

military dictatorship to the Brazilian version. Eduardo Frei comments that both Communists and socialists were dishonest and corrupt as officials of the Allende government, but the former turned over bribe money to the party while the latter kept it for their own personal use.

The book could have been richer had Alexander added personal editorial notes. In too many places, he lets the presidents speak “untruths” and even fabricate history. Those familiar with Latin American history will not be duped by this, and may even enjoy the vignettes. But for a book of this magnitude, Alexander could have shared his personal insights and experience from five decades as a distinguished student of Latin American politics and economy. In spite of this weakness, however, the book makes fascinating reading and will be an invaluable source for historical research.

EUL-SOO PANG, Colorado School of Mines

*Flucht vor Nürnberg? Deutsche und österreichische Einwanderung in Argentinien, 1945–1955.* By HOLGER M. MEDING. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1992. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. ix, 311 pp. Cloth.

After 1945, the vast majority of European war criminals—Germans and their allies and collaborators—escaped accountability, much less punishment. The how and why of this phenomenon have remained a puzzle for many years. For a long time it was customary in the United States to identify Argentina as the principal bolt-hole of the twentieth century’s most detestable fugitives. In the past decade or so, however, a more nuanced understanding has emerged. Argentina has hardly been exculpated, but it is now evident that complicity and culpability were widely shared by the United States, Great Britain and its dominions (Australia and Canada; South Africa has yet to be heard from), France (the foreign legion had its uses), other European and Latin American nations, and organs of the Roman Catholic church. No accounting from the former Soviet bloc is yet in sight.

Holger Meding’s remarkable book, the expansion of a 1991 doctoral dissertation at the University of Cologne, is a major contribution to recent historiography. Using secondary sources, Meding describes Allied planning and execution of a comprehensive policy toward a conquered Germany; then, shifting his focus to Argentina, he describes the German collectivity on the Plata and its involvement in the machinations of the 1930s and 1940s. The final chapter of the opening section concerns Peronismo, Perón’s plans for postwar immigration (linked, of course, to his industrialization program), and his personal stance toward Germans and Germany.

The remainder of the book draws heavily on personal interviews Meding conducted in Argentina with postwar German immigrants and the Argentines and German-Argentines who helped to bring them there. The author obtained access

to information that many, this reviewer included, had thought forever lost to historians; moreover, these personal accounts of evasion and migration exist in sufficient quantity to allow for the rigorous cross-checking that the topic obviously demands. They are supplemented by published and unpublished memoirs by Germans and investigative accounts in other languages, notably Danish and Swedish.

Why did these immigrants leave Germany? The majority, for traditional reasons: hopelessness and homelessness. SS veterans, German and non-German, were barred from their accustomed occupations. A minority fled the certain fate of prison or the gallows. How many were they? Meding estimates 30,000 to 40,000 for the postwar decade 1945–55. These included legal and illegal immigrants, repatriated German-Argentines caught in Europe in 1939, and *Volksdeutsche* displaced from the Baltic, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans.

How they got to Argentina constitutes the book's most fascinating section. Apart from the well-known U-530 and U-977 affairs, no mystery submarines attempted the journey. Systematically, Meding considers the legal and clandestine routes and the involvement of various individuals and groups, official and otherwise. *Flüchtlinge* of all conditions received passive assistance from negligent functionaries and active help from Nazi sympathizers, anti-Communists (especially Catholic clergy and the U.S. military), and corruptible officials (especially in Italy). Even individual Allied soldiers were not above temptation. Meding traces the efforts of German-Argentines such as Carlos Schulz to organize transatlantic passage for sizable groups. Finally, Meding concludes that no secret Nazi organization—no ODESSA, no Spinne—ever existed. Meding examines in detail the Argentine occupations of all these immigrants, including military service, research, and urban pursuits. He discusses the conflicts in the postwar German-speaking community, which split into unreconcilable halves.

Focused as it is on German-speaking immigrants, the book sheds little light on ancillary questions concerning the hindrances to postwar Jewish immigration to Argentina, the entry of large numbers of Italian and Croatian Fascists and other anti-Communist “assets” from Eastern Europe, and the use of Argentina by British and U.S. intelligence as a “warehouse” for particularly “dirty” goods until such elements could be safely incorporated into the Cold War military, political-warfare, and scientific establishments. Meding has not yet consulted British and American archives, which may still conceal disquieting revelations. Nevertheless, on its own terms the book is an amazing tour de force. Thanks to this resourceful young researcher, most of the outstanding puzzles are puzzles no longer.

RONALD C. NEWTON, Simon Fraser University