

approximately ten cartoons with brief explanatory notes — a structure that ultimately explains little and produces a choppy, disjointed style. Cartoons from a number of countries should have been eliminated because they tend to raise more questions than they answer. For example, the very complex war experiences of Canada, Australia, and South Africa are each covered in two or three cartoons. Moreover, Douglas fails to state why certain newspapers were chosen to provide illustrations for the text; indeed, one gets the impression that this decision was based upon what could be obtained most easily. In any event, the result does not provide any regional, religious, or class-based cross-representation of newspapers that in several countries produced disparate outlooks upon the war and spoke to important internal divisions. Also left unaddressed is the crucial matter of censorship policies, even though Douglas expresses surprise that some rather macabre illustrations, such as several from France, were allowed into print. One comes away from this slender volume with the feeling that it would have been far better if Douglas had undertaken an intensive rather than extensive approach — namely one that focused upon cartoons in the newspapers of just two or three principal belligerents — which would have allowed him to explore a wider array of sources and issues.

There are a number of recently published books that demonstrate the tremendous potential of cartoons as historical evidence, including for the study of warfare. Unfortunately, this volume comes up short by furnishing, both in pictorial and written formats, a far too brief and cursory analysis that primarily ends up reinforcing some well-established points and interpretations. Although its scholarly use is marginal, Douglas's book may find an audience among cartoon buffs. Yet one suspects that, even among such fans, the outrageous price of \$105 Canadian will limit the appeal of this book.

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Alexander de Grand — *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: The "Fascist" Style of Rule*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Pp. xviii, 102.

Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany is part of a series, "Historical Connections", intended for those studying and teaching history. The series attempts to provide its audience with a synthesis of the research on a particular topic to date, in an effort to overcome the fragmented nature of much history undertaken today, and such is Alexander de Grand's task. It is an ambitious and admirable goal but a challenging one, especially given the extreme brevity of the book and the topic addressed.

De Grand's comparison is carefully restricted to Hitler's Nazi regime in Germany and Mussolini's Fascist regime in Italy at the level of practical politics and the implementation of policy. He deliberately avoids a comparison of the two ideologies and the whole debate over what constituted fascism and which regimes were truly fascist. He focuses on the regimes, their respective state structures, and the policies implemented, pointing out the similarities and differences between Fascism and

Nazism in practice. He argues that, while the Nazi regime in Germany and the Fascist regime in Italy were both part of a generic fascist “style of governing” (p. 84), the practice of that style differed occasionally for two fundamental reasons. First, each regime faced practical constraints to its government. Each had to cope with existing social hierarchies and property relations and to deal with the established social and economic elites (p. 84). Variations in the nature and strength of these hierarchies and elites between the two countries resulted in differences in the styles of governing practised by Hitler and Mussolini. Secondly, race was of much more importance to the Nazi regime than it was to the Fascist, and this contributed further important differences in governing styles.

The book is organized thematically for the most part, beginning with three chapters dealing with the regimes’ seizure and consolidation of power. De Grand then examines the regimes’ practice of politics in various spheres of interest — the military, the economy, and agriculture — and their positions on certain issues that have received special attention from historians — the party’s institutionalization, women’s role in the new orders being created, and the nature of the new society being constructed (discussed in a chapter cryptically entitled “Culture and Society”). The book is weakest in its opening chapters, where the stories of the Fascist and Nazi seizures of power are discussed. Given the complicated twists and turns of either story, it is not difficult to understand why de Grand is unsuccessful in summarizing in a mere 20 pages the rise to power of not just one, but both regimes. The comparative approach only serves to confuse further, to the point that even a reader with some familiarity with the story has difficulty following the “ins” and “outs” of the saga. The third chapter, “The March to Power”, is particularly confusing, as it tries to accomplish too much in too short a space. The remaining chapters are much more successful and provide useful, succinct overviews of the major lines of the historiographical debate on various key issues. For those looking for a quick introduction to the general lines of debate, these chapters would be a useful place to start.

It is unfortunate that de Grand has avoided the extensive debate on the differences and similarities between the ideologies of the Nazi and the Fascist regimes, and rather has assumed the existence of a generic fascism upon which both are based. This debate is a crucial one in the field, and its omission from a comparative study of the fascist style of governing weakens the book in several ways. An explanation of the basic tenets of that generic fascism would have provided a base of comparison for each of the regimes and would have made clearer the differences and similarities between the two. As it is, de Grand reveals those tenets rather haphazardly throughout the book and often only by inference, suggesting that he is not able to ignore ideology completely: better to address it overtly and in an organized fashion. For a reader already familiar with the debate, it is possible to read between the lines. A teacher or student new to the field, or only superficially familiar with it, would find the approach confusing. Furthermore, ideology permeates the regimes, offering justification for the choices made and policies pursued, providing the logic for the style of governing. Ignoring it leaves us with a book that tells us what happened, but not why it happened the way it did.

Finally, the book gives more weight to the Italian case than it does the German. Nazi Germany is often given only a ‘token nod’, with Mussolini’s Italy generally providing most of the evidence for points being made. *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany* is an ambitious and admirable project, with much that could be useful to the general reader. Nonetheless, it suffers from extreme brevity, which appears to have required compromises that have weakened the book as a whole.

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James von Geldern and Richard Stites, eds. — *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia: Tales, Poems, Songs, Movies, Plays and Folklore, 1917–1953*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995. Pp. xxix, 492.

This pathbreaking book is a much needed introduction to Soviet mass culture for English-speaking readers. Richard Stites and James von Geldern, leading specialists in Russian and Soviet cultural studies, have assembled an anthology that spans the period from the revolution up to the death of Stalin. In contrast to the many studies that have concentrated on the institutions which formulated and administered cultural policies, this collection focuses on the content and reception of mass culture. The editors have collected poems, folk tales, comic sketches, film scripts, plays, children’s stories, and anecdotes to bring to life the richness and variety of cultural forms from a period all too often considered to be culturally barren.

The volume is divided chronologically into four sections. The first spans the years of revolution and Civil War to the end of the relatively free period of the New Economic Policy (NEP), featuring proletarian poetry, anti-war pamphlets in popular language, Red Army songs, agitational plays, excerpts from film scripts and novels, and underground songs. The second section, covering the late 1920s and 1930s, treats the more overtly official culture of Stalinism, illustrating the devastating impact of the cultural revolution of 1928–1932 on mass culture and the emergence of the optimistic mass culture of socialist realism, with its mythology of opportunity and social mobility. The more politically unconstrained and emotion-filled culture of the Second World War is presented in the third section, while the final one deals with the resurgence of a now stale socialist realism in the sombre postwar years. Von Geldern and Stites have included unofficial anecdotes throughout the book to provide a counterweight to the predominance of officially sanctioned culture, and these allow the reader a glimpse into the minds of ordinary citizens.

The selections are well chosen to illustrate the shifts in the changing mythology of Soviet culture under Lenin and Stalin, and they demonstrate the variety and complexity of a uniquely politicized mass culture. Each selection is given a short introduction explaining its historical context, and a cassette featuring recordings of popular songs makes the book a superb resource for teaching.

In his excellent introduction, von Geldern ties the various strands of the collection together, arguing that Soviet mass culture was shaped by the often conflicting