

Victor D  nninghaus. *Die Deutschen in der Moskauer Gesellschaft: Symbiose und Konflikte (1494-1941).* Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2002. 576 pp. EUR 29.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-3-486-56638-3.



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Victor D  nninghaus's *Die Deutschen in der Moskauer Gesellschaft: Symbiose und Konflikte (1494-1941)* fills an important gap in the historiography of Germans in Russia. Historical attention to the hundreds of thousands of Germans in Russia has tended to focus on the Germans who lived in the Volga valley. Indeed, D  nninghaus himself published a companion study to the book currently under review entitled *Revolution, Reform und Krieg: Die Deutschen an der Wolga im ausgehenden Zarenreich*, which had as its emphasis precisely this community.[1] In comparison to the Volga Germans, who numbered half a million on the eve of the 1905 revolution, Germans in Moscow comprised a comparatively small group. At its height in 1912, there were 20,209 German speakers in Moscow, or less than 2 percent of the total population. If absolute numbers are to be the gauge of historical importance, the Germans in Moscow should merit little more than a footnote in the historiography of Germans in Russia. Nonetheless, D  nninghaus makes a convincing case that the Moscow community is more deserving of historiographical attention than its relatively small numbers suggest.

Although his book examines a broad period, the bulk of D  nninghaus's study is concentrated on the decades leading up to the Revolution of 1917, while the years between 1494 and 1871 are concentrated in one

twenty-page section, and a mere fourteen suffice to describe the period between the Russian Revolution and the beginning of World War II. D  nninghaus's much more thorough coverage of the intervening years emphasizes the organizations that structured the German community in Moscow. After laying out some of the basic demographic structure of the community, D  nninghaus turns to churches, schools, and German-speaking organizations, including everything from religious-oriented youth groups to the more explicitly political and nationalist organizations founded after the 1905 revolution. D  nninghaus also includes an informative chapter which details the difficult experiences of Moscow Germans during the anti-German persecution of World War I. The text is clearly laid out (if a bit repetitive at times) and each chapter helpfully concludes with a series of one- or two-sentence conclusions that can be drawn from the material that he presents. These conclusions are never less than convincing, if hardly provocative or startlingly new. Indeed, the same could be said of the study as a whole. D  nninghaus has provided his readers with an extremely well-researched study, but he is less interested in going beyond the minutiae of his evidence to make larger or more challenging points.

In his demographic and organizational history sections, D  nninghaus emphasizes the increasingly po-

their national) consciousness? As is perhaps to be expected in such a wide-ranging study, D  nninghaus does not devote time to such questions, but the very richness of his subject matter makes one wish that he had. Indeed, D  nninghaus might have usefully reorganized his section on organizations within the German community. Instead of cataloguing each organization, he might have organized these chapters around his conclusions and demonstrated how the organizations he discusses related to them. D  nninghaus's work in this regard will hopefully be a spur to further research on many of these organizations.

In contrast to the almost encyclopedic presentation of the first three quarters of the book, D  nninghaus's chapter on the Moscow Germans during World War I reads more like a traditional monographic study. In this chapter, D  nninghaus makes several highly interesting observations, such as his mention that the German citizenship law of 1913, which allowed more *Auslandsdeutsche* to claim German citizenship, was seen in Russia as allowing all Germans to become dual citizens—thus rendering their loyalty to Russia suspect (p. 368). The war was a tragedy for the Moscow German community. Laws forbade the German purchase of property and placed restrictions on the public use of the German language and the public expression of German culture (including German religious activities). Meanwhile, Germans suffered insults from the press as well as public officials. In May, 1915, anti-German pogroms in Moscow devastated the community. D  nninghaus convincingly argues that these were the result of both the economic and political consequences of Russia's poor conduct of the war as well as propaganda painting the Germans as "internal enemies." Members of the German community became scapegoats for economic and social privation. But here, too, D  nninghaus's research inspires several questions: Although D  nninghaus does not make the comparison, one wonders how the scapegoating of the German community during World War I related to anti-Semitic pogroms before and during the war. In general, how much of the German experience in Russia was unique? And to what degree does the German experience shed light on the wider world of ethnic minorities in Imperial Russia? D  nninghaus occasionally provides hints at the answers to these questions, but clearly his interest lies more in the inner workings of the German community itself and its image (at least during World War I) among the Russian population of the city and the state authorities.

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of a long-standing but little-known community of Germans abroad. While he does not probe the potential historiographical implications of the Moscow Germans' peculiar blend of national, class, and urban identity, this study is nonetheless a solid contribution to the field.

Note

[1]. Victor Dönninghaus, *Revolution, Reform und Krieg*, (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2002), reviewed for H-German by Renate Bridenthal (April 2003), at <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=63011053571701>. See also Dietmar Neutatz, *Die "deutsche Frage" im Schwarzmeergebiet und*

in Wolhynien: Politik, Wirtschaft, Mentalitäten und Alltag im Spannungsfeld von Nationalismus und Modernisierung (1856-1914) (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1993), and Ingeborg Fleischhauer, *Die Deutschen im Zarenreich: zwei Jahrhunderte deutsch-russische Kulturgemeinschaft* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986); James Long, *From Privileged to Dispossessed: The Volga Germans, 1860-1917* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988). On the Baltic Germans, whose issues and experiences were substantially different from either the Moscow or Volga communities, see Andrew Ezergailis and Gert Pistohlkors, *The Russian Baltic Provinces between the 1905/1917 Revolutions* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1982).

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