl May’s westerns and some science fiction novels. Some successful authors of crime novels worked around Nazi authorities’ distaste for detective fiction set in Britain or the United States by going backwards in time and placing the scene of the crime in the nineteenth century.

Adam offers a detailed overview of the publication histories and distribution of book types that were a high priority for Nazi literary authorities: *Heimat* novels, particularly those that reflected the values of *Blut und Boden*; and Nazi propaganda texts like Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (1925/1927) and Alfred Rosenberg’s *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1930), which were (respectively) the top and fourth bestselling books of the entire period. Adam notes that “the production numbers alone [of Nazi propaganda books] reveal nothing of how they found their way to consumers, or if they were read,” but instead reflect the ability of Nazi leaders to exploit “their influence and names to successfully disseminate their ‘products’” (95–97).

Adam includes a discussion of the literary production, tastes, and reading habits of an array of Nazi luminaries, including Joseph Goebbels, Rosenberg, Heinrich Himmler, and Hermann Goering; this chapter seems less integrated into the overall discussion. Adam’s study also surveys the array of state and party agencies created by Goebbels, Rosenberg, and others to oversee the book trade. Like many other aspects of the Nazi state, Adam finds that censorship, regulation, and promotion of literature were a polycentric field, featuring competing ministries and organizations. These “internal power struggles” meant that “there never was a unified [Nazi] literary policy . . . the National Socialists’ plan to create their own literature failed on a grand scale . . . apolitical mediocrity above all was ultimately able to prevail” (265), at least in terms of sales.

Adam’s findings remind us that books are, among other things, consumer products. Particularly after 1939, Goebbels and other Nazi authorities promoted the publication of

“easy reading” and escapist literature, to boost wartime morale. The landscape of bestsellers so comprehensively surveyed by Adam reminds us of Hartmut Berghoff’s observation that the cumulative effect of the regime’s consumer policies led to both enticement and deprivation of consumers. Nazi authorities oversaw the suppression of consumption in some areas, combined with widespread distribution of key goods such as radios in selected high-profile areas. Readers were deprived of books by many of the most important authors of the period: Heinrich Mann, Arnold Zweig, and Lion Feuchtwanger are only some of the best-known examples. But at the same time, German readers were enticed by “easy reading” and entertainment-oriented literature, including mass print runs of paperbacks and pulp magazines for soldiers, paid for by the Wehrmacht. Adam concludes that, as a result, “almost the entire elite of German writers had been driven into exile or silenced. The actors in the second row now took their place and filled it – rather badly” (266).

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## **Hitler’s Refugees and the French Response, 1933–1938**

**By Julius Fein. Lanham and Boulder: Lexington Books, 2021. Pp. 246. Cloth \$120.00. ISBN: 978-1793622280.**

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*Hitler’s Refugees* is, in one sense, independent scholar Julius Fein’s personal search for the policy origins of his own family’s refugee odyssey during the Second World War. After his father lost the right to practice law in Germany, Fein fled with his family, first to Britain, then to New York. He returned later to Britain and eventually pursued a professional career as a trader. A beneficiary of wartime asylum, Fein digs deeply into the French asylum policies that saved tens of thousands of mostly German Jews but excluded just as many. Fein’s deeply researched book narrates the struggle and tensions between France’s ideological tradition, dating from the Montagnard constitution of 1793 that attempted to establish France as a humanitarian country of asylum for the persecuted, and the Third Republic’s Foreign Office, the Quai D’Orsay’s practices to defend France’s position as a sovereign state and practice nonintervention into the Third Reich’s domestic persecution policies. From the beginning of the German refugee crisis in 1933 until 1938, when the French government established a dedicated bureau of refugees and began the strict application of the narrowest refugee admissions criteria, Fein traces the intricate policy negotiations between France’s Foreign Ministry (the Quai); the League of Nations (LON); its neglected stepchild, the High Commission for Refugees from Germany (HCR) led by the American James G. McDonald; and key member states. A diplomatic and legal history in the main, *Hitler’s Refugees* carefully and accessibly details the play-by-play negotiations undertaken by the Quai to balance France’s claim to be an open and generous country of asylum with the Quai’s abiding desire to safeguard France’s fragile post-1929 economy and defend the nation’s status as a sovereign state from liberal interpretations of international agreements and foreign pressure groups.

A strength of the book’s policy-laden narrative is the author’s ability to sketch out the actions and motivations of a few key players whose philosophies and intervention strategies had a deep impact on the French approach to limiting refugee asylum. Although one of Fein’s