how untruths became widely believed by significant numbers of people in Bavaria after the First World War.

Reading this work, an older question remains relevant: could pro-Republic parties have done more to combat support for antisemitism in Bavaria? Could Gustav Stresemann's government have done more to support Bavarian Jews in the autumn of 1923? That they needed to do so was obvious to some contemporaries: antisemitism in Bavaria after 1918 was not limited to words and state policies. There were acts of physical violence too. Brenner includes some details but does not probe the crucial question of *how* violent speech became physical acts of violence against Jews? For example, at one point Brenner suggests that the violent acts directed at Jews in Munich during the night of the Hitler Putsch were "undoubtedly spurred on by pogrom-like scenes in Berlin's Scheunenviertel" (255). But the author offers little to support this argument. Perhaps it is a problem that is impossible to fully answer. That said, *In Hitler's Munich* is an important book. It is essential reading for all with an interest in antisemitism in Germany in the twentieth century. Above all, it offers a necessary corrective to those who try to downplay the significance of antisemitism during Germany's first democracy.

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Festival, Culture, and Identity in Lübeck: Nordic Days, 1920-1960

By Erika L. Briesacher. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2023. Pp. xi + 193. Hardcover $95.00. ISBN: 978-1498585019.

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In August 1956, the northern German city of Lübeck held a festival to celebrate its ties with Scandinavia. City officials spoke of a "rapprochement between our people" (159); the Finnish National Ballet performed, capping a program of exhibitions, sporting events, and film screenings. These "Nordic Days" went off without a hitch, because they had been well rehearsed. Lübeck had hosted similar Nordic Days in 1953 and 1954, as well as Nordic Week in 1921 and six Nordic Society rallies from 1934 to 1939. The perseverance of Nordic-themed events over forty years and three political systems is the subject of Erika Briesacher's engaging new book. Through the lens of Lübeck's Nordic Days, Briesacher explores the formation and reformation of German identities in the turbulent twentieth century. She highlights two themes in particular: "the roles of regionalism and internationalism in German nationalism" (4) and "how identity can become framed and then weaponized over time" (170).

The book opens with Lübeck's inaugural Nordic Week in 1921, designed to put the city on the map. At a time when Lübeckers felt overshadowed by neighboring Hamburg and Kiel, not to mention Berlin, asserting their international ties was both a claim to national significance and a defense of regional identity. When Nordic Week ended, its planners established the Nordic Society, which worked closely with Lübeck's Chamber of Commerce. Amid the Nazi Party's rise, however, the Society gradually drifted towards "Nordicist ideologies" (93), promoting visions of a Nordic racial community that included Scandinavians but excluded many Germans, notably German Jews. It was eventually absorbed by Alfred Rosenberg's Office of

Foreign Affairs and used to reach Scandinavian fascists; Nordic Society members also played leading roles in administering the occupied Baltic states. After the Second World War – when Lübeck suffered heavy bombing – the Nordic Society disappeared, but Nordic Days did not. They reemerged in 1953, with much the same goals and program as in 1921, for Lübeck again "struggled to find its place in a 'new' Germany, following a cultural, military, and ethical cataclysm" (149).

The book's main strength lies in its chronological breadth. Briesacher takes aim at "the tendency to analyze German history as a series of stops and starts, lurching from conflict to conflict instigating dramatic change" (5). Instead, she tells a story of surprising continuities, ably weaving together the often-disparate historiographies of Weimar Germany, the Third Reich, and the Federal Republic. What makes this possible is the focus on a single city, where many local leaders stayed in place through all the turmoil. One of the masterminds of Lübeck's first Nordic Week, city senator Georg Kalkbrenner, remained a major figure in the Nazified Nordic Society and then helped resurrect the Nordic Days under the Federal Republic. A close analysis of Lübeck also demonstrates "how culture, identity, politics, and economy are intermingled in the life of a city and its people" (2). The Nordic Days had many aims, Briesacher shows; they were intended to draw tourists, build community, define an in-group, and raise Lübeck's profile. These goals often conflicted, resulting in unexpected outcomes. Festival, culture, and identity – the three core concepts in the title – "intersected, combined, competed, and complemented each other" in many interesting ways (9).

All three core concepts, though, call for elaboration. Briesacher refers to "Nordic identities that were actively constructed at *Nordische Woche*" (58), but it remains unclear to what extent the Nordic Days actually shaped people's identities. Briesacher's sources come primarily from city planners and official publications; by contrast, there is little trace of popular responses to the Nordic Days or media coverage of them. One wonders if the relevant category might be "Nordic narratives" rather than "Nordic identities," since the book deals with the construction of Nordicism rather than its reception. In either case, the narratives of Nordic Days deserve fuller treatment. Briesacher is admirably attentive to the material culture of the Days, analyzing their advertising pages and commemorative currency, but sometimes glosses over what she calls "the more academic or scholarly elements" (49). This is a pity, for the glimpses we get are tantalizing. What did "exhibitions of 'Nordic' art" (78) look like, for instance? What about issues of *Der Norden*, the Nordic Society's journal, where Lübeckers could "read about advances in racial and eugenic theory, especially the Nordic movement" (95)? A closer reading of such sources would help flesh out the Nordic Days' culture.

Briesacher is even more oblique in her discussion of the Nordic Society. Each year from 1934 to 1939, the Society "staged rallies in Lübeck in June, bringing upper-level Nazis and state ministries together with society members and leaders from across Germany and Scandinavia" (90-91). Unfortunately, that is all we learn; there are also no details on the Nordic Society's membership, or on the rationale of leaders such as Kalkbrenner, who remained an "important member" (155) even as the organization turned to Nazism. This feels like a missed opportunity to inscribe the Nazi era into the broader sweep of German history – a sweep that Briesacher's book otherwise traces. How did Nazi-era Nordic rallies compare to Nordic Days before and after? To what extent did notions of Nordicism "actively contribut[e] to the intellectual landscape that fertilized and even encouraged Nazism" (66), as Briesacher suggests in passing? One wishes for a fuller answer to these questions, because they are central to Briesacher's goals. This stimulating book shows how easily old concepts gained new life, how steadily local identities evolved, and how important festivals were to the process. In tracing Lübeck's many Nordic Days, it sheds new light on Germany's transformations through the first half of the twentieth century.

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