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The Happy Burden of History : From Sovereign Impunity to Responsible Selfhood

By Andrew S. Bergerson

Walter De Gmbh Gruyter Jun 2016, 2016. Taschenbuch. Condition: Neu. Neuware - Germans are often accused of failing to take responsibility for Nazi crimes, but what precisely should ordinary people do differently. Indeed, scholars have yet to outline viable alternatives for how any of us should respond to terror and genocide. And because of the way they compartmentalize everyday life, our discipline-bound analyses often disguise more than they illuminate. Written by a historian, literary critic, philosopher, and theologian, *The Happy Burden of History* takes an integrative approach to the problem of responsible selfhood. Exploring the lives and letters of ordinary and intellectual Germans who faced the ethical challenges of the Third Reich, it focuses on five typical tools for cultivating the modern self: myths, lies, non-conformity, irony, and modeling. The authors carefully dissect the ways in which ordinary and intellectual Germans excused their violent claims to mastery with a sense of 'sovereign impunity.' They then recuperate the same strategies of selfhood for our contemporary world, but in ways that are self-critical and humble. The book shows how viewing this problem from within everyday life can empower and encourage us to bear the burden of historical responsibility and be happy doing so. 247 pp....



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