

'cleansing' action" (p. 284). The Gypsies could not be as easily dismissed, and Bauer discusses them at some length (pp. 59–66).

To disqualify Gypsies as Holocaust victims, Bauer argues that the Nazis never intended to kill them all, pointing to various exemptions. But Jews married to non-Jews and their children were also exempted, something Bauer notes but does not consider significant. Further, Bauer argues that the murders must be global to qualify as a Holocaust, and this applied only to Jews and not to Gypsies. But this only shows that Jews had the highest priority, which no one would deny, and that Gypsies came later. Finally, Bauer argues that ideology, not rational aims, drove Holocaust killings. Although he accepts that policies toward Gypsies (and the disabled) were "based on a biological-racist ideology" (p. 60), he dismisses this because it governed Nazi relations with everyone, while the policy toward Jews was based on antisemitism, which (obviously) only applied to them. Bauer makes this very clear in his two historiographical chapters. There his treatment of Daniel Goldhagen is most revealing. Bauer has moderated his earlier severe criticism (p. 111), since Goldhagen's work highlighted the central role of antisemitism and transmitted this to a wide reading public; for this reason, Goldhagen's "commercial success has to be valued very positively" (p. 102).

There is no difference between Holocaust and Nazi genocide, and both Jews and Gypsies were its victims. Exemptions applied to both, but such exemptions were to last only until victory. Fortunately, Adolf Hitler lost the war. If he had won, both Jewish *Mischlinge* and settled Gypsies would have been killed. And in a world after a German victory, neither Bauer nor this reviewer would have been around to debate the differences between victims of Holocaust and victims of Nazi genocide.

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SACHA ZALA. *Geschichte unter der Schere politischer Zensur: Amtliche Aktensammlungen im internationalen Vergleich*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg. 2001. Pp. 385. €47.50.

"There will always be scholarly concern over what might have been 'left out' of official edited collections of documents," Forrest L. Grier described the deep-rooted mistrust of government publications. Sacha Zala's study focuses on this crucial issue: what has been the impact of governmental influence and censorship on historiography? He asks three questions: why do governments sometimes suppress the publication of records? Are official publications useful for scholars and researchers? And why do governments give official historians and not public servants the task of preparing official volumes of contemporary documents?

Since 1624, official publications in England have

been called blue books or white books. By publishing selected documents, successive English governments tried to legitimize foreign policy decisions. After World War I, such official publications of files and records became a weapon in international affairs. In the 1920s, the German government attempted to counter the war guilt thesis by editing *Die Große Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871–1914*. The official papers of the July crisis in 1914 had an enormous impact on public opinion and caused a revolution in contemporary history (as Mario Toscano maintained). Their publication produced a more critical view of the war and led to the development of a revisionist historiography in the United States. In response, the governments in Washington and London were forced to authorize the publication of their own diplomatic papers.

Zala delivers a classic example of governmental interference by describing the discussions concerning publication of the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series volume on the Four Power Council of the Versailles conference. In 1943, Winston Churchill persuaded Franklin D. Roosevelt to prevent historians in the state department from publishing these memoranda. The president was convinced that notes of these conversations ought not to have been taken down anyway; i.e. the control of decisions should be suppressed. The Roosevelt administration was afraid of being blamed for Germany's international discrimination and Adolf Hitler's excessive and imperial revenge policy. Analyzing the capture of the German Archives in 1945 by the American occupation troops, Zala stresses another important problem. Files and papers became trophies proving Germany's war guilt. After the Council of Foreign Ministers' failure to negotiate a German peace treaty in 1947, the *Documents on German Foreign Policy* were published. The series served as a propaganda weapon in the Cold War because papers revealed close Nazi-Soviet relations from the very beginning of World War II. Furthermore the publication was used as an instrument to prevent German revisionism and served to legitimate Allied dismemberment policy in Germany.

In a separate chapter, Zala describes the far-reaching political impact of the *Documents on German Foreign Policy* in Switzerland. The Swiss and the British governments both sought to prevent their publication. The documents revealed Franco-Swiss military cooperation during the war, which cast doubt on Switzerland's neutrality.

For different political and military reasons, Churchill and the Pentagon postponed the publication of the U.S. papers from the Malta, Yalta, and Potsdam conferences, originally announced in 1954. The British prime minister feared that publication might provoke the Soviets and hinder Western détente efforts. The Pentagon worried that the details of U.S.-Soviet military cooperation would be made public.

Contrary to the interests of politicians, the first objective of the historian is to produce a substantially

complete, honest, and definitive record of what really happened. Western governments have recognized the necessity of the work of official historians, and some of them have accepted independent scientific boards of review intended to guarantee the high quality of the criteria that underlie the selection of documents. But historians have always to keep in mind the tense relationship between political interests and the service "official" historians provide governments. Before using government publications for research on international affairs, scholars should read Zala's book.

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JOSEPH A. AMATO. *Rethinking Home: A Case for Writing Local History*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2002. Pp. xvi, 245.

All historians tend to be defensive about the kind of history they write, but none are more likely to fret about it than those whose subject is a self-consciously provincial community. Joseph A. Amato claims that local history "satisfies an innate human desire to be connected to a place. It feeds our hunger to experience life directly and on intimate terms" (p. 4). Yet academic historians rarely take it seriously. "If they bother even to notice local and regional historians, professional historians judge them to be narrowly focused fact gatherers and eccentric storytellers, or they are irritated by the disdain that amateur local historians show for the academy's No Trespassing signs." To his credit, Amato sees the problem as a two-way street: the objects of scorn are also the purveyors of scorn. "[L]ocal historians go about their business as oblivious to professional historians and their canons as professional historians are indifferent to them" (p. 9).

In this book, Amato, the author of several studies of life in rural Minnesota, makes a case for local history as "the natural link between immediate experience and general history" (p. 4). Armed with a lively imagination, wide reading in European and American history, a commitment to contemporary public conversation, and a witty, epigrammatic style, Amato rejects what he imagines is a popular stereotype of local historians as amateur antiquarians. Using his own career as a touchstone, he argues that local history informed by the questions and methodologies of other scholars and energized by the role its practitioners can play in local political struggles is "contrarian" history. Amato has a fondness for darkness, and his essays on anger, the clandestine, and madness suggest interpretive possibilities at odds with a conventional notion of local history as an uncritical celebration of a self-contained place whose residents revel in a uniqueness more imagined than real.

Amato's thoughtful essays invite conversation, and I am eager to talk. Much as I loved his interest in the stuff of ordinary life, in the sounds, smells, and landscapes that most of us take for granted, the idea of the midwestern countryside as a last bastion of defense

against globalization and homogenization is a romantic one at best. As disturbing is the scant attention Amato pays to political power. Local history has to take into account the role of the state (broadly understood), for political boundaries and institutions are as personal in their application as they are arbitrary in their origins. And Amato's equation of local history with rural history is troubling. Is there no local history in the Bronx?

Most perplexing is Amato's insistence that professional historians disdain local history. Academic historians have long written well-informed histories of particular communities. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard* (1990) and John Mack Faragher's *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (1986) convey a specific sense of place even as they engage questions of interest to a wide spectrum of readers. No one would describe them as local histories because they are both about a lot more than a river valley in Maine at the turn of the nineteenth century or a rural area in nineteenth-century Illinois; moreover, they were written largely for an academic audience. Local history, on the other hand, is, by definition provincial history, its practitioners less interested in the reaction of professionals than that of their neighbors. To make it relevant to a wider group of readers is, to some extent, to undermine its purpose and its charm.

Perhaps we should not worry so much about categories of professional identity, not try to turn the mild epithet of "local historian" into a badge of honor, but rather concentrate on the hardest task we all have in common: developing the dialectic between the particular and the universal. Shouldn't we all read widely? Shouldn't we all respect the contingencies of time and the peculiarities of place? Shouldn't we all use the concrete to talk about the universal, and vice versa? Professional history is not all about theories and generalizations any more than local history is all about anecdotes and boosterism. And while we should celebrate the fact that there is no single model of how to do history, we might at least agree that all good history involves saying something substantive in a way that allows our readers to make sense of what we write on their own terms: which encourages them, in other words, to transform our local knowledge into their local knowledge.

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JAMES RAVEN. *London Booksellers and American Customers: Transatlantic Literary Community and the Charleston Library Society, 1748-1811*. (The Carolina Low Country and the Atlantic World.) Columbia: University of South Carolina Press. 2002. Pp. xxii, 522. \$59.95.