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Gretchen E. Schafft. *From Racism to Genocide: Anthropology in the Third Reich.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004. 297 pp. \$36.00. ISBN 0-252-02930-5.

Schafft's book is an innovative amalgam of historical research, an overview of historical events, ethical-political reasoning, personal experiences, and psychological reflections regarding the role of anthropologists in the Third Reich. Because of the combination of historical, ethical, and psychological perspectives, this monograph is valuable for both academic and nonscholarly readers. Schafft's studies include extensive archival research on material located in Germany, Poland, Austria, and the United States. For instance, she discovered in the Smithsonian Institution's National Anthropological Archives hair samples, fingerprints, drawings, questionnaires, pictures, and file cards of research subjects, initially accumulated by the *Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit* (IDO), specifically from the section on race and *Volkstum* research. This institute was occupied with idiosyncratic topics such as showing that Copernicus was German and not "inferiorly" Polish, and, more important, its researchers were deeply involved in applying racial theory in the field. Schafft demonstrates that anthropologists were involved in sorting population groups, in the certification of race, in racial and medical research on people and body parts, and in the establishment of Auschwitz (Fritz Arlt).

Following and promoting an ideological commitment to social Darwinism, German anthropologists were committed to selection (*Auslese*) and extermination (*Ausmerzen*) of those who were deemed to be unworthy, on the basis of the concept of German blood. Schafft's research produces new knowledge and her historical summaries, provided on an intermittent basis, make her arguments more lucid for those who are less familiar with the history of the Third Reich. She provides an overview of the rise of Hitler; his support of anthropology; the development of the war in the East; the role of science, especially anthropology and medicine; developments at the end of the war; and German continuity after the war, in terms of personal networks. She also includes a chapter on "race and racism" based on controversies during that time but also regarding the latest research findings in anthropology. It is evident that the involvement of anthropology in the ideological and practical battles of the Third Reich lends itself to ethical reflection, and Schafft does not hesitate in identifying individuals and organizations leading and participating in the racial discourses of the Nazis. She points to the *Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft* in Germany and discusses the ambiguous role that Max Planck played (after the war the KWG was renamed the *Max Planck Society*). She also describes the involvement of the Rockefeller Foundation in funding research conducted by Eugen Fischer in accordance with Nazi ideology. She further analyzes the lack of ethical reflection in past and current contexts: Schafft was asked by an anthropological colleague for permission to use IDO data that she had catalogued at the Smithsonian. But when he was not able to provide a purpose or goal for his research, Schafft declined the request. She also recounts her experiences in doing archival research in Germany and Austria and the various hurdles she had to overcome.

The reluctance in these countries is explained by German terms such as *Nestbeschmutzer* (one who dirties the nest), and she identifies the difficulties of whistleblowers in receiving positions at German universities after the war (Saller). Yet, highly involved individuals such as Verschuer, Fischer, Magnussen, Lenz, and Muckermann continued their networks and avoided responsibility after the war, with Mengele escaping to South America. She discusses leaders in the field of German Nazi anthropology but also ordinary researchers such as Elfriede Fliethmann and Dora Kahlich, who studied Jews in the Tarnow Ghetto, and with

whom she begins her investigations in the book. Schafft provides psychological interpretations when she discusses individuals involved in racial research. She has an ethical voice when she looks at the trivialities covered in the letters of these two women while at the same time Jews were experiencing the most horrible circumstances.

Whereas Schafft excels in some of the archival research, her psychological interpretations regarding motivations may lack evidence. Some of the behavior can be explained by a bureaucracy of research in which the fate of subjects was irrelevant and where it was normal (but clearly unethical) to rename subjects as material and pieces. We also think that it would have reinforced the argument to include more German-published studies on this topic. Nevertheless, this book is an excellent case study on the banality of evil. German anthropologists were involved in genocide due to character flaws, professional irresponsibility, false ideological commitments, the dynamic of anthropology as a discipline, institutional constraints, and sociohistorical developments. The book, which understands anthropologists as perpetrators and makes pleas for responsible science, is as much an ethical as it is a historical study.

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