

Riekhoff's discussion of the national minorities question. Although on most issues he consulted both German and Polish sources, in this instance he relied mainly on works produced either by postwar professional anti-Poles or former German nationalist leaders now residing in West Germany. The result is a chapter that is disproportionately and inaccurately apologetic for the German minority in Poland and openly critical of their treatment by the Polish state. On the other hand, there is little mention of the Polish minority in the Weimar Republic, a topic examined in depth by recent Polish historians. Criticism might also be leveled at the author's discussion of internal Polish political developments. Rather than using the rich, varied, and quite lively press of the period, the numerous contemporary publications on the German question, or the several fine recent studies of interwar Polish politics, Riekhoff draws mainly on German diplomatic dispatches and intelligence research reports from the *Auswärtiges Amt* to gauge the reaction of the Polish government and opposition circles to key issues in Polish-German relations. Consequently the entire book appears to consider these relations from the German point of view, although Riekhoff has gone to considerable pains to retain a detached personal objectivity in his analysis.

But these shortcomings should not obscure the overall worth of this book. Riekhoff has produced a major work of serious scholarship that should remain the definitive study of Polish-German relations during the Weimar era for some time to come. The book will also serve as a veritable encyclopedia of information for any scholar dealing with the diplomacy of interwar Europe, not merely Poland or Germany. It is a worthy monument to the author and his late mentor, Hajo Holborn.

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DER DEUTSCH-POLNISCHE SEPTEMBER 1939: EINE VOLKSGRUPPE
ZWISCHEN DEN FRONTEN. By *Peter Aurich*. Munich and Vienna:
Günter Olzog Verlag, 1969. 147 pp. DM 16, paper.

Such an emotional topic as the maltreatment of the German minority in Poland during the first days of the war in September 1939 may not be particularly rewarding for a historian's inquiry. For after the main facts have been established—the realistic estimate of the number of Germans killed is about four thousand—the conclusions are rather predictable. As can be expected, the outrages committed were the result more of anger and despair on the part of individuals than of premeditated and organized action by the authorities; the Polish government, never known for efficiency, was after all in hopeless chaos in those days. And equally predictable, the persecuted minority group did not serve as the kind of fifth column many Poles suspected it to be; for that to have happened, the German military operations had been organized too professionally and executed too swiftly.

To point out the limitations of the topic is not to say that the author has coped with it as well as he could have. His is a rather old-fashioned account, descriptive rather than analytical. Quoting extensively from interviews with survivors, he dwells on detailed descriptions of the various miseries inflicted on the *Volksdeutsche* by the outraged Poles. But in explaining the causes, he seldom goes beyond the general theme of cruelty of man to man. He never really faces in a straightforward fashion the problem of the Germans' loyalty—or the lack of it—toward the Polish state and the question how they tried or did not try to seek

constructive ways of coexistence. Similarly, the reader may wish to know to what extent the excesses of September 1939 were perhaps due to the anarchic features of the interwar Polish regime—a regime which served so poorly not only the minorities but the dominant people as well.

Considering that the author is himself a descendant of Polish Germans, his often sentimental approach to his subject matter should not perhaps be judged too severely. It ought to be stressed that his book is not one of those—all too familiar ten or fifteen years ago—that have been published primarily to serve the expellees' urge to show their wounds in the marketplace. As the editors affirm in the introduction, the study is intended to promote the cause of German-Polish reconciliation by helping to overcome the unpleasant past. For that aim, it deserves praise; as a work of scholarship, it leaves much to be desired.

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KONSTYTUCJA KSIĘSTWA WARSZAWSKIEGO: JEJ POWSTANIE, SYSTEMATYKA I GŁÓWNE INSTYTUCJE W ZWIĄZKU Z NORMAMI SZCZEGÓŁOWYMI I PRAKTYKĄ. By *Marian Kallas*. Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, *Studia Iuridica*, vol. 9, no. 3. Toruń: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1970. 205 pp. 40 zł., paper.

As the subtitle of this monograph indicates, it discusses the origin, organization, and provisions of the Constitution of the Duchy of Warsaw (1807), as well as the way it was applied during the eight years it was in force. The Duchy, a strange creation of Napoleon, carved out of the center of Poland, was replaced by the Congress Kingdom in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna. The author has assembled a wealth of materials, and refers to archival documents and scores of writings in the field of constitutional law and history. To a large extent he uses the comparative approach. He points out that the famous Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791, was the source of some provisions of the Constitution of 1807, and compares them with those of contemporary "Napoleonic" constitutions: France (1799, as amended in 1802 and 1804), Westphalia (1807), Naples (1808), Spain (1808), and Bavaria (1808). His general conclusion is that the Constitution of the Duchy was less like the others than is generally believed. The author emphasizes the progressive character of the Constitution. Freedom of religious belief was solemnly proclaimed, and personal liberty granted to the peasants. However, on both points the Constitution of 1791 took a similar stand.

The book begins with the history of the Polish territories during the first years of the Napoleonic period. It continues with the decision to establish the Duchy (particularly in the treaty of Tilsit) and the "legislative history" of its Constitution. The author proceeds with an analysis of the methodology of the Constitution, its treatment of social problems, and the organization of the state (whose head, as the duke, was the king of Saxony), the Council of Ministers, the Council of State, and the parliament (Sejm). The electoral system is also discussed. He then passes on to regional administration and self-government, the judicial system, and denominational problems.

The author's presentation is lucid, and his observations are well documented.

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