

help by air, especially the sending of the Polish Parachute Brigade, but was told on July 30 by courier Jan Nowak-Jeziorański—sent via Italy from London—that this was out of the question. In fact, the Polish Parachute Brigade—formed expressly to fight in Poland, was ordered by Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery to support British airborne troops in crossing the Rhine into Germany (Arnhem). Bór-Komorowski was aware that Red Army commanders had arrested Polish officers after accepting their units' help in liberating Wilno (Vilnius) and Lwów (Lviv); nevertheless, he expected Soviet help because Warsaw was the main transport hub between Moscow and Berlin. He obviously did not anticipate the destruction of Warsaw (see interview with Alexandra Richie, <http://historia.newsweek.pl/zniszczenie-warszawy-tego-powstancy-nie-mogli-przewidziec.artykuly,348965,1.html>). In 1958 when this reviewer asked the general in London what he would have done if the Red Army had come into Warsaw and tried to arrest him and his officers, his answer was: "Of course, we would have defended ourselves."

Alexandra Richie sees the main reason for the Home Army's military defeat in the arrival of new German forces led by General Otto Moritz Walter Model (1891–1945) that also stopped the First Ukrainian Front vanguard east of Warsaw. She gives a brief account of the Warsaw Uprising and her views of it in an interview with the Polish-language edition of *Newsweek* cited above. In her book she discusses the lack of Western Allies' help. Except for a few flights from Brindisi, Italy, by Polish and South African pilots, Warsaw received no supplies whatsoever. The lack of substantial help was later justified by the British-U.S. critical need of the Red Army's continued fight against the German Wehrmacht before as well as after the Normandy invasion. This fact was the basis of the Western Allies' decision in August 1943 to consign Eastern Europe to the Soviet war theater and keep silent about Soviet arrests of anticommunists in East Central Europe (Anna M. Cienciala, "The Diplomatic Background of the Warsaw Uprising of 1944: The Players and the Stakes," *The Polish Review*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4, 1994, pp. 393–413).

Richie's book is a substantial scholarly achievement. It is a fascinating, readable work that will, hopefully, help spread knowledge of the Warsaw Uprising, generally passed over in silence by Western historians. It may be a long read for some, but well worth the effort. The maps and illustrations are very good. One wishes, however, for a list of abbreviations, a name-and-subject index, and a timeline; the book has only an index of names. Δ

The Use and Abuse of Memory Interpreting World War II in Contemporary European Politics

Edited by Christian Karner and Bram Mertens. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2013. 284 pages. Index, illustrations. ISBN-13: 978-1412851947. \$34.73 on Amazon.com.

Patryk Babiracki

World War II had a profound impact on the consciousness of Europeans. But why the sudden proliferation of allusions to it in recent politics? In the collection of essays under review, sixteen authors study those who have been mentioning the war in European public life. The essays cover the entire postwar period, but they focus on the twenty-first century. This is part of this book's appeal: both historiography and memorialization of the war have been shaped by communism and the cold war to such a great extent that one must ask as the authors do: what new meanings, if any, have been attached to the war, and to what ends?

Classic scholarly monographs on the subject such as Jeffrey Herf's *Divided Memory* or James Young's *The Texture of Memory* place different emphases on context and texts, and therefore represent more traditional explorations of European memory of World War II within the boundaries of the respective disciplines, in this case history and art history. Furthermore, Young's study is remarkable in that it compares commemorative practices in four countries. In contrast, *The Use and Abuse of Memory* studies

the ways in which the war has been invoked in a dozen or so national and regional settings. The authors include political scientists, sociologists, linguists, historians and art historians. The result is an array of original and rich case studies that substantiate one of the book's two chief arguments: that "the Second World War is now firmly embedded in many Europeans' historical (semi-)consciousness and life worlds, to the extent that it can be readily employed as an interpretive anchor" (6).

The editors' second claim is both more controversial and complex—the constant allusions to the war in European public life say something "about those present circumstances being discursively linked to the period of the 1930s and 1940s. . . [and] provide a glimpse into what those enunciating them perceive to be key problems or defining issues in the here and now: from European integration to power struggles within nation states, from contemporary transnational controversies to secularism of the inequalities and injustices of our now inescapably global economy" (6). The main tensions in the volume surface precisely in the discussions of the bearing of the war on the globalizing present. The chief issue is, have the discussions of World War II served as a unifying or a dividing factor in European politics?

In their opening essay Karner and Mertens set the stage by illuminating the urgency of the issue with examples drawn from recent European public debates. They also introduce Duncan Bell's concept of "mythscape," which refers to a terrain on which people's memories are constantly contested and subverted. They thereby distance themselves from the scholarship that presupposes the existence of "collective memory" (the concept pioneered by Maurice Halbwachs, a student of Emile Durkheim). Not every contributor to the volume engages with the notion of mythscape directly, but all of them explore the process of contestation it aims to capture.

In the first chapter Henning Grunwald surveys postwar European "memory regimes." Grunwald argues that while national discourses of remembrance did little to create a common European identity, they nevertheless served as a

latent "Europeanizing agent" by helping sustain a common memory of German guilt. Subsequent contributions carry forward one or both of the book's two central claims. Some show just how frequent and in some cases sudden the discursive deployment of the war has been in recent years and months. For instance, as Joseph Burrridge demonstrates in chapter 2, British parliamentarians arguing for the 2003 invasion of Iraq drew their rhetorical strength from analogies to the appeasement of Hitler. In chapter 6 Paul Smith compellingly examines Nicolas Sarkozy's blatantly instrumental approach to history before and during his presidency. This essay differs from the rest in that the war is treated along with Sarkozy's other historical targets, such as colonialism, and recast in order to restore a sense of greatness to the French narrative of national history. In chapter 8 Zinovia Lialiouti and Giorgos Bithymitris discuss how Greek-German tensions during the recent economic crisis reactivated Greek memories and discourses of the German occupation. The line between the "use" and "abuse" of history can be quite subjective and blurry, and the editors generally do little to problematize this distinction. At least these two essays, along with Karner's piece that features the embattled Austrian Far Right's self-comparison to the "new Jews" (chapter 10), leave the reader with no doubt about what transpires.

Other authors address the key question directly by paying more attention to the integrative and divisive potential of the war in various European settings. In one of the more stimulating essays of the collection, Tanja Schult explores the reasons behind the removal of painter Dick Bengtsson's swastika-ridden paintings during a 2009 EU summit in the Swedish Museum of Modern Art. Systematically interrogating and then rejecting the official explanations, Schult finds that Bengtsson's swastikas hovering in the corners of the otherwise indifferent paintings created too much "uncertainty" about the very founding of the EU which was, after all, "born out of the memory of the war, its large-scale violence and atrocity" (75). This leads the author to ask, "Is it reasonable to conclude that the incident at the Moderna Museet confirms that a genuinely

rooted European memory based on World War II and the Holocaust is still not part of European political practice?" (76) As Jovana Mihajlović Trbovc and Tamara Pavasović Trošt demonstrate in chapter 9, this conclusion holds true with regard to the states that emerged from the former Yugoslavia, each of which popularizes a different textbook narrative about which military groupings could be subsumed under the label of anti-fascist resistance. More often than not, the essays reveal that the pan-European preoccupation with war is underwritten by its different interpretations in various places and spaces on the Continent. However, this insight neither diminishes *The Use and Abuse of Memory* as a collective scholarly endeavor nor exposes any flaws in the European project. As Bjørn Thomassen and Rosario Forlenza point out in chapter 7, "attempts to reach a unanimous memory of World War II events seem implausible and counterproductive. If this is so at the level of national debates, the same point must be made with respect to Europe" (152). It is the process of working through these memories that might count the most; the presence of the war in contemporary consciousness and its simultaneous contestation—the European "mythscape"—might be the optimal possible and desired state of affairs.

This reviewer has four complaints. First, more East European case studies would have strengthened the book. The two contributions by Anna Duszak on Poland (chapter 11) and Tatiana Zhurzhenko on Ukraine (chapter 12) are illuminating, but altogether do little to dispel another contributor's erroneous notion that "it would be difficult to find [a culture] that makes more ready use of history as a form of historical-cultural shorthand, than France" (122). Take Poland, which has been intermittently invaded, conquered, or erased from the map. There history has served as a medium of national survival. The use and abuse of historical shorthand has been a permanent feature of Polish public culture, precisely because the stakes have been high (Zhurzhenko reminds us of Radosław Sikorski's comparison of the recent pipeline deal between Germany and Russia to the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, but there's plenty

more). Second, the book's title is somewhat inaccurate: despite its ostensive emphasis on "memory" (capacious in itself, as here it includes acts of free recollecting, official and unofficial commemorations, as well as politically driven manipulation), several authors examine the fortunes of historical narration; there is more truth in the first line of the introduction, which leads us to expect "a book about the presence of the past in the present" more generally. Third, there are some typographic inconsistencies—the historic site of Soviet massacre of Polish officers is variously rendered as "Katyn" (214), "Katyń" (215), and "Khatyn" (236). Other errors of transliteration include "Gasprom" (it should be "Gazprom"). Finally, the writing is uneven. Some essays are harder to read than others, though this reader's squinting at a phrase such as "any discursive construal of the War is part of an unending process of its recontextualization, rereading, and rewriting, as well as re-semiotization into various modalities and (sub)codes" (211) may well point to certain side effects of interdisciplinarity: what seems constructive and necessary to a linguist may come off as unnecessary jargon to a historian.

These issues aside, this is an important volume for specialists and graduate students in many disciplines. The essays remind us that each country has its own complicated history of the war; invoking it from one single point of view seems both flawed and counterproductive. The editors resist channeling their conclusions into facile generalizations and instead leave us with the following hypothesis: "Do memories and historical allusions gain in appeal and salience to the same extent as the political blueprints on offer lose in plausibility?" The year 2014 saw Russia violate the post-Cold War order in Europe by annexing Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. As analogies to the past irresistibly invite themselves into our present, this important question becomes even more timely and pressing. Δ

Editor's Note: Romuald (Roman) Rodziewicz (see the book review on p. 1898) died in England on October 24, 2014. He was 101.