

woman for causing the depression and chaos in Germany. Women Nazis were in reaction to the "New Woman" and accepted their second sex status, provided their lives were free of male interference.

Women's membership in the Nazi party remained low except for the few enamored with Hitler. Early women Nazi leaders studied Hitler's ideology, wrote their own tracts and tried to defend the Party's policy of misogyny to non-Nazi women's groups. The results were disastrous. They were ridiculed by German women and scorned by male Nazis, who would not tolerate powerful women. Only women who could be used were given a role. In 1933, one woman, a female eugenics expert, but not a Nazi, was co-opted by the Nazis to subvert, then integrate Germany's civic and women's groups into the new Reich.

By December 1933, Gertrud Scholtz-Klink was appointed the National Women's leader for the Third Reich. She was outside Hitler's inner circle, but promoted the Nazi myth of the sturdy peasant family unit becoming the backbone of German society. Woman was most valued for her docility. Still, she was expected to protect her home from modern influences. Scholtz-Klink supported the idea of the strong happy family, but Nazi policy strove for producing racially pure babies. Women were valued only as producers of Aryan children: sons for the local Nazi Youth groups and daughters trained to be mothers of the masters.

The last domestic conquest of the Nazis against women was organized religion. Protestant women gave only conditional support to the Nazis. Scholtz-Klink used the Protestant church models to organize youth projects, eugenics and motherhood groups and then outlawed the church groups. The Catholic women's situation was different because of the Concordat that protected Hitler from Vatican criticism in exchange for protecting German Catholics from Nazi take over. The Concordat rendered women helpless to act until Church opinion was made clear. Catholic mothers were upset with indoctrination and "Political Catholicism" began and continued underground. Catholic women continued their influence over Catholic teachers, mothers, welfare and health care workers. Christian women did not so much undermine Nazi rule as keep a distance from it.

As for the women who said no to Nazism, there remained few resources. Women's "gifts" of deception, manipulation and "innocuous appearance" allowed the exchange of information, moved the "paper lifeline" of resistance along in baby buggies and "Kaffee and Kuchen" (Coffee & Cakes) visits. Nazi misogyny said women were *beneath* suspicion and less risk to the Third Reich. In fact, women were arrested more often for offensive comments and ideological crimes than as *de facto* resisters.

From the outset Jewish women linked the Nazi misogyny to anti-Semitism — but to no avail. Their attempts to seek support from non-Jewish women's groups resulted in the dissolution of the umbrella women's group, the Federation of German Women's Associations. They abandoned all women rather than resist the Nazi demand to expel Jewish women. Jewish women knew disaster was impending as they walked the streets and their children came home rejected by schoolfriends and telling stories of brutality.

Nazi rule had serious consequences for all women. Women participated in the genocide although they never planned the policy. Nazi policy understood woman as the incubator — a policy that affected woman's private life. The elite's wives kept the home as a refuge from the horrors that their husbands saw every day in the camps. Only a few wives of the SS participated in recycling Jewish property; SS officers were told to keep their camp-related work a secret from their wives and children.

There are several aspects of the book that I personally found fascinating. Koonz has researched her topic thoroughly. Where she is short of information, or encounters methodology problems she says so — a mark of sound feminist scholarship. In her reconstruction of the hidden story, she considers the advantages and disadvantages of being a woman in the face of Nazi misogyny. My only disappointment was that there is little about Nazi treatment of lesbians; this information, though scarce, does exist in two German books. That lesbians were not traditionally understood as potential mothers may account for the lack of propagandistic material on either side concerning them. I would encourage women to read *Mothers in the Fatherland* for infor-

mation, academic excellence — and a painful reminder that the struggle to liberate women often results in a powerful right wing reaction.

Unfortunately Daphne Read's review of *Balancing Acts* (Helena Goscilo, ed. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989), did not arrive in time to be published in "Soviet Women." The review will be published in the forthcoming issue of *CWS/cf*.

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