



he offers this judgment, Retallack presents the differing views of other German historians in a fair and open-minded way. This is a work in which a leading scholar brings fresh analytical insights to bear on the age of Bismarck and Wilhelm. It has the additional merit of providing an insider's account of the development in recent years of the website on *German History in Documents and Images* (<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/>). **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*S. Bailey, Knox College*

CC 53-2805 DC801 2015-14639 CIP
Rollo-Koster, Joëlle. **Avignon and its papacy, 1309–1417: popes, institutions, and society.** Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. 314p bibl index afp ISBN 9781442215320 cloth, \$75.00; ISBN 9781442215344 ebook, \$74.99

In this survey of the Avignon papacy and the period of the Great Western Schism (1378–1417), Rollo-Koster (Univ. of Rhode Island) sets out to “rehabilitate” the Avignon papacy from a reputation that began as early as Petrarch’s criticism of Avignon as “the Babylon of the West.” Although the author acknowledges the Avignon popes’ emphasis on “efficient productivity” rather than spirituality, she shows that their institutional achievements, including an effective bureaucracy, a centralized fiscal system, and the development of archives and recording procedures, were innovative and provided long-term stability. She credits much of this to Pope John XXII (r. 1316–1334), “an administrative genius” and the “architect of papal centralization” who established the foundations on which his successors built. Rollo-Koster further challenges the view that the Avignon papacy turned its back on Rome; rather, it recognized the temporary status of its residence and sought to return to Rome, even as it transformed the village of Avignon into a cosmopolitan city and a spiritual capital. Employing her familiarity with Avignon’s archives and the streets of the city, Rollo-Koster provides English readers with a valuable introduction to a dynamic, if controversial, period in papal history. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.—*J. Harrie, California State University, Bakersfield*

CC 53-2806 DG417 2014-42156 CIP
The Routledge handbook of contemporary Italy: history, politics, society, ed. by Andrea Mammone, Ercole Giap Parini, and Giuseppe A. Veltri. Routledge, 2015. 354p bibl index ISBN 9780415604178 cloth, \$215.00

The aim of this work is admirable and largely achieved. This handbook assesses selected aspects of modern Italy’s history, culture, politics, and economy in an interdisciplinary way. The commitment to asking and answering essential questions is valuable. However, what makes this undertaking particularly worthy is that this effort was undertaken by 38 authors in varied disciplines. A law professor, a psychologist, and a geographer join historians, sociologists, economists, and political scientists to analyze geographic and cultural differences, crime, women, youth, mass media, religion, big business, traditional and recent political movements, and emigration and the crisis of current immigration. The insights into contemporary Italy are at times wider than they are deep. However, the very nature of such a broad undertaking and the book’s proclaimed purpose necessitate an acknowledgement that the work is both a collection of important information about Italy and a call to further research. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.—*P. Lorenzini, Saint Xavier University*

CC 53-2807 HQ76 2015-8467 CIP
Wackerfuss, Andrew. **Stormtrooper families: homosexuality and community in the early Nazi movement.** Harrington Park Press, 2015. 384p index afp ISBN 9781939594044 cloth, \$90.00; ISBN 9781939594051 pbk, \$35.00; ISBN 9781939594068 ebook, \$22.99

Historian Wackerfuss (Georgetown) provides a very readable history of the *Sturmabteilung* (SA), or stormtroopers, one of the earliest wings of Nazism. Focusing on the SA’s actions as a paramilitary group in Hamburg in the years leading up to 1933, Wackerfuss traces the group’s origins in the Great War, showcasing a series of violent actions intended to ensure the group’s position of power in local politics. In doing so, the author effectively teases out tensions between stormtroopers’ relationships to their families on the one hand, and on the other to the strong homosocial kinship networks they built, which were central to the emergence, growth, and ultimate disappearance of the SA on the Night of the Long Knives in 1934. Additionally, the study raises important questions about the links between same-sex desire, sexuality, and politics, and interrogates the ever-present specter of Nazism in public memory and the popular imagination. The inclusion of a broad historical overview, a thorough explanation of the terminology used throughout the study, and a glossary of relevant terms make the book highly accessible to a wide range of readers. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.—*B. Boovy, Oregon State University*

CC 53-2808 DJ109 2014-43018 CIP
Wielenga, Friso. **A history of the Netherlands: from the sixteenth century to the present day,** tr. by Lynne Richards. Bloomsbury Academic, 2015. 323p bibl indexes ISBN 9781472569592 pbk, \$29.95

This volume fills an important gap: to the best of this reviewer’s knowledge, there is no recent history, in English, of the Netherlands. However, this volume does not include a brief summary of the pre-1500 period. Most of the book is political and economic history, discussing in detail the rise of the Dutch Republic and its important role in world affairs. Only one chapter describes arts and science during this period. In the 18th century, the republic was overshadowed by Britain and France and became part of Napoleon’s empire. The Netherlands regained independence in 1813 and for 15 years was united with Belgium. The 19th century saw the rise of the parliamentary state, the party system, and the “pillarization” of society, i.e., the evolution of different social categories. However, society never made it very clear who belonged to which “pillar.” Wielenga (Dutch studies, Westphalian Wilhelms-Univ., Munster, Germany) also discusses the colonial empire and the neutral foreign policy and emphasizes that many changes did not occur, as alleged, without much strife. There are good, brief chapters on the German occupation and the postwar period. The book is based on very recent scholarship and has an excellent bibliography. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.—*G. D. Homan, Illinois State University, ret.*