

The Other God that Failed

Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism

Why did some of the "best and brightest" of Weimar intellectuals advocate totalitarian solutions to the problems of liberal democratic, capitalist society? How did their "radical conservatism" contribute to the rise of National Socialism? What roles did they play in the Third Reich? How did their experience of totalitarianism lead them to recast their social and political thought? This biography of Hans Freyer, a prominent German sociologist and political ideologist, is a case study of intellectuals and a "god that failed"--not on the political left, but on the right, where its significance has been overlooked. The author explores the interaction of political ideology and academic social science in democratic and totalitarian regimes, the transformation of German conservatism by the experience of National Socialism, and the ways in which tension between former collaborators and former opponents of National Socialism continued to mold West German intellectual life in the postwar decades.

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56,50 €

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Nicht mehr lieferbar

Artikelnummer: 9780691008233

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-691-00823-3

Verlag: Princeton University Press

Erscheinungstermin: 21.04.1988

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 1988

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 754 g

Seiten: 472

Format (B x H): 152 x 229 mm

