

Citation style

Edele, Mark: Rezension über: Christian Hartmann, Unternehmen Barbarossa. Der deutsche Krieg im Osten 1941–1945, München: Beck, 2011, in: Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas / jgo.e-reviews, JGO 61 (2013), 3, S. 460-461, heruntergeladen über Website



Franz Steiner Verlag

IM AUFTRAG DES
Leibniz-Instituts für Ost- und Südosteuropaforschung

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an der Erhaltung des materiellen und politischen Status quo bestimmt wurde.

Beachtung verdienen neben dem Text der Monographie auch die Anhänge, etwa die Edition des Privilegs Sigismunds I. an Smolensk aus dem Jahr 1513, sowie die Tabellen, welche die Lebenswege der Bojaren aus Brjansk und Smolensk nach dem Übergang beider Städte unter die Moskauer Herrschaft vergleichend nachverfolgen. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit verdient das äußerst informative kartographische Material, das von dem weißrussischem

Forscher Viktor Temušev erstellt wurde.

Resümierend ist zu betonen, dass das Buch von Michail Krom zurecht große Popularität und hohes Ansehen genießt. Nach unserer Meinung resultiert dies vor allem daraus, dass das Werk mit seinem sachlichen und ausgewogenen Ansatz ein Beispiel dafür ist, dass die politische Geschichte Weißrusslands im späten Mittelalter ohne ideologische Vorurteile und hurrapatriotische Klischees geschrieben werden kann.

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CHRISTIAN HARTMANN: *Wehrmacht im Ostkrieg. Front und militärisches Hinterland 1941/42*. München: Oldenbourg, 2010. 928 S., Abb., Tab. = Quellen und Darstellungen zur Zeitgeschichte, 75. ISBN: 978-3-486-70225-5.

CHRISTIAN HARTMANN: *Unternehmen Barbarossa. Der deutsche Krieg im Osten 1941–1945*. München: Beck, 2011. 128 S., 6 Abb., 5 Ktn. = Beck'sche Reihe Wissen, 2714. ISBN: 978-3-406-61226-8.

To find oneself unable to put down a 928 page research monograph is not the most common of experiences. Christian Hartmann's book *Wehrmacht im Ostkrieg*, then, is unusual: elegantly structured, well written, with a good eye for telling detail, full of eloquent quotations, and spiked with a well-measured dose of sarcasm, it is academic history at its best. Combining strategic and operational with social and "new military history", Hartmann eschews the deep gulfs which have come to separate the histories of military operations from those of war crimes, the Holocaust, or even everyday life in the field, not to speak of the economic, social, and cultural histories of the war making societies. This masterpiece should become compulsory reading for any student of the German-Soviet war and of military violence in the twentieth century more generally.

Focusing on five divisions during the first year of the German-Soviet war, Hartmann charts a dynamic of increased radicalization of German war making in the encounter with realities, which were largely self-inflicted and only partially due to the enemy's uncompromising ferocity. The nadir was reached in the winter of 1941/42, when the distinctions between legitimate and criminal conduct, between front and hinterland, and between combatant and civilian were all but lost. This narrative

is not altogether new, although Hartmann stresses the Soviet side's contribution to the barbarisation of Hitler's army more than, say, Omer Bartov. The novelty lies in what came next, a process of, if not de-escalation, then at least re-calibration of violence in the first half of 1942: partisan warfare became more differentiated, the policy towards POWs less barbaric and more interested in exploiting their labour and, hence, sparing their lives. The civilian population was now seen not only as a potential threat, but also as an asset the Wehrmacht needed to foster. In an important order of 3 March 1942 and in the subsequent prosecution of criminal behaviour, the commander of the 2nd Panzer Army, Generaloberst Rudolf Schmidt, made a concerted attempt to put an end to the random murder, plunder, and destruction his troops had become used to in the preceding months. This study thus confirms on a wider empirical basis what Ben Shepherd has found for the 221st Security Division, also part of Hartmann's "sample". Rather than ever deepening barbarisation (on both sides), or the implementation of a blueprint on the German and the unleashing of "integral brutality" (Amir Weiner) on the Soviet side, Hartmann notes, like Shepherd, that "the escalation of violence was not a permanent state of affairs" (p. 792). The tentative de-escalation of 1942 was, of course, followed by its reversal thereafter, when the tactic of scorched earth was transformed into a strategy of all-out destruction and spoliation of enemy territory. Nevertheless, the recovery of the moment of 1942, when other alternatives were at least considered, is an important corrective to the prevailing views of linear processes of brutalisation.

This diagnosis, however, does not apply to the systematic destruction of the Soviet Union's Jews. Hartmann leaves no doubt about the Wehrmacht's complicity in the Holocaust. More than just

bystanders, “the German armed forces were also accomplices, at times even the motor of the extermination of the Jews“. Their “main guilt” (*Hauptschuld*), however, lies in not having opposed the genocide, which began as an “experiment” (Götz Aly). Once it became clear that the military would “accept, promote, or even welcome the murder, the perpetrators knew they had a free hand in their politics of extermination” (p. 659).

By “the” Wehrmacht, Hartmann means, first and foremost, the military leadership. He agrees with Dieter Pohl, that among the ranks direct participants in the selection of victims, the organisation or support of killing operations, or the shootings themselves were maybe “several tens of thousands” out of 10 million Wehrmacht personnel serving in the Soviet Union, i. e., well below 1 percent (p. 661). However, he does not let the 99 percent off the hook: “Even smaller, though, is that group of members of the Wehrmacht, who articulated their disquiet about the Holocaust, or even resisted it. This means that we are dealing here with a broad, apparently indifferent middle section” (p. 661). After a close analysis of the available evidence on anti-Semitism in the ranks, he concludes that the non-participation of the majority was due to lack of opportunity, not ideological distance to the Nazis. The Holocaust was implemented not at the front-line, where the vast majority of German soldiers fought, but in the hinterland, where only weak security divisions operated side by side with police and SS forces. Thus, the majority was not confronted with the question of how to react to a genocide unfolding in front of their eyes. Hartmann has little hope that most would have behaved much differently from their comrades who did face the slaughter. “Given the voices we heard in this chapter,” he concludes, “it was probably better that this part of the Wehrmacht did not have to make this decision” (p. 698).

Nevertheless, Hartmann does not assume that each and every German soldier was a crazed Nazi or “Hitler’s willing executioner”, although he provides some memorable examples for both. A *Leitmotiv* of his account is the diversity of the soldiery of 18 million (10 million on the Eastern Front). The Wehrmacht reflected the complexity of German society as a whole; the only division which was more or less absent (despite the existence of *Wehrmachtsshelferinnen*) was gender. Other-

wise, as Generaloberst von Brauchitsch put it, one could find within the army “all naturally existing and all artificially created oppositions of a people of 80 million” (p. 94). Moreover, like any modern military machine, the army was also functionally highly differentiated. Consequently, as Hartmann demonstrates again and again, there was more than just one “war experience” of “the German soldier” in the East.

The second book reviewed here, *Unternehmen Barbarossa*, is very different from the monograph: a slim volume of 122 pages of text, with a short but fine bibliography and no footnotes whatsoever, this is a very brief introduction to this conflict, catering to undergraduate students and the general public alike. The lack of footnotes is the only true setback of this introduction, due doubtlessly to editorial policy of the C. H. Beck Wissen series (comparable approximately to Oxford University Press’s *Very Short Introductions*). This short book rivals its monographical brother in quality while surpassing it dramatically in scope. Here, we find not only a brief outline of the military history of the German effort and a sketch of occupational policies, but also a broad outline of the Soviet response. Particularly noteworthy is the balanced chapter on Soviet crimes, a beacon in a historiography marred by extreme judgements. But the book does much more than just focusing on the conduct of war of both sides. Moving far beyond the military sphere, Hartmann also covers high politics, diplomacy, aftermath, and long-term effects of this war. That it manages to do all of this coherently in such a small space is no less than a *tour de force*: a real feat of compression and synthesis.

With these two books Hartmann has proven mastery of two extremely different historiographical genres: the research monograph and the short introduction. Few historians manage to do both well, and Hartmann is among this minority. His research is impeccable, his judgement sound and subtle, and his writing fluid. One can only hope that both of these landmark studies will be translated into English soon. The monograph deserves a readership far beyond the circle of connoisseurs of Germanic research tomes, and the slimmer volume is the best available introduction to this war in any language.

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