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### Review of the book *The Swastika's Darkening Shadow: Voices Before the Holocaust*

John A. Drobnicki  
*CUNY York College*

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Penkower, Monty Noam. **The swastika's darkening shadow: voices before the Holocaust.** Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 315p bibl index ISBN 9781137302458, \$90.00; ISBN 9781137302465 pbk, \$30.00

Penkower (emer., Machon Lander Graduate School of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem) is the author of numerous books on contemporary Jewish history (e.g., *Twentieth Century Jews*, CH, Jul'11, 48-6439). Here he sets out to document "the spread of Jew-hatred across the Continent, rooted in numerous reports of that persecution." Both the spread of and the responses to that virus are detailed in three chronological chapters, covering 1933 to 1939. These chapters chronicle anti-Semitic laws and activities not only in Germany, but also in eastern and western Europe. They are linked to 58 documents in the second half of the book (23 from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency) that illustrate how reports of Jewish persecution were readily available for those who wanted to read (or heed) them. Each document contains full bibliographic information, including (if appropriate) the archive name, box number, file number, and more. Students will find this book a handy source, in part because it serves to illustrate how Jews were not simply passive victims. However, libraries wanting to strengthen their primary source collections should also consider *Jewish Responses to Persecution* (five volumes are projected), edited by Jürgen Matthäus et al., which includes reports from many ordinary people rather than just diplomats. Volume 1 (CH, Nov'10, 48-1241) alone, which covers 1933-38, contains 200 documents. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Lower-division undergraduates through researchers/faculty.—*J. A. Drobnicki, York College, CUNY*