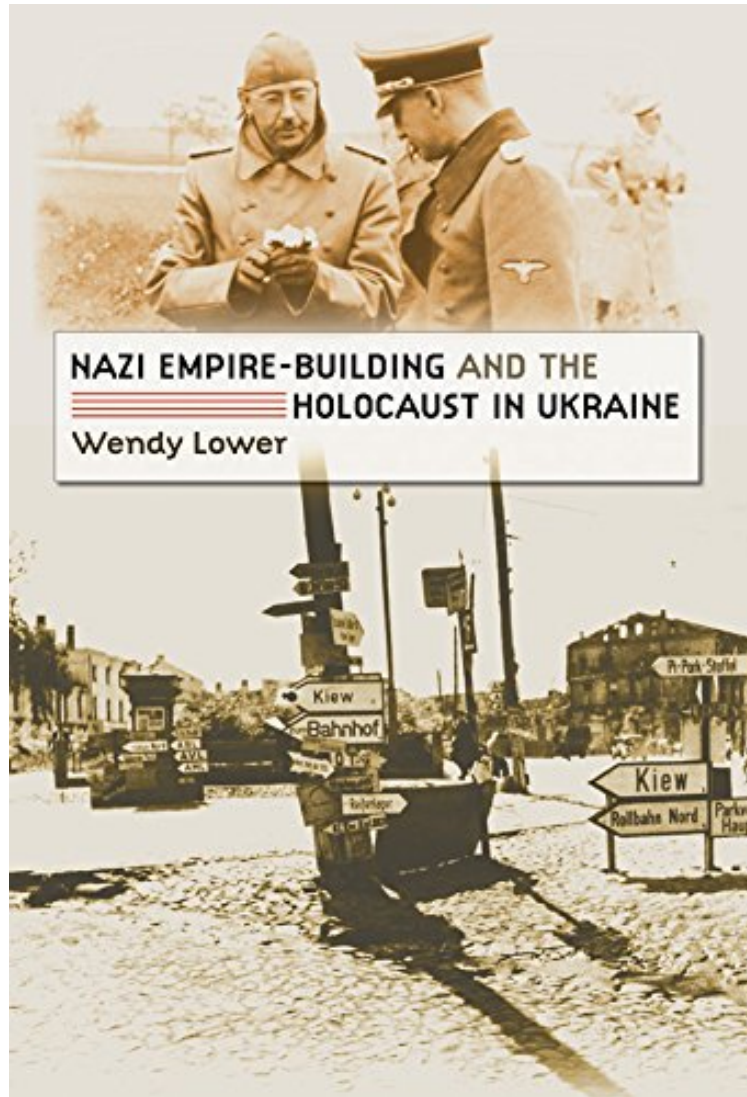


Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine

Wendy Lower

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Wendy Lower : Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine:

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Exceptionally Well Written Study of a Under Researched Topic! By S. Heminger It seems that as we move further from the brief but tumultuous time period in which the Nazis ruled first Germany and then a seeming avalanche of countries, there are fewer and fewer areas of the historiography in which significant gaps exist. That isn't to imply that there are no longer significant areas of research yet waiting, but rather that there are fewer almost daily it would appear. At the very least, there are basic frameworks of research in place for

much of the Nazi era historiography even if these frameworks are made up of disputing theories. Despite this, there are occasionally works published that significantly change the way by which we view the events that occurred or possibly even add significant meaning beyond that which previously existed. Wendy Lower's narrative 'Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine' has done precisely that. Her work focuses on how Nazi expansion into the Ukraine was based on a utopian colonialism and connected inseparably from the Holocaust itself. Although the concept of empire has frequently been addressed, this is particular concept has never sufficiently been explored. This is in spite of the FACT of how plain spoken the frequent musings by senior Nazi's regarding desires for an India-like colony to the east were and the acceptance of the vast degree of racial reordering that would be necessary to achieve the goal. Indeed Ms. Lower asserts that "this study sheds light on how the Nazis conceptualized, conquered, and governed Ukraine in a manner that was historically familiar, as well as distinctive and even unprecedented"(2). 'Nazi Empire Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine' is a phenomenal success as a regional study of Nazi social engineering (Zhytomir region of Ukraine). Primarily this work it is laid out in a loose chronological fashion based around chapters covering Nazi colonialist theory, a pair of chapters on Conquest and the military administration, three chapters on the planning and onset of the Holocaust, one chapter regarding the actual efforts to set up a racial colony, the disintegration of Nazi rule in 1943-44 and concluding thoughts. There is some chronological overlap because of the variety of topics between chapters but this is never confusing or unwieldy. She in fact takes a story that actually is somewhat confusing because of the variety of player involved and simplifies it greatly. In particular the authors chapters covering the military administration and its transition to Party/Commissariat administration is of great value to anyone trying to make sense of the crimes and social engineering that were part and parcel of Hitlers eastern empire. Probably Lower's greatest contribution to the historiography is in her sections regarding the Commissariat organization in the Zhytomyr region and the role it played in enforcing Hitler's brand of 'exterminationist' anti-Semitism. She provides a great deal of evidence showing how the 'polycratic system that caused so much chaos and inefficiency in Berlin and other large population centers was never a significant issue within the Zhytomyr region of Ukraine. This was in large part because of the unified view that most working within the region had regarding the administration of their colonial possession irrespective of the branch they were employed by at least as it regarded extermination of the Jews in the region and terrorization/diminishment of Ukrainian society and culture. The author provides numerous examples in the documentation of cooperation between agencies that would be competing for power in regions nearer to the hub of Nazi authority. She writes, The most remarkable administrative pattern was one of ad hoc collaboration. Ironically, factors that might have otherwise caused conflicts or resistance to the Holocaust, such as personnel shortages and the isolation of the rural outposts, actually furthered it (159). Another impressive addition to the extant scholarship is in her contribution development to the concept of lower levels within the Nazi hierarchy developing action plans that would work towards the Fuehrers wishes (9). Throughout, Ms. Lower provides numerous examples of instances when lower level, SS, Police authorities and civil administrators committed atrocities in the name of a Fuehrer or Reichsfuehrer SS who had not ordered that specific action. Instead, basing their actions on vague, perceived and sometimes even unspoken wishes by senior Nazi leadership these lower level men committed horrific atrocities in response, to curry favor or simply do what needed to be done in the massive and violent ethnic cleansing project that was Zhytomyr. The one area in which the analysis WAS a bit underdeveloped for my taste was with the very first chapter. Although a single chapter devoted to the evolution of Imperial/colonial eastern Lebensraum theory in Nazi and even pre Nazi times serves to at least introduce the reader to this concept, it is far too brief for a narrative in which the analysis is dependent on it. This particular topic could easily have taken up two or three times the 12 pages spent on it. Indeed, how the eastward colonial Lebensraum theory evolved, which is the absolute critical basis of this work, is disappointingly underdeveloped by the author. Providing a 12 page introduction into this topic is a tantalizing and frustrating tease that leaves the reader nearly shaking the book and asking wheres the rest of the story?!? Finally there are the less tangible contributions of this particular narrative. The bibliography is very impressive for such a short work and is comprised of a better than fair number of both primary sources and early memoir sources. Secondary sources are also well represented, however the author never becomes reliant or dependent on them as many less skillful writers frequently seem to. Likewise, the numerous photos included are great additions to the text. Several will be familiar to those who read much in the way of Holocaust history or even WWII history; however there are many interesting additions that I had not seen prior. Lastly, there are the physical qualities of this work and I must admit a certain sentimental attachment to a quality hardcover book in this age of digital everything. At least for the edition that I had, the pages were from a good and heavy paper, the binding was a nice cloth and the book had a solid, slightly heavy feel to it not to mention the smell it had and has me looking for other works published by the University of North Carolina Press. Altogether this history was an engaging read and had a sense of quality to it in EVERY way. I can unreservedly give Nazi Empire Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine a five star rating. The research and prose are topnotch throughout. My only quibble is just that, and in no way inhibits me from giving Lower a standing ovation for her effort. Research into Nazi purpose and rationalization for social engineering projects in Ukraine, as well as elsewhere should be greatly influenced by this groundbreaking analysis. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I can't add more about this the book as other reviewers have done excellent reviews. But if you are interested

of this ...By Roland JohanssonTerric Book. I can't add more about this book as other reviewers have done excellent reviews. But if you are interested of this kind of information which is highly fascinating deeply disturbing, trust me, it is a very good book. Wendy Lower is a scholar of great distinction. I have read two other books by her and both are at the edge coming to scholarship, namely, "The Shoah in Ukraine" (2008) Ed., Ray Brandon Wendy Lower and "Hitler's Furies" (2013) by Wendy Lower. Highly recommended. Read them!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Colonizing UkraineBy Kevin M. KearneyGreat book, but not an easy read unless you like real details about a horrible part of Western Civilizations past. Explains easily Nazi's approach to colonizing Ukraine and why the attacked Russian in 1941. Thank God they did or Europe might still be in the hands of the Nazi regime.If you are a student of history you will enjoy this book.

On 16 July 1941, Adolf Hitler convened top Nazi leaders at his headquarters in East Prussia to dictate how they would rule the newly occupied eastern territories. Ukraine, the "jewel" in the Nazi empire, would become a German colony administered by Heinrich Himmler's SS and police, Hermann Goring's economic plunderers, and a host of other satraps. Focusing on the Zhytomyr region and weaving together official German wartime records, diaries, memoirs, and personal interviews, Wendy Lower provides the most complete assessment available of German colonization and the Holocaust in Ukraine.Midlevel "managers," Lower demonstrates, played major roles in mass murder, and locals willingly participated in violence and theft. Lower puts names and faces to local perpetrators, bystanders, beneficiaries, as well as resisters. She argues that Nazi actions in the region evolved from imperial arrogance and ambition; hatred of Jews, Slavs, and Communists; careerism and pragmatism; greed and fear. In her analysis of the murderous implementation of Nazi "race" and population policy in Zhytomyr, Lower shifts scholarly attention from Germany itself to the eastern outposts of the Reich, where the regime truly revealed its core beliefs, aims, and practices.

An exemplary local study. . . . Lower integrates the Ukrainian version of the Shoah as one component--albeit a major one--within this fastidiously researched, thorough, insightful, and flowingly readable examination of the Nazi racial vision as implemented in one locale of the occupied East.--Central European History Valuable. . . . An assured, meticulous, and accessible presentation. . . . This is a monograph of considerable value which deserves a wide readership among scholars and students of the Holocaust and genocide.--Journal of Genocide ResearchAn exemplary local study of . . . the administrative entity encompassing much of the German-occupied Ukraine in World War II.--Central European HistoryFocusing on the Zhytomyr region--where Adolf Hitler's headquarters were located in summer 1942--this excellent book reconstructs the regime's attempt to implement its colonial vision by murdering the Jewish population, enslaving the Ukrainians, and transforming the local ethnic Germans into the new Master Race of this rich agricultural region. Lower has uncovered fascinating documentation.--Times Literary SupplementA carefully nuanced picture of Ukrainian responses to Nazi occupation. . . . Both specialists and general readers seeking new insights into the Holocaust and the history of Nazi occupation in Eastern Europe will benefit greatly from [this] important study.--Journal of Modern HistoryLower's excellent study offers important insights into the nature of National Socialist racial visions and efforts to transform colonial fantasy into reality, as well as into the tragic consequences for the Jewish and non-Jewish populations of Ukraine.--Holocaust and Genocide StudiesA very useful contribution to the field of Holocaust studies. . . . An excellent analysis of Nazi empire-building and the Holocaust in the Zhytomyr district.--English Historical Quarterly[Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine] offers an excellent regional account of the Holocaust, carefully unpacking the interaction between higher orders and lower level initiatives in the unfolding of genocide.--American Historical First-rate.--Journal of Modern HistoryAs a study of the relationship between the Nazi core and periphery and of Himmler's grotesque and murderous ambitions to repopulate the Ukraine with Germans (represented in miniature by the Hegewald colonial outpost), this is a monograph of considerable value which deserves a wide readership among scholars and students of the Holocaust and genocide.--Journal of Genocide ResearchLower has written a brilliant study of the Zhytomyr region, where Hitler and Heinrich Himmler established an experimental colony of local Germans and some Ukrainians. . . . Lower's brilliant study demonstrates the insane cruelty of Hitler's empire. This is one of the best studies of the evil reality of Hitler's dream and will be an important addition to every collection on WWII. Essential.--Choice[A] tightly written case study. . . . Unlike most occupational studies, Lower details the close relationship between traditional European imperialist thinking, Nazi racial ideology, and the Holocaust itself. . . . Lower mined German and former Soviet archives in Berlin, Moscow, Kiev, and Washington, as well as local archives in Zhytomyr, to produce this well-researched monograph. . . . Lower's book is a worthy contribution to the history of World War II, the Holocaust, the Soviet Union, and Ukraine.--Russian An excellent study that bravely attempts to put the Nazi occupation of Ukraine in comparative context, and uses newly opened archives to extend our knowledge of the true horror of the era.--Europe-Asia StudiesLower's excellent book confirms many findings of the new regional studies over the past decade. . . . Lower demonstrates a mastery of both German sources and those accessible only in the native language (in this case Ukrainian) of the occupied population.--German Studies Wendy Lower's book on the town and district of Zhytomyr

under Nazi occupation is a model regional study that both vividly captures the details of local experience and throws light on broader issues. Alongside a succinct and perceptive analysis of the continuities and particularities of Nazi colonialism and empire-building 'in the East,' Lower portrays the devastating consequences for Jews, Ukrainians, and ethnic Germans of the lethal Nazi combination of utopian illusion and policies of unfettered exploitation and destruction.--Christopher Browning, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Lower presents an extremely important addition to our knowledge of the eastern front in the Second World War. By treating the Holocaust and German colonization policies at the local level, Lower presents social history as the consequence of political history. The 'bottom-up' and the 'top-down' perspectives are beautifully integrated here.--Timothy Snyder, Yale University

Lower should be commended for linking German and, more generally, European imperialism to the Third Reich's war of extermination in the former Soviet Union. When placed into this context of European conquest and exploitation, the brutality of the German occupation becomes somewhat more comprehensible. . . . Lower has produced a very important study on Nazi occupation goals and practices that not only highlights the centrality of the Holocaust to all German institutions in the occupied Eastern territories, but also stresses the collapse of unanimity between these same institutions concerning the construction of the German East.--H-German

From the Inside Flap

Lower provides the most complete assessment available of German colonization and the Holocaust in Ukraine, the "jewel" of the Nazi empire. In this unprecedented attempt at Nazi empire building, violence, racism, antisemitism, and militarism pervaded all aspects of everyday life. Lower argues that it was in the eastern outposts of the Reich, such as Ukraine, that the regime's core beliefs, aims, and practices were revealed.