

tion—as well as pressure from the state—decided the issue. This does not exonerate Farben executives: in fact Farben's choice of the site itself led to the expansion of the camp and "its eventual evolution into a manufacturer of death. As on other occasions under the Third Reich, Farben's response to politically ordained choices accelerated the dynamic that produced them" (pp. 350–351).

Setting the stage for a crime and committing it are, of course, not the same thing. Farben executives, though, did more than inadvertently facilitate mass exterminations at Auschwitz. A subsidiary produced Zyklon B, the gas used in the camp. No one bothered to question the increase in orders for the powerful poison. The Auschwitz factory worked inmates nearly to death. When they disappeared to the main camp a few miles down the road, no one inquired about their fate. The inaction of Farben executives in the face of mounting evidence about the mass exterminations at Auschwitz was their most significant failing. Indeed, there is no evidence that any of them even contemplated doing anything about the killings.

Industry and Ideology does not exhaust the historical work that remains to be done on the Farben concern; Hayes devotes very little space to its place in the history of technology, for instance. His treatment of the most important issues surrounding the relationship between Farben and the Nazi regime is, however, definitive.

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German Eugenics

Race Hygiene and National Efficiency. The Eugenics of Wilhelm Schallmayer. SHEILA FAITH WEISS. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988. xii, 245 pp. \$35.

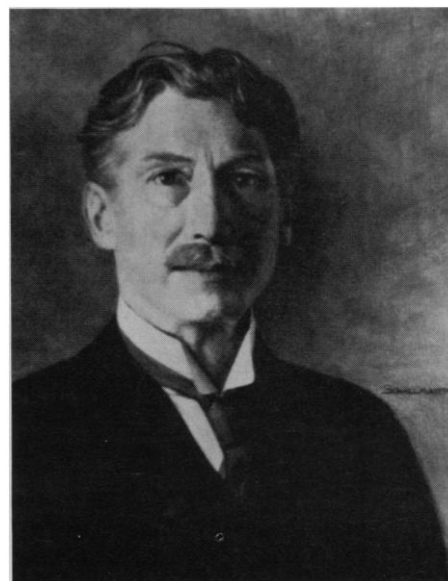
Sheila Weiss's fine book is much more than a scientific biography of the German doctor and eugenicist Wilhelm Schallmayer. *Race Hygiene and National Efficiency* also contributes to the study of ideology and science. Whereas eugenics in Britain and America have been studied on their own terms, unfortunately German eugenics is usually examined in a teleological fashion, as little more than one of the roots of the murderous National Socialist racial policy. But the work of Schallmayer and others should be taken out of the shadow of Auschwitz, as Weiss has done, in order to illumi-

nate German eugenics as well as biology and medicine under Hitler.

German eugenics was a product of its social, industrial, and professional contexts. The rapid industrialization of Germany during the 19th century brought with it disturbing social problems—including alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, and prostitution—that challenged the German medical community. Social "degeneration" was seen as a straightforward medical problem, indeed often as a question of heredity, for the writings of Charles Darwin and subsequent Social Darwinists were influential in Wilhelminian Germany. These three main concerns, social, professional, and "selectionist," led Schallmayer and other German intellectuals to turn to a study of "race hygiene and national efficiency." Only by an efficient management of the hereditary resources of the nation, Schallmayer argued, could the German Empire prosper.

One of the most interesting aspects of Weiss's story is the conflict between eugenicists such as Schallmayer, advocates of the enlightened regulation of the biological wealth of *all* races in the nation, and Aryan supremacists, who both believed in and sought to buttress the inherent superiority of their race. In a sense, it was a struggle between race hygiene and the hygiene of races. Schallmayer could and did argue that all races contain individuals with superior or inferior traits, and eugenics therefore had to transcend racial boundaries. However, other eugenicists claimed that since some races *were* superior, they should be favored at the expense of their countrymen. But as Weiss points out, it would be wrong to imply that there were two separate schools of race hygiene, one meritocratic, the other racist. All German eugenicists shared a technocratic logic and advocated a program of hereditary efficiency and managerial control in order to reduce future social costs. Inevitably, these programs included "negative" as well as "positive" eugenics: proscription of reproduction for inferior humans, and encouragement of procreation for those perceived as superior.

Throughout the German Empire and the Weimar Republic, the eugenicists' dire forecasts of hereditary degeneration and calls for a renewal of the biological strength of the German nation were generally disregarded. Thus many race hygienists were pleased when the National Socialists seized power. Finally, a German government recognized the significance of eugenics. It was no coincidence that racism and race hygiene became inextricably intertwined *after* 1933. But perhaps Weiss's greatest service to the reader is her demonstration that the most important aspect of continuity between pre- and post-



Wilhelm Schallmayer, 1918. [From *Race Hygiene and National Efficiency*; courtesy of Frederick Schallmayer]

1933 German eugenics was not race but logic. Race hygiene implied a relationship between population and power, a technocratic conception of population as a natural resource subject to some form of rational control. Eugenicists placed people into the categories of "valuable" and "valueless," and such a distinction was employed to horrific effect during the Third Reich.

At first glance, a reader might wonder why Weiss did not include a fuller treatment of eugenics after Schallmayer's death in 1919, especially given that this book is of modest length and Weiss has examined this subject elsewhere (*Osiris* 3, 193–236 [1987]). In fact, Weiss's decision to concentrate on Schallmayer's race hygiene and to devote only a 16-page epilogue to eugenics in Weimar and under the swastika is an effective literary device that helps the reader recognize that race hygiene, a necessary, but not sufficient, portion of National Socialist biological policy, was not the work of ideologues or ethnocentric extremists alone, but also of respectable scientists. Race hygiene was a result of class bias, professional arrogance, and optimistic scientific naïveté—hardly factors peculiar to Germans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Weiss remarks that her book may be provocative. I hope so, in the sense that it be widely read and critically discussed. But what she has to tell us should be no surprise. A better reaction would be recognition of what should have been obvious: when science and ideology interact, neither remains the same.

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