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Konrad H. JARAUSCH, Gerhard ARMINGER, Manfred THALLER, *Quantitative Methoden in der Geschichtswissenschaft. Eine Einführung in die Forschung, Datenverarbeitung und Statistik*, Darmstadt (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft) 1985, X-211 p.

An increasing number of historians find it worthwhile to get acquainted with quantitative methods, some to use them in their own work, others just to understand what these others are doing. It is true that historical problems are not as different from, say, sociological problems as some historians think, but most historians will no doubt feel more comfortable with a text book explicitly designed for them.

Jarausch, Arminger, and Thaller's book is a great deal more than an introduction to statistics: An introductory chapter gives an answer to the question »What are quantitative methods?« and the following chapter describes the preconditions for their use. Then follow chapters on the research process from source to data collection, and from data collection to conclusion. Research design is treated in the fifth chapter, after which follows a chapter on computer software for statistical and non-numerical purposes. Then, in four chapters, the authors give the reader a succinct introduction to statistics including the most important multivariate methods, not just bivariate ones, and they conclude with chapters on interpretation and theorising, the role of quantitative methods in historical research and bibliographies.

The authors aim to give a practical introduction to the subject, and so they do; most of the practical problems the researcher meets with, are described here. The exposition is clear and concise, at times even so concise that the reader might miss a bit of practical advice given, one might say, in a subordinate clause. Considering how much the book covers in a little more than two hundred pages, it may seem ungrateful, but one nevertheless wonders whether the, perhaps misnamed, preanalytic methods, such as cluster and factor analysis ought not to be briefly described, just to make historians aware of their existence, the more so as one of the authors (Arminger) has written a book about factor analysis. The authors have also decided to leave out time series, not such a great loss as it might seem; time series have their use, but they are not as important to historians as the statistical novice may think. Other reservations are also minor: There is more to the question of validity than just discovering errors; historians studying less well documented ages may have to use data similar to those of the psychologists in being neither obviously valid nor obviously invalid (chapter 5). Some of the less expensive statistical software packages for microcomputers are rather more than playthings¹ (chapter 6). The only serious objection concerns the exposition: Due to its conciseness and somewhat abstract mode of presentation the book may be tough going for those studying it on their own. If the reader had got, in addition to what he now gets, more numerical examples and »intuitive« descriptions, the book would be more suited for private study. Still, although for instance Floud's book² is better in this regard, there is no doubt that the extensive coverage, the up to date treatment and the amount of practical advice makes Jarausch, Arminger and Thaller's book the best alternative by far.

Ferdinand Linthoe NÆSHAGEN, Oslo

1 James CARPENTER and Dennis DELORIA, *Statistical Software for Microcomputers*, in: *Byte* vol. 9, no 4 (April 1984) p. 234-64.

2 Roderick FLOUD, *An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians*, Second Edition, London (Methuen) 1979.