WORLD WAR TWO STUDIES ASSOCIATION
(formerly American Committee on the History of the Second World War)

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By Dick van Galen Last
General Information

Established in 1967 “to promote historical research in the period of World War II in all its aspects,” the World War Two Studies Association, whose original name was the American Committee on the History of the Second World War, is a private organization supported by the dues and donations of its members. It is affiliated with the American Historical Association, with the International Committee for the History of the Second World War, and with corresponding national committees in other countries, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, and the Vatican.

The Newsletter

The WWTSA issues a semiannual newsletter, which is assigned International Standard Serial Number [ISSN] 0885-5668 by the Library of Congress. Back issues of the Newsletter are available from Robin Higham, WWTSA Archivist, through Sunflower University Press, 1531 Yuma (or Box 1009), Manhattan, KS 66502-4228.

Please send information for the Newsletter to:

Mark Parillo
Department of History
Kansas State University
Eisenhower Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-1002
Tel.: (785) 532-0374
Fax: (785) 532-7004
E-mail: parillo@ksu.edu

Annual Membership Dues

Membership is open to all who are interested in the era of the Second World War. Annual membership dues of $15.00 are payable at the beginning of each calendar year. Students with U.S. addresses may, if their circumstances require it, pay annual dues of $5.00 for up to six years. There is no surcharge for members abroad, but it is requested that dues be remitted directly to the secretary of the WWTSA (not through an agency or subscription service) in U.S. dollars. The Newsletter, which is mailed at bulk rates within the United States, will be sent by surface mail to foreign addresses unless special arrangements are made to cover the cost of airmail postage.
WWTSA Elections

The ballot for the 2001 elections of members of the Board of Directors is included with this issue. All members who are current with their membership dues for the year 2000 are eligible to vote. Please return the ballot as directed by January 1, 2001.

WWTSA Annual Business Meeting

The annual business meeting of the World War Two Studies Association will be held in conjunction with the American Historical Association meeting in Boston in January 2001. The WWTSA meeting will convene at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, January 5th, in the Boston College Room of the Boston Marriott Copley Place. All members are welcome.

WWTSA Scholarly Session

The WWTSA will sponsor a scholarly session in conjunction with the 2001 American Historical Association annual meeting. The session will be from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 6th, at the Boston College Room of the Boston Marriott Copley Place. Here is the session program:

"Racing Time: World War II and Oral History"

Chair: Dr. Jeffrey Grey, Horner Professor of Military Theory, Marine Corps University

Papers:
Dr. Ron Marcello, University of North Texas, “Creating World War II Oral History Archives”
Mr. Timothy Frank, Kansas State University, “Recounted Valor: Interviews with Medal of Honor Recipients”

Comment: Dr. Jeffrey Grey

Annual Dues

Membership dues for the World War Two Studies Association are due at the beginning of the calendar year. A membership renewal form is included with this issue of the newsletter.

Special Issue of the Newsletter

This special issue of the newsletter contains a review essay reprinted with the kind permission of the author, Dick Van Galen Last. The essay originally appeared in the recent Bulletin du Comité international d’histoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale (Bulletin of the International Committee of the History of the Second World War). The article appears in larger type than in the Bulletin, but the original pagination and headers have been retained for easy reference. A footer with the World War Two Studies Association newsletter pagination also appears.

Mr. James Ehrman, associate editor of the WWTSA newsletter, ably oversaw the technical aspects of the scanning and reprinting processes.
In 1995, a year of commemorations, the New York Times remarked that "public memories of the past are also the battlefields of the present". Controversy dogged the commemoration of Auschwitz and the planned exhibition in the US of the Enola Gay, the plane which dropped the first atom bomb on Hiroshima. The uproar over the Enola Gay is a good example of the tension that develops, inevitably it seems, between individual memories and justification of one's own conduct on the one hand and the attempts to subject the past to analysis on the other. Hiroshima and Auschwitz have long ceased to be mere place names on the map of the world but lieux de mémoire capable of igniting political controversies about the interpretation and representation of history - controversies which then become part of what we are wont to call collective memories. Extreme events like the Holocaust tend to promote a move towards justificatory narratives, and in the first decades after the war Hiroshima and Nagasaki became "icons of Japanese suffering" that enabled that country to repress the mass murder in Nanking and other atrocities perpetrated by its military.

Public memories" is a concept the New York Times would not have used twenty or thirty years ago. It was only in the eighties that the idea of collective memory, introduced by Maurice Halbwachs in the 1920s, became part of the historical discourse and bestowed new meaning on the events of the years 1939-1945. A title like Italian Fascism: History, Memory and Representation or The Labour of Loss. Mourning, Memory, and Wartime Bereavement in Australia is typical of this genre. Historians no longer seem to be content merely to write about what took place in Nanking, Stalingrad or Oradour, or the history of Stalin's Communism or Hitler's National Socialism; rather, they want to know how these events and ideologies are processed and live on in public memory.

All this could not but leave its mark on the interpretation of the Second World War. Shifting perspectives in space and time occasioned additional changes. What follows are several examples of what I see as typical of the
developments in the historiography of the Second World War in the past half century.

Example one. *Life's Picture History of World War II* came out exactly mid-way through the twentieth century. The word Holocaust appears on page 12. Here, however, the word is not used to denote the persecution and destruction of the Jews but the bombardment of Rotterdam on May 14, 1940. Indeed, *Life's Picture History* no more mentions the Jews than it does any other persecuted minority. Only at the end of the seventies, after the American TV series by the same name, would the American public become fully acquainted with the Holocaust. Recent polls indicate that many more Americans are able to identify the Holocaust than Pearl Harbor or the atomic bombing of Japan. Historians inclined smugly to dismiss these simply as typical blind spots on the part of the masses and the media may be surprised to learn that Gordon Craig's book on Europe's history since 1815 makes no mention of the Nazi "Final Solution" either. Nor does destruction of the Jews figure much in the popular biographies of Hitler by Alan Bullock (1952) and Joachim Fest (1973).

Example two. When Rome was liberated by the Allies in June 1944, Pope Pius XII requested "that no Allied coloured troops would be among the small number that might be garrisoned at Rome after the occupation". Few then were conscious of the hypocrisy involved in conducting a war for democracy and democratic values - with segregated troops.

Both examples illustrate how recently the racist components of the Second World War came to be recognized. The next two examples indicate the extent to which perspectives may be shaped by location.

Example one. In 1999 a Taiwanese company, using large subway billboards, featured a cartoon figure of a smiling Adolf Hitler advertising German-made electric space heaters. The ad shows Hitler with his right arm raised in the Nazi salute and a slogan that reads " Declare war on the cold front". In the West, with its stringent taboos on the political or commercial use of Hitler's portrait, an ad like this would simply be unthinkable. Conversely, the Rwandese are hard put to understand why the West has been so slow in recognizing that the genocide that took place there in 1994 was a real, premeditated genocide whose intensity and cruelty was no less barbaric than that of the *Endlösung*. Historians have only just begun to show an interest in this particular holocaust.

The same is true of Europe, as the second example illustrates. There too the view of history depends to a significant degree on place. A 1992 survey revealed that 52 percent of West German respondents considered the Third Reich and National Socialism the defining events of Germany's past, as opposed to only 11 percent of the East Germans, of whom 30 percent thought...
the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 the more important. A poll in 1995 revealed that to the question which power was most responsible for defeating Nazi Germany, 69% of the West Germans replied the US and 87% of the East Germans replied the Soviet Union. East Germans remembered National Socialism primarily for the war's devastation, West Germans for the Holocaust. Not surprisingly, then, in Nazi-occupied countries it is the Holocaust that by and large now defines the memory of the Second World War. In British memory and historiography the Holocaust doesn't count for nearly as much, although the flood of English literature shows an upsurge in interest in the Holocaust in English-speaking countries, which is also evident from the establishment of major Holocaust Museums not only in the US but also in the UK.

The *New York Times' *1995 observation has since gained momentum. In 1996 Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, hailed by *Time* as the 'most talked about' book of the year, once again brought the German guilt question to the fore. 1998 featured the Walser-Bubis debate on the paralyzing effect of politically correct Auschwitz commemorations. In the meantime, discussions about adequate forms of remembering the victims, and more specifically about the Holocaust Monument in Berlin, are as impassioned as ever and show no signs of abating. These incidents and debates resonated not only in the scholarly journals but also and primarily in the media. What people know about Nazism and the murder of the Jews, now referred to as the Holocaust, they have ingested not so much from the historians as from writers of fiction, filmmakers, plays, TV programs, the daily press, magazines, and so forth.

The Holocaust owes its remarkable topicality to contemporary realities: ethnic cleansing, the refugee problem, and the daily toll of human rights violations throughout the world. The Holocaust is now regarded as pertinent to almost every disturbing contemporary event. "The struggle against Hitler," observes Mazower, "had revealed the importance of human and civil rights." But not so very long ago, in the era of the Cold War, that awareness was a limited commodity. It is this growing interest in human rights and in international law that allowed the Holocaust to come to the fore and precipitated a greatly increased sensitivity towards its victims, notably in the last ten years. Events in Rwanda, which owe their currency largely to the media, prove that genocides are not solely objects of study in a university setting.

Memory puts a question mark over historical scholarship claiming universal validity. But this is not the place to go into the social forces responsible for the explosion of interest in collective and individual memories, an explosion ordering on commemoration mania. Peter Novick, for example,
suggests that the legacy of the Holocaust has been treated as a political issue and deliberately used for political ends. Others, too, have dealt extensively with the problematical relationship between history and memory. I shall cite only one of these, Jörn Rüsen, who writes: “Die ungeheurlichen Verbrechen dieses Jahrhunderts verlangen Veränderungen auf der kategorialen Ebene des historischen Denkens.” And concludes: “Erinnern und Erzählen können also nicht einfach als anthropologische Basis der geschichtswissenschaftlichen Arbeit vorausgesetzt, sondern müssen von Grund auf meta-historisch neu bedacht werden.”

Berel Lang, in his fine study The Future of the Holocaust, suggests that the Holocaust marks a distinctive moment in contemporary thinking for analyzing the relationship between history and memory. No one has worked harder to eliminate the boundary between history and memory, between the facts and what people remember about those facts, than the historian Saul Friedländer, contributing a new method of historical thinking in the process. Many authors have however managed to fold the culture of remembrance into their scholarship with surprising ease. Cases in point are the studies by Omer Bartov and Geoffrey Hartman, and the anthologies Thinking about the Holocaust. After half a century and La Sho'ah tra interpretazione e memoria, edited by Alvin Rosenfeld and Paolo Amodio respectively. Others remain skeptical.

In the nineties almost every Nazi-occupied country produced its own narrative of the Holocaust and its memory, for example the excellent study by Michael Steinlauf on the memory of the Holocaust in Poland. I will here confine myself to the persecution of the Jews as such, if only because of that literature's sheer volume. I estimate that between 1990 and 2000 more studies have been published on this topic than in the first thirty years after the war. Given the late “discovery” of the Holocaust, we can speak of a veritable revenge of historiography over history. Think of it like this: what Hilberg was able to accomplish at the outset of the sixties now has practically become impossible. “The ever-growing mass of studies on the Holocaust is so overwhelming,” observes Dan Michman, “that today no scholar is capable of covering the entire field.”

Rewriting histories?

The collapse of Communism and resulting accessibility of the Soviet archives breathed new life into that old chestnut comparing Stalinism and Nazism. In France this caused the usual excitement, which seemed to have more to do with the Communist past of some French intellectuals than with
historical curiosity - some feared a "Nuremberg of Communism." In Germany the interest was no less political: how would the GDR, with its double dose of Nazism and Communism, fare in the comparison between Nazism and Communism? It remains to be seen whether these renewed debates about the generic concept of totalitarianism and the recent rebirth of racist and imperialist tendencies in Europe will result in a revision of the theory of fascism. Since these discussions are on the whole being carried on rather more by philosophers, political scientists and other social scientists than by historians, I have opted not to deal with them in this article.

The preoccupation with individual memory and the impact of public opinion and the media can also be deduced from the growing tendency to individualize the historical narrative. Vaclav Havel remarks somewhere that we must try harder to understand than to explain, that the rehabilitation of the human spirit - "the heart of reality" - is best served by focusing on personal discourse rather than on "universal systematic solutions" imposed from outside. To be sure, Goldhagen was more interested in explaining than in understanding: the Holocaust was the product of a single cause, "German eliminationist antisemitism." But his is not the only work to demonstrate that historical research and debates are moving away from studying impersonal power structures toward exploring the role of the individual and assessing personal responsibility. Why was a cultivated man like Albert Speer one of Hitler's best friends and why was an equally intelligent man such as Stauffenberg plotting to take his life? How did Canaris turn into the Hamlet of Gelman conservatism? Such questions keep on fascinating, even if their biographers have not much to add. And not for nothing did the translation of Viktor Klemperer's diaries of the Nazi era, Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten, become the best-selling German book in the Anglo-Saxon world.

A discussion assessing the responsibility of specific groups or institutions arose at the same time. With the public breathing down their necks, critics began scrutinizing the roles played by neutral countries like Switzerland, Sweden, and the Vatican, organizations like the Red Cross, as well as banks and big business and other elites involved in the persecution of the Jews or profiting from the exploitation of forced labor.

For those who want to know how each country reacted to the persecution of the Jews there is The World Reacts to the Holocaust, a lively collection of articles which describes the responses of 22 countries up until the 1990's. Loser Germany, it appears, publishes far more on its Vergangenheitspolitik than loser Japan. It seems as if later generations feel the guilt more deeply. In today's Germany, notes Dan Diner, it is "a conspicuous component in the public culture and in the public rites of shame." This delayed reaction is not unique to Germany; other European countries have been going through the
same experience, as the flood of mea culpas testifies. And governments, too, turned the spotlights on themselves. A major target during the past few years has been German plunder and economic and cultural exploitation.

**The Regionalization of Holocaust Research**

All Western European countries have added solid monographs on the persecution of the Jews in their own countries. Bob Moore provides a balanced work synthesizing recent research on Jewish persecution published only in Dutch. He is also one of the first to take on the challenge of placing the persecution of the Jews in a comparative perspective.

For France as well it was a foreigner who wrote the best monograph on this subject. The American Richard Weisberg paints a devastating picture of the complicity of the French judicial apparatus with the German occupier. In France, too, the evidence points to a growing interest in the first phase of Jewish persecution, namely, economic plunder. Denis Peschanski provides a lucid survey of the reactions of the various segments of French society to the exclusion and the deportation of the Jews. The reactions of the Jews and their organizations are ably described by Renée Poznanski. Simon Schwarzfuchs concludes that it was the Jews themselves who prevented the UGIF from becoming a *Judenrat* and then went on to play an important role in keeping three quarters of the French Jews out of the hands of the Nazis. For an update of the research on the persecution of the Jews in Belgium there is *Belgium and the Holocaust. Jews, Belgians, Germans*, a collection of articles edited by Dan Michman.

The enormous amount of archival material that has recently become available in the former Communist states has been a boon for historians intent on raking over old coals. Now that the documents located in Berlin have been sufficiently sifted, studies about decision-making on the local level are appearing at a rapid rate. These works are noteworthy for their insight into the genesis of the Holocaust, the Holocaust, that is, as perceived by German scholars: the annihilation of the Jews in the forties. Along with the mass executions and gassings, more is becoming known about the starvation of the Jews on the Death Marches and in the thousands of labor camps and, not to mention the economic significance of the camps themselves.

One such local study is *Auschwitz: From 1270 to the Present*. Himmler planned to turn Auschwitz into a model city for German colonization in the East. Only in the spring of 1942, in the vortex of war, would it assume its now familiar function as the central location for gassing Europe's Jews with industrial methods. Regarding the history of Auschwitz, Michael Marrus...
concludes soberly: “that however they came to the idea of murdering the Jews of Europe, the Nazis spent remarkably little time thinking of precisely how they would accomplish their task”.  

The admirable regional study by Dieter Pohl about the murder of the Jews of Galicia further supports the view that the politics of destruction underwent a radicalization in the spring of 1942. The daily reports by the police battalions made public in Washington leave little doubt, however, that already in 1941 there was a clear policy to kill off the Jews systematically. Aside from Poland, that policy hit the Baltic states especially hard. At the end of 1941, 72% of Lithuanian Jewry had already been murdered. Eighty percent of these battalions were made up of Lithuanian volunteers. Political considerations are partly responsible for the fact that so little work has been done on the role of local auxiliary police forces and authorities in the Baltic states, Belorussia and in Ukraine. Even so, the picture of the activities of the Einsatzgruppen and the Wehrmacht in Poland, the Baltic states and in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union is becoming more and more complete. Christian Gerlach emphasizes that both among the civilian and the military authorities of the German occupation in White Russia there was broad agreement on the destruction policies: “Die deutschen Funktionäre in den verschiedenen Institutionen waren hochmotiviert, in ihren Zielen weitgehend einig und identifizierten sich stark mit ihren Aufgaben”.

In a previous work, Gerlach had already stated that historians can no longer afford to ignore the starvation policies and the terror of the occupation in the East. Systematic researches which clearly spell out the connections between military, economic and political aims and chart the entire range of regional variations in German conduct is a necessary precondition for drawing meaningful conclusions about Germany's occupation policies in Europe. Since Gerlach's meticulous study is based on German sources, the voices of the White Russian and Jewish victims are not heard. The problem of language often poses a huge obstacle to this type of research. The greater the pity, for many a worthwhile study from the former Eastern Block is thereby “lost” to us, certainly to the writer of this article. Because he did not know any Western languages, one author, for example, grounded his study of Jewish persecution in the Ukraine and Eastern Galicia entirely on Russian and East European sources and thus remained unaware of the book in German by Dieter Pohl. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of Randolph Braham, we do have English language publications about the persecution of the Jews in Hungary and Romania.

Himmler’s Dienstkalender, which surfaced in the Moscow archives, indicates that the mass killings of Jewish women and children began in July of 1941, within weeks of the invasion of Russia. The comprehensive
introduction by a group of German historians summarizes the latest research on the Final Solution. 67

I'm afraid that for the time being the studies on the different regions will continue to appear and that historians will keep on going down beaten paths. The great difficulty is that there is as yet no consensus on how to compare these monographs with one another. What is lacking is a more detailed analytical conceptual framework, the sine qua non for arriving at a synthesis. There are plenty of standard collections in which each author takes charge of a particular region and the comparison is left to the introduction and thus to the reader. Some collections, however, distinguish themselves by the quality of their contributions. Among the latter is the series about the aid to Jews in Nazi-occupied countries. 68

The more such studies, the greater the need for a comprehensive work surveying the field of National Socialist genocide. The multidisciplinary Holocaust and History ranges across fifty years of scholarship 69, while Peter Longerich weighs in with an authoritative, overall account. 70 Ulrich Herbert's interesting historiographical contribution reconfirms that the focus of the research has shifted from Berlin to the periphery, to the East, but also to Paris. From this periphery came the stimuli, in 1941 and the beginning of 1942, that energized and radicalized the persecution. 71

Holocaust: a Synthesis?

In rather less space, Saul Friedländer not only imposed order in the immense jungle of Holocaust studies, but also supplied the initiative for a historical synthesis encompassing fifty years of historiography on the persecution of the Jews. Friedländer argues that the apparent contradiction between a traditional interpretation that stresses the role of antisemitism and anti-modernism, and a new interpretation that asserts the centrality of science, social engineering, and a crisis of modernity for the rise of Nazism and the implementation of genocidal policies, can be resolved by recognizing the ambivalence of Nazi ideology itself and the inner contradictions of Hitler's regime. 72 Friedländer's article on the extermination of the European Jews in historiography factually confirms the development, already noted here earlier, of the convergence of interpretations which not so long ago seemed to be irreconcilable, those of intentionalism and functionalism. 73 "The radicalization process," Friedländer writes, "was fed by initiatives taken at various levels of the party hierarchy, but no major decision could be taken without Hitler's assent". 74
However admirable, Friedländer's attempt to arrive at a synthesis for now appears to be a pious wish. Omer Bartov and Dan Diner, among others, point to the large differences that persist between what the latter refers to as the "Jewish" macro-perspective in the representation of the Holocaust and the "German" micro-perspective that "tends to dissolve the total picture into its seemingly trivial constituent parts." 75

The complexity of the overall picture - certainly where the persecution of the Jews is concerned - appears to have stimulated a demand, in compensation as it were, for books in which cause and effect again are clearly articulated; for books which explain what actually happened, how the murder was committed, what sort of people committed them 76, stood by 77, or became the victims. 78

Where the perpetrators are concerned, one senses a desire for simple and moralistic answers, as may be gathered from the public debates in Germany over the legacy of Nazism and the commotion occasioned by "Vernichtungskrieg", the exhibit which detailed the war crimes of the Wehrmacht. 79 To encompass in a single synthesis two such disparate experiential universes as those of the perpetrators and the victims presents an ongoing difficulty. But while the unparalleled interest exhibited in their plight in the course of the past two decades may satisfy the victims, the historians clearly have a problem integrating their voices and the veritable flood of survivor memorial literature into their narratives. Add to this the more recent studies exploring the differences between the women's and men's memories 80, and we are more than justified, echoing Annette Wieviorka's aptly titled work, in calling this the "era of the witness". 81

Continuing Controversies: Modernity and Sonderweg

Reinterpretations of the Holocaust and National Socialism are often bundled together, as the debates about modernization and the German Sonderweg would seem to indicate. Uwe Backes among Germany's political scientists and Jesse and Zitelmann among the historians are not the only ones critical of the "neurotic treatment" of National Socialist history which, they maintain, makes it impossible to ask "unconventional questions." The more time passes, the more likely we are to reach that stage of normalization of historical consciousness and an historiography of Nazism liberated from the fetters of the Nuremberg Trials. Even so, there will always be historians prepared to defend the Nazi-Germany-as-the-crisis-of-modernity thesis, just as there will always be historians equally prepared to argue that it was Nazism which actually ushered in the modernization of German society.
In time the debate about the German Sonderweg is also bound to lose its edge. For now why not be satisfied with the notion put forward by Louis Dumont and Isaiah Berlin, two philosophers who caution against identifying modern civilization solely with the intellectual legacy of the Enlightenment, which they prefer to think of as a pluralistic whole from which the ideas of the Counter-Enlightenment are not excluded. For however fertile the ground there, these ideas were by no means confined to Germany alone. This would make it much easier to explain why fascism - of which National Socialism was but one variety among many - was able to rear its head in all European nations.

If there is agreement that the world we live in today has not yet shaken off the profound contradictions of modernity that made Auschwitz possible, then it is up to the historians to obtain a better insight into those contradictions. For this to happen, historians would have to step outside their own field rather more often than has been the case up to now. Only then would one truly be able to attempt to comprehend the catastrophes of the twentieth century, and the Holocaust in particular, and to place these in the proper perspective.

_Stalinism, Nazism and the Claim to Uniqueness_

Concrete, historical comparisons between the two totalitarian systems are still rare. A good start has been made with two collections that feature the contributions of experts on Nazism and Communism. To no one's surprise, these demonstrate once more that the former has been studied far more extensively than the latter, so much so that Alain Besançon speaks of a “hypermnésie” with regard to Nazism and of “amnésie” with regard to Communism. Assessing the extent to which First World War was responsible for giving birth to totalitarian regimes is still drawing in historians.

Gradually the German and Russian concentrations camps are starting to be compared with one another. Complementing the dozens of studies of recent years on individual camps and their liberation is a two-volume collection which views the German concentration camps from a purely functionalist perspective - surely an indispensable source for anyone wishing to write on the Nazi camps. Wolfgang Sofsky's brilliant analysis of the function of power and control in the camp is now also available in English.

Another collection features an exceptional number of authors arguing against the uniqueness of the Holocaust. Steven Katz's proposed three volume study promises to be the most extensive effort to assert and to defend the claim to uniqueness, a claim whose most prominent champions include
the likes of Yehuda Bauer, Eberhard Jäckel, Elie Wiesel and Emil Fackenheim. A critical review of Katz's version of the "Uniqueness Claim" can be found in the aforementioned volume by Berel Lang. For the time being, Friedländer's wait-and-see attitude seems plausible enough. "A new debate," writes Friedländer, "on significant historiographical issues may be appearing in regard to the relation between Nazism and Bolshevism and the significance of 'totalitarianism' as a generalized explanatory framework for Nazi exterminations and the 'Final Solution'."

**Hitler and the Holocaust**

Sebastian Haffner died in 1999. His essays on Churchill, Hitler, and the Third Reich are among the most pointed ever penned. He emigrated to England, where he recorded his experiences with Nazism. These have now finally appeared in a German translation: *Germany: Jekyll & Hyde. 1939 - Deutschland von innen betrachtet.* Haffner wanted to prevail upon the British government not to enter into peace negotiations with Hitler. His analyses present a good counterweight to the functionalist school, which tend to look upon Hitler as a "weak dictator." In the more modern surveys of the Third Reich, this weak dictator concept is barely in evidence, and in this respect Haffner has been proven right. In 1940 he already foresaw that Hitler, "the potential suicide par excellence," would end by dragging Germany down with him.

There is no end to writing about Hitler. Already more than 120,000 titles have been devoted to the Führer of the Reich - many more than to Stalin. Ian Kershaw has written a welcome synthesis. A striking aspect of his Hitler is this one's passivity. In Kershaw's eyes Hitler's career was no "Triumph des Willens." As little as it took for Hitler to come to power, so little he had to do to remain in power. The 'forces working toward Hitler' accounted for the dynamic of the Nazi state. Kershaw provides a synthesis in the debate between functionalists and intentionalists: according to him, it was precisely the dialectic between the very general directives imposed from above and the spontaneous initiatives at the local level that paved the twisted road to Auschwitz.

"The questions of the uniqueness of National Socialism, of Hitler's role in its history, and of Germany's path towards it," writes Jane Caplan in a first-rate historiographical essay, "thus continue to occupy an absolutely central place, posing great challenges to contemporary historians."

The reconceptualization of the relationship between power and ideology will remain a subject for debate as long as the origins of the Holocaust
between the extremes of Goldhagen's thesis (the Holocaust as the outcome of German "eliminationist antisemitism") and Götz Aly's ("ethnic cleansing" as the major cause of the Final Solution) are being debated. In both monocausal explanations of the Holocaust Hitler hardly plays a role of any significance. These views are not those of the great majority of Holocaust scholars, including the functionalist Hilberg, for whom Hitler was "the supreme architect" of the Holocaust. 95

Another important work for understanding the genesis and implementation of the Final Solution is Ulrich Herbert's biography of Werner Best. 96 Herbert describes Best, Germany's Reichsbevollmächtigter in Denmark, as the type of young SS intellectual who came to National Socialism from his own convictions rather than by way of Hitler. These SS intellectuals were already plotting to murder the Jews at an early date, again largely on their own initiative. When the opportunity presented itself, they took charge of the Einsatzgruppen and began to carry out their plans in Poland and the Soviet Union. Thus they acted not so much from slavish obedience to the Führer as from a völkisch-racist ideology and a coldly calculated "Antisemitismus der Vernunft". The great measure of independence they enjoyed has been confirmed in Michael Wildt's excellent documentation, Die Judenpolitik des SD 1935 bis 1938. 97

Hitler and Antisemitism

Saul Friedländer stresses Hitler's "redemptive antisemitism". 98 The Führer was convinced that the only way the German world could be saved was by a life and death battle with the Jews who were doing everything in their power to poison the German people. According to Friedländer, the source of this "redemptive antisemitism" has to be sought in the ideas held by Richard Wagner and his circle. This decisive influence of Wagner on Hitler had already been established in Joachim Köhler's Wagners Hitler. 99

Der Nationalsozialismus als politische Religion 100 places National Socialism in a long Christian tradition of heresy. The authors of this collection assert that the Holocaust was the result of the Nazi apocalyptic belief that the murder of the Jews would mean the delivery of humanity. The decision for the Holocaust was the direct result of Hitler's "Messiah Complex." Friedländer and Kershaw consider similar Messianic aspirations. The religious dimension of National Socialist ideology is also treated in Bärsch's analysis of the beliefs on Volk and race espoused by Dietrich Eckart, Joseph Goebbels, Alfred Rosenberg and Adolf Hitler. 101 Paul Nolte however
reminds us that the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft* was not exclusive to right-wing politics.  

In *Wartum Auschwitz?* Gunnar Heinsohn concluded tersely: “Auschwitz war ein Völkermord für die Wiederherstellung des Rechtes auf Völkermord”. By getting rid of the Jews Hitler would be eliminating the Thora commandments to love one's neighbor and to do justice, thus clearing the way for the right to kill. Heinsohn, who found a total of 42 different explanations for Auschwitz, summarizes Hitler's beliefs as follows: the *arische Herrenmenschen* were only following the dictates of nature, and nature was cruel.

*Racism and Hitler's Academic Auxiliaries*

“The discourse of science in the social policy domain, with the allied fields of eugenics, social hygiene and public health,” writes Geoff Eley in an interesting article about the contexts for German antisemitism, “within an increasingly racialized climate of ideas between the 1890s and the 1930s, is likewise vital to the understanding of antisemitism in that period”.

Nazism has put eugenics, geopolitics and holism in bad odor. In 1989, Paul Weindling provided the best introduction to the new thinking on public health that occurred at the end of the nineteenth century. His most recent study, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1890-1945*, links the antityphus measures (a “Jewish” disease) of the First World War to the genocide of the Second.

Not quite as long but equally convincing is the line from euthanasia to the destruction of the Jews Henry Friedländer draws. The Dutch historian Dick de Mildt supplies the epilogue. His *In the Name of the People* presents a clear analysis of the trials of the Germans involved in the “euthanasia” program “lebensunwerten Leben”, the so-called *T4-Aktion*, and subsequently, in *Operation Reinhard* - the industrial-style murder of 1.7 million Jews in the three Polish extermination camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka between 1942 and 1943.

Comparative research into the new thinking on public health at the beginning of the last century is capable of imparting depth to Hitler’s and the Germans' antisemitism and thus explain the ideological fanaticism which possessed the Germans in acquitting themselves of their tasks on the Eastern front, as Gerlach indicated earlier. The centrality of biological racism and eugenics, and more specifically the connection between the German *Drang nach Osten*, the “euthanasia” operations and extermination is becoming more and more understood, as is evident from a collection of essays by Michael Bur-
The kinderreiche family the Nazis strove for was, in the population policy of the Nazi "biocracy" (Robert Jay Lifton), to a large degree determined by racial-biological beliefs and eugenics, observes Lisa Pine in a study on Nazi family politics. How significantly these beliefs about racial hygiene had captured the elites and solicited the participation of biologists and physicians is clear from many a study. Mark Walker's Nazi Science, pointing an accusatory finger at the war generation, criticizes the attitude of scientists in a criminal regime. Ernst Klee dredged up more than 1,000 perpetrators who, at the behest of prominent industries, university departments and, above all, the Wehrmacht, conducted medical experiments on patients, POW's and concentration camp prisoners in Auschwitz. Meanwhile, the comforting interpretation of Italian racism as an imported product has been challenged by Giorgio Israel and Pietro Nastasi who demonstrate the magnitude of the backing given to the regime's antisemitism by numerous Italian intellectuals, scientists and university teachers.

The flood of studies about the complicity of the elites - "Hitlers akademische Hilfstruppen" - in the Nazi crimes has now reached the caste of historians themselves, a number of whom became ardent proponents of German expansionism and ethnic cleansing. After 1945, these historians quickly adjusted their language and shed their former identity as easily as an old coat. Here too the trend of shifting historical perspectives, from researching the institutions themselves to the role played by the leaders of these institutions, is clearly discernible. There are simply too many of these biographies to mention them all. The case of the Nazi Germanist Hans Ernst Schneider alone, who after 1945 simply assumed a new personality and became the left-liberal Hans Schwerte, has spawned more than six publications. In this ongoing investigation of the complicity of the elites, students fill a separate chapter.

All of this confirms that Nazi Germany was an explosive laboratory of modernity, as the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman had demonstrated in Modernity and the Holocaust (1989) - the genocide as a bureaucratic process governed by rational principles such as efficiency, cost-benefit analyses, and division of labor. The division of labor made it easy to set aside one's moral scruples both during and after the war. Ideological fervor hardly entered into it.

This may be true for those who participated in the genocide from behind a desk or in a laboratory. The case stood different for those who populate the book by Goldhagen and literally pulled the trigger; Bauman and Goldhagen targeted different groups. Nor can we rule out Nazi ideology as the main reason for the willingness of Germans to commit or to condone murder, as
Bartov alleged in *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (1991). In the racist *Weltanschauung* all Slavs, Russian POW's and Jews were *Untermenschen*.

**Other Victims**

Other groups the Nazis wrote off as *Untermenschen* are getting more attention. The discussion of whether Gypsies and Jews were the victims of the same murderous persecution is likely to continue, as the studies by Wolfgang Wippermann and Guenter Lewy demonstrate. The first synthesis of the persecution of the Gypsies came out only in 1996. Michael Zimmermann's well documented study puts the number of murdered Gypsies considerably lower than the generally accepted total of one half million. More important is his conclusion that the history of National Socialist persecution of the Gypsies does not coincide with the historical experiences of the Sinti and Roma: “Der Historiographie wird sich deshalb stärker als bisher bemühren müssen, die Erinnerungen der Überlebenden festzuhalten, die vielleicht mehr vom Leben der Ermordeten bewahren als jene Dokumente der Verfolgung, die von den Tätern stammen.” There also seems to be a growing interest in the plight of such persecuted minorities as the asocials and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Reconstructing the reactions of the survivors and integrating the perspective of the victims in a comprehensive comparative analysis of the Nazi persecution would require taking an inventory of the never-ending stream of memoirs about the concentration camps and prisons. Gie van den Berghe got the ball rolling for Belgium, compiling a bibliography of 1,600 eyewitness accounts. Inga Clendinnen stresses in her study the problematical nature of eyewitness accounts and memoirs of survivors.

The treatment of another group of victims, the POW's, was decisively worse than that compared with their position some thirty years earlier in the First World War. Particularly shocking is the treatment of the Africans and African-Americans, whose fate David Killingray traces in the collection *Prisoners of War and Their Captors in World War II*. The Germans and the Italians held that the Geneva Convention did not apply to “aborigines”; often they did not even bother to take these prisoner and just shot them on the spot, as was the fate of the 500 black soldiers whom the Germans executed on the side of the road near Lyon in June of 1940. Unfortunately, Killingray does not discuss the significance of the war experiences in shaping the self-consciousness of the black soldiers and future African leaders such as Senghor, Bokassa, Kenyatta and Nkrumah. Léopold Sédar Senghor considered the two
years he spent as a POW as a decisive period in his intellectual pilgrimage toward négritude. Having fought in Europe, they returned home determined to continue the struggle that had begun against Hitler.\textsuperscript{125}

The Russian POW’s were treated the worst. Of the 5.7 million, 3.3 million did not survive the German camps. More research is needed, both to document their experiences and those of their German counterparts who eventually wound up as POW’s in the Soviet Union\textsuperscript{126} and in the West.

The tactic of pitting different groups of victims against one another, the deployment of a “hierarchy of suffering”, is the subject of a study by the philosopher and sociologist Jean-Michel Chaumont, who investigated the struggle of individuals and groups for recognition.\textsuperscript{127} Dan Diner affirms that the Jews occupy a special place in Western consciousness. “...The mass murder of Jews,” he writes, “ultimately appears to touch deeper psychological levels and to evoke more powerful emotions than the victimization of others by the Nazi machinery of destruction”.\textsuperscript{128}

\textit{Churches}

Systematic research on the attitude of the Christian Churches has been done primarily in Germany: the dividing line within the Protestant churches lay between collaboration\textsuperscript{129} and resistance as it manifested itself in the Kirchenkampf\textsuperscript{130} and the persecution of the Catholic church\textsuperscript{131}. Since comprehensive studies on the functioning of the local churches for the rest of Europe are mostly lacking, so are the preconditions for a more general comparative approach among the countries themselves.

Under the Nazi regimes the Churches could still maintain a certain autonomy as havens for alternative communication during and after the services. Being that effective buffer between the individual and the state, the Churches were in many countries the only institution to have strengthened its position during the war. For example, churches were never as full as under the Vichy government. Etienne Fouilloux placed the reactions of the church in France in a larger continuum - from 1937 to 1947 - - in order to get a better insight in the evolution of the Catholic world.\textsuperscript{132} Fouilloux, and before him - Halls\textsuperscript{133}, have shown more understanding than other historians for what the former calls “the paradoxes of French Catholicism,” without, however, glossing over the collaboration of the Church with Vichy rule.
Art and culture

Already in 1935 Walter Benjamin called fascism the "estheticizing of politics." Many studies bear out that the Nazis took seriously the concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk, the Wagnerian ideal in which all forms of art merge into a form of communal art which would no longer be distinguishable from society at large. For a long time it was considered inappropriate, to say the least, to mention esthetics and culture in the same breath as fascism and Nazism. No longer. M. S. Stone, for one, treats fascism as a serious cultural phenomenon pursuing a conscious policy of "esthetic pluralism".

As Günter Berghaus shows, the relationship between Futurism and fascism was a complicated one. The many nuances within fascism and Nazism make it wellnigh impossible to speak of a single artistic direction with regard to the arts. Similarly, Michael Kater found a surprising measure of variation and autonomy in the Nazi world of music. The status of musicians went up and music by amateurs was encouraged. Much depended on the taste of the individual leaders, not all of whom were keen on agitprop. An analysis of the attitude of eight composers toward Nazism and democracy wraps up Kater's absorbing trilogy.

That totalitarian regimes well understood the importance of symbols, myths, ritual and aesthetics in mobilizing the masses is a recurring theme in the work of George Mosse, the pioneer in the cultural interpretation of fascism who died in 1999. His The Image of Man showed how the history of modern virility, suitably expressed in the martial statues by Arno Breker, came to a climax in the Second World War. Lately, the representation of the body and fascist virilities seems to fascinate many scholars. Not surprisingly, film, theater and opera have been found to have played equally important roles in the aestheticizing of politics. "We need to interpret fascist aesthetics as founded on the sublimation of the body and the alienation of sensual life," writes Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi in her study of fascism as a discourse.

And then there are the usual volumes exploring the relationship between film and photographs and history and memory. Sylvie Lindeperg investigated the heroic myths propagated in postwar French films and demonstrates how the past was continually reinvented, while Pierre Darmon found that occupied Paris actually offered more scope for film-makers than did Vichy.

Not only German writers and philosophers sympathized with fascism and National Socialism; French intellectuals were not far behind in perceiving fascism as the embodiment of irrational and instinctive creativity. Except for Drieu la Rochelle, most of the writers were writers of the second tier,
according to Jeannine Verdes-Leroux. How the Germans attempted to achieve cultural hegemony in Europe is the subject of a monograph on “Aktion Ritterbusch”, the Kriegseinsatz mounted by German scholars in the humanities to displace the French. In this context, a significant contribution is Gisèle Sapiro’s synthesis inspired by Pierre Bourdieu’s sociological “field” approach. In treating the ever-intriguing topic of the attitude of the French writers, she clearly shows that ideological motives were not always as decisive in shaping their attitude as is commonly thought.

The Israeli historian Limore Yagil analyzed the mythical symbolism of the “New Man” with which Vichy sought to further its goal of bringing about a Révolution nationale, a spiritual renaissance, as well as the regime’s use of art, the media and the theater in support of this effort. Pétain himself saw education as an important component in the cultivation of this “New Man.”

Gender

In the past decades, writes Perry Willson, Italian historiography has seen “an increased professionalisation and the emergence of ‘women’s history’ as a small but assertive section of historical study.” The same holds for other countries. New research challenges the idea that the violent aspects of the resistance were the most important ones. A new emphasis on the unarmed, mainly female, role of civilians has yielded a number of studies about women in the German, French, Italian and Greek resistance. Their authors are mostly women. Gender studies are no exception to the growing interest in exploring subjective attitudes to the war. Tools are borrowed from other disciplines to analyze the symbolic meaning of deeds and emotions and how these are remembered and reported. Such studies, Willson notes, detail how interviewees remember fear and courage and resort to modesty and pride, jokes, understatement, dialect or metaphor in order to tell difficult or painful stories.

Although French women only obtained the right to vote after the liberation in 1945, they were far from powerless in determining social policies before that, argues Sian Reynold in her feminist perspective of French history. Francine Muel-Dreyfus writes in Vichy et l’éternel féminin that part of the regime’s “treatment for national purity” was to condemn women to the kitchen, and that in so doing it was at the same time condemning the ideals of the French Revolution. Miranda Pollard’s Reign of Virtue also tells the story of Vichy’s attempt to reshape the position of women in French society. To judge from several collections focusing on the relationship between women and Nazism, and women and fascism, one might
conclude that the picture of the role of women was less clearly defined in the latter than in the former.

**The Axis Powers**

Surveys and anthologies on the Third Reich are appearing in rapid succession. Ulrich von Hehl has given us a solid introduction, an excellent summary of the recent debates, and a representative bibliography of 500 titles. Racism is the most important strand in both Michael Burleigh's collection and the monograph by Ludolf Herbst. Pierre Ayyoberry analyzes the mechanisms of terror and violence which permeated society in the Third Reich and cuts a clear path through the current thicket of historiographical debates. Eric Johnson's excellent study on the mechanism of terror in a dictatorship portrays the Gestapo as a relatively small organization which directed its terror almost exclusively at Communists and Jews. The "ordinary" German had little to fear.

The trend toward individualization is so marked in the literature on the Third Reich that Hermann Graml, taking stock on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Munich Institut für Zeitgeschichte, felt compelled to issue a warning against "a privatization of the confrontation with National Socialism" and the potential for "kollektiver Drückebergerei".

Resisting the determinism which historians tend to impute to Hitler's advent to power, Henry Turner's book on January 1933 attributes the successful Machtübernahme to a fortuitous conjunction of circumstances in which the specific character traits of the protagonists - Hindenburg, father and son, Schleicher, Papen en Hugenberg - all played major roles.

William Brustein, in the sequel to the research into the social backgrounds of the Nazis by his colleague Falter, concludes that the Germans became Nazis for economic reasons. In the economic program of the Party they saw the potential for improving their standard of living.

There are many new general histories of fascism, as well as studies comparing Nazi Germany with fascist Italy or other fascist states - Stanley Payne for example makes a convincing case for the political weakness of Spanish fascism. Renzo De Felice has finished his monumental work on Mussolini, which is surely a cornerstone in the historiography of fascism by making the distinction between fascism as a movement and fascism as a regime. The oft-repeated claim that industrialists enthusiastically backed fascism does not hold up well, either for Germany or, as Franklin Adler showed, for Italy; the industrialists were too committed to the existing economy.
To dub Edwin Hoyt's study revisionist would not seem improper, given its spirited celebration of Mussolini's diplomatic talents. Jasper Ridley is more critical, but he too observes that Mussolini was often right, as when he predicted that the Second World War would end in the division of, and the struggle between, two super-powers, the US and the Soviet Union. "The world today is not one of the History but one of the Myth", Pierre Milza quotes Mussolini as saying in his biography of the Duce. Milza further makes the point that Mussolini, in contradistinction to what happened in Germany, allowed the state to prevail over the party. What Mussolini and Hitler had in common was an ability to make the average person feel that he or she was taking part in a great historical and social enterprise.

There is a growing body of work by Italian, American and British historians such as Emilio Gentile, Richard Bosworth and Denis Mack Smith whose focus is the Italian fascist regime and its mechanisms of control. The political culture of fascist Italy has prompted several fascinating studies that led to real advances in our understanding of the fascist experience. Emilio Gentile's masterly analysis of the fascist political liturgy as a means of self-representation, or the aforementioned study by M.S. Stone on its estheticizing policies are two of these. Stone found that the fascist regime literally exhibited itself to the public. The author of Dictating Demography, C. Ipsen, has produced yet another history of political culture by taking into account the common positions of fascism's demographic theory and of the Catholic Church.

The regime's last chapter, the Republic of Salò and the final accounting with Mussolini, has not been neglected, either. Hans Woller estimates that until 1946 between 10,000 and 12,000 Italians fell victim to the so-called purges - this in addition to the 20,000 to 30,000 trials of those held responsible for the Duce's regime. The postwar transition and the division among the anti-fascists on questions relating to Italy's future are treated in various works.

More than ideology, it was common international interests that brought Nazi Germany and fascist Italy together. That interest began with the Italian conquest of Ethiopia in 1935. Haile Larebo's evaluation of Italy's colonial policies is a mixed bag. The negative components (racism and violence) contributed significantly to its failure; the positive elements, such as the establishment of infrastructure, turned out to be of capital importance for the modernization of Ethiopia. Albert Sbacchi concurs. The conqueror toppled, "the Ethiopians appreciated Italian contributions in industry, transport, and government administration".
Vichy France

A history of occupation well worth emulating is Etienne Dejonghe's and Yves Le Maner's study of the two northwestern departments of France. This region is special for two reasons: the strong German military presence and the experiences of the First World War.

The English literary historian Ian Ousby used literary sources to depict life in France during the occupation. Dominique Veillon provides a more representative picture. Philippe Burrin burrowed into German and French archives to probe the extent to which the French adjusted to or productively cooperated with the occupier. 50,000 children plus was the harvest from liaisons dangereuses between French women and German soldiers. Research on the ways in which war and occupation changed sexual life and attitudes has hardly begun. Thanks to Ludger Tewes, however, we do know what the German soldiers thought about life as “Gott in Frankreich”.

Burrin's study leaves no doubt that nearly all the institutions and their leaders adapted handily. The many studies that have since subjected these institutions to detailed analyses confirm this assessment. Marc Olivier Baruch examined the attitude of the French governmental apparatus vis-à-vis Vichy and was left to wonder why only a small minority (0.2% of the 900,000 civil servants) remained true to republican principles and went over to the resistance. Gérard Noiriel, however, inquired whether the Vichy regime really was as decisive a break with the Third Republic as has generally been assumed. Additional studies of Vichy's discriminatory measures against France's foreign-born would shed more light on how the adherents of the Révolution nationale legitimized their policies by appealing to the Republic.

The moral question of the limits of obedience was screwed a little tighter in the course of the “second purge” (Rousso) in the eighties and the nineties, when several highly-placed Vichy bureaucrats and collaborators were put on trial. Omer Bartov asked the same questions, albeit more generally, about the police in modern states. A similar concern is evident in a collection of articles on the political police in European nation-states that includes a contribution on the Tokkō and political police in Japan. There is also a separate study on Japan's dreaded military police, the Kempeitai. The active involvement of the French police in the deportations; the collaboration of the Milice; the attitude of French physicians, entrepreneurs and banks - all these have found their historians.

Finally, many of the best scholars in the field have contributed to France at War which not only examines how the experience of war and occupation
shaped the everyday lives of people but also the ways in which the historians have analyzed the historical legacy of Vichy.205

Occupation and Resistance: Comparative Perspectives?

How carefully an historian has to tread when he or she tackles history and collective memory is apparent from Nicholas Doumanis' ethnographic research in an outpost of Europe, the Dodecanese archipelago.206 Local historiography depicts the Italian occupation of these islands as a period of barbarization, exploitation and corruption. The memories of eyewitnesses Doumanis interviewed were rather more tinged with nostalgia; as these remembered it, relations with the Italian occupier were much more pleasant and human than with their German and British counterparts.

Albania was another country that experienced both a German and an Italian occupation. Where the Italians attempted to win the Albanian elites for themselves, the Germans did their utmost to destroy the political and social structures.207 Other occupation histories include the Nazi occupation of Austria208, Greece209, Luxemburg210 and Italy211, and a collection of articles focuses on Hungary in “the age of total war” (1938-1948).212

The many specialized studies on the resistance of groups and individuals in Nazi Germany done by Germans have been joined by some English-language publications213. Reflecting more recent interests is the collection of articles that focus on the attitude of the German military resistance towards the “Jewish problem” and war crimes on the Eastern front214, America's ties with the German resistance are coming into focus as well.215 Leonid Grenkevich has taken the essential first step in reconstructing the real nature and impact of the Soviet partisan struggle by synthesizing the best available Western and Eastern sources.216

Rab Bennett's comprehensive guide to the harrowing ethical choices that confronted people in the occupied countries includes a detailed discussion of Jewish resistance and “collaboration”.217 Jean-François Muracciole's engaging study of the spiritual ambitions of the resistance in France - a pioneer effort in comparative research into the resistance as a subculture - reflects the shifting interest in the legacy of the Résistance.218

The debate on the place of the resistance in Italian and in French history continues. This reflects the highly politicized nature of historical writing in Italy, a country rife with institutions devoted to the history of the resistance and anti-fascism, especially in the northern and central cities. To a lesser degree, this is also true of France, where publications often are the product of academic conferences during which notions on what constituted the resistance
are challenged. The evolution toward more social and anthropologically-based studies of the resistance is noticeable here as well.219

The compilations on the resistance in Germany and other Western European220 countries, as those on the German struggle against the resistance in Western and Southern Europe221, offer little that is new from a comparative perspective. Though the heroic, nationalistic phase in its historiography may be long past, there are still too few studies on the different interpretations of the term resistance to be able to subject them to systematic comparative criticism. A good foundation for such comparative study has been laid in Resistance in Western Europe, a collection of articles edited by Bob Moore.222 In his thoughtful conclusion, Moore urges to take up the challenge issued by Jacques Semelin and others to place the resistance in a wider framework than that of the national and international social histories of World War II.

However, as Semelin has shown, earlier resistance was highly dependent upon community cohesion. The articles in Opposing Fascism. Community, Authority and Resistance in Europe show that centralized, nationally led resistance movements never originated from below. The historiography of Italian resistance has been enriched by Philip Morgan's important methodological contribution contesting De Felice's conclusions on the quantity and quality of 'consent' and 'dissent' under the fascist regime.223

The final volumes of the documentary series Europa unterm Hakenkreuz contains a very useful overview of the sources and a bibliography on the politics of occupation.224 This series can be read as an interesting attempt to investigate the nature of the general traits of the German occupation. In this it differs from the now-completed series Nationalsozialisiche Besatzungspolitik in Europa 1939-1945225, which clearly shows that since there was no overall leadership, we cannot really compare one country with another. Only where the persecution of the Jews was concerned and (after 1942) the conscription of labor did the Germans attempt to lay down a central policy, with variable success.

The nine volumes of the ESE (European Science Foundation) owe their methodological consensus and content coherence to the workshops and conferences which preceded its publication. The ESE has plans to research the profound consequences of National Socialist and fascist occupations for the European populations using the same intensive international cooperation - an important objective in that the collective memory of National Socialist occupation is central to the historical and moral beliefs that link people in Europe. This becomes very clear in Pieter Lagrou's outstanding comparative study of the consequences of the Second World War in three Western European countries. He concludes that the memory of the Second World War contributed
to a profound transformation of Western Europe's concepts of national identity, citizenship and human rights. 226

Gabriel Kolko claimed in his Century of War (1994) that it is only through our comprehension of the traumatizing impact of war on society that one can begin to understand the political upheavals and ideological cleavages that have produced so many cataclysmic "peacetime" changes in the twentieth century. 227 Kolko contends that any useful conception of social change must be rooted in empirical studies of war.

Economics

Reflecting the same high standards of the previous volumes, Dietrich Eichholtz's third and final volume of the Geschichte der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft is a study of great importance for the economic policy of the occupation 228. It is becoming increasingly clear that the Germans failed to establish a continental "Grossraumwirtschaft". That their economic exploitation of the occupied areas was not nearly as successful as is generally thought is the thrust of a collection of articles published in the aforementioned ESF series under the title Die "Neuordnung" Europas229 - a conclusion more than borne out by Corni and Gies' solid study on agricultural policy and food provisioning in Germany.230

At last we have a contribution on the economic history of the Second World War which illuminates the perceptions of six of its participants. 231 Italy seems to have spent the least percent of its national income on military expenditures, a maximum of 23% (1941), which accounts for its rapid collapse in 1943. The numbers Mark Harrison furnishes in the introduction leave no doubt whatever that there was no way the Allies could lose the war once they had mobilized their economic resources. Richard Overy and Alan Milward had already come to the same conclusion earlier, however much they differed in their assessment of the Blitzkrieg.

Second World War: Causes and Consequences

Thanks to some new tools, the cluttered forest of literature on the Second World War has now been made a little easier to penetrate. One of these is an all-English-language sources handbook listing the most important events. 232 Nor have books on the causes of the Second World War in Europe become extinct. 233 We also have a healthy new crop of new books on the eve of the war, appeasement politics and Munich. 234 A fine evaluation of the historical
debates gives Pierre Grosser. Archive materials of recent vintage are bound to stimulate re-interpretations, and many studies claim to have made new discoveries in hitherto inaccessible depositories.

“Stalin distrusted everyone,” told Ivan Maisky, the longstanding Soviet ambassador who had sent Stalin repeated warnings that Hitler was planning to attack Russia, “the only man he trusted was Hitler.” Both German and Russian sources confirm that there never existed any Soviet plans for a surprise attack on Germany in 1941.

Russian archive material, kept secret until recently, indicates, among other things, that the Russian losses were much greater than previously believed. Roger Reese’s gripping social history of the Red Army explains how the Red Army, the world largest armed force, had failed to successfully defend its borders and had allowed an enemy to conquer most of European Russia. Reese concludes: “The armed forces had outrun the capacity of a still predominantly peasant society to provide (on a mostly volunteer basis) cadres capable of leading and managing a modern mass army”. In some ways, the regime failed the army. In other ways, the army high command failed the soldiers: “It lost sight of the individual and his needs, forgetting that the foundation of military success is the motivated and trained soldier”. The military historian David Glantz confirms that the Red Army was poorly trained, inadequately equipped and inaptly organized.

Relying on statistics and new documents, Mark Harrison analyzed the economic toll of the war. Richard Overy points to the enormous Russian achievement in transferring its factories behind the Urals - the year was 1941 - and shifting to the mass production of simple but effective tanks, weapons and airplanes.

The Russian historian Falin asked why the Allies waited so long to open up the Second Front, and Walter Dunn’s study of the Red Army, modernized by the Weimar Republic and armed on American advice, came to the not so startling conclusion that the map of postwar Europe would have looked a lot less favorable to the Soviet Union had the Allies invaded France in 1943. However, the lesson of David Glantz’s study of Zhukov’s offensive of March 1942 is never to start an offensive before its time, unless you’re willing to pay a heavy price.

The historian of war, Kiesling, explains why the French had good reasons to feel secure behind their Maginot Line. But they were also defeatist. These are two contradictory, yet frequently heard explanations for the French collapse of May 1940. Robert Young sorts it all out in a monograph, while other historians do the same collectively under the editorship of Joel Blatt.

In London, too, things could have taken an entirely different turn in the spring of 1940, when not even all of the Tories solidly backed Churchill’s
firm stand on Hitler and many European politicians were prepared to accept the
end of parliamentary democracy, writes John Lukacs.250 Luckacs, who has little
patience for revisionist Churchill literature, recalls Churchill's prediction that
the 1980's would see the end of Communism in Eastern Europe, and
concludes: "we must understand that the history of the fifty years from 1940 to
1990 was inseparable from what happened in 1940, just as the Cold War too
was but the result of the Second World War. At best, civilization may survive,
at least in some small part due to Churchill in 1940."251

"There is only one thing worse than fighting with Allies, and that is fighting
without them", Churchill is reported to have said. As is well known, the
tension between England and America persisted throughout the war years, a
tension which has been assessed by a number of historians, each in his or her
own way.252 We owe it to the published documents from Stalin's personal
archives that we now know more about Russia's role in "the making of the
Grand Alliance."253

The end of the war in Europe and Asia is the subject of a number of
anthologies254; individual studies on the same topic have come out on
Germany255 and France.256 The fiftieth anniversary of the Nuremberg Tribunal
afforded the occasion for a critical evaluation of the historical significance of
the War Crimes trial.257

David Kennedy has contributed a new and broad ranging history covering
all aspects of Roosevelt's America258 and there is also a collection of articles
worth noting, The War in American Culture. Society and Consciousness during
World War II.259 It is becoming quite clear that the war had a far greater impact
on the collective and private lives of Americans than historians had imagined.
John Dower's analysis of US and Japanese racism not only shows how the war
changed people's thinking on racial differences, but also whets one's appetite
for more comparative studies of home fronts spanning different eras and
places. One such is the collection edited by Jeremy Noakes260; another is Birthe
Kundrus' work on family policies and the position of the German woman on
the home front in the First and Second World War261; yet another is Women
and War in the Twentieth Century.262 That the war period seems to have been
no less a radical time for the Australians is the upshot of a work with a taste for
social history.263

Many more gaps remain to be filled. Still barely explored, for example, is
the functioning of local and regional structures and institutions under the
occupation and the question of their continuity. The mass migrations of people
likewise are waiting to be included in the research on the impact of war and
occupation on the lives of the occupied peoples. In 1945 the ethnic map of
Europe was drastically redrawn.
The war was a catalyst of change. Its long-term economic consequences, according to Mark Harrison, were an integrated world economy, capital accumulation and mass production. The war also initiated the decolonization process, which concluded with Western countries having to adjust to a post-imperial role. The economic crisis and the Second World War had led to a consensus on the necessity of social services and stable political institutions. It was the irony of history that it took Hitler's hubris, which brought down not only Hitler himself but a whole slew of peoples, to rehabilitate democracy as a bastion of human dignity.

**Military History**

In one of his war stories, Tolstoy related that he was more interested in knowing what drove a soldier to kill another soldier, and how he felt about that, than he was in knowing exactly how the armies were deployed at Austerlitz. Interest in the lives of the soldiers at the front is still growing, and many such memoirs are being published on the premise that the most violent episodes of humanity are best understood by means of individual experience. *Andere Helmen - Andere Menschen* kills two birds with one stone: it furnishes both an important collection of the war experiences of soldiers and civilians from various countries as well as a comparative perspective. For Japanese war experiences, there is the English translation of *Senso* (war).

World War II did far more societal damage beyond the battlefield than did World War I. Not surprisingly, given the reliance on new technologies, especially of the advent of air power, and the extension of submarine warfare. Robert Buderi argues that while the atom bomb may have ended World War II, it was radar that won it. Clay Blair's two-volume work on U-boat warfare attempts to undermine the belief that Hitler's submarines at any time posed a serious danger to the Allies. David Evans and Mark Peattie persuasively explain in their important new study on the Japanese Navy how the Japanese failed to prepare properly for the war in the Pacific: "...the most serious strategic failing of the Japanese navy was to mistake tactics for strategy and strategy for the conduct of war".

If the war at sea keeps pens stirring, so does the war in the air. Eric Bergerud's analysis of the air war in the Pacific is rich in detail of what it was like to fly and fight under primitive conditions so different from the massive air war in Europe. A previous work described the downward spiral toward barbarization of the war in the Pacific, beginning with the land war on the Solomon Islands and in the jungles of New Guinea, with neither the Japanese nor the Americans bothering to take POWs.
Another striking difference from the First World War were the doctrines that accompanied the new technologies. These doctrines encouraged a "total war" mentality, which meant converting the entire enemy civilian population, along with its industrial and urban infrastructure, into permissible military targets. Stephen Spender once remarked that the bombed cities of the Second World War were the trenches of the First World War. The discussion over the effectiveness and morality of the Allied bombardments is far from dead. A very high proportion of the 50 million people killed in the Second World War were civilians, in contradistinction to the 10 million casualties of the First World War, nearly all of whom were combatants.

And yet the Second World War has a silver lining, insists military historian John Keegan, who believes that "the worst of war is now behind us". In 1941 Hitler mustered 143 divisions to invade Russia, epitomizing that era of mass, industrialized ground war which, Keegan asserts, has run its historical course. Another military historian, Martin van Creveld, is less sanguine. His *The Transformation of War* (1991) maintains that Clausewitz's trinity of power behind modern war - army, government and people -- has ceased to be relevant. The number of people killed in assorted wars, rebellions, coups, revolutions, and other massacres since the end of the Second World War has been estimated to hover between 15 and 20 million, or roughly one-third or one-half of the total numbers of deaths in the war itself.

Asia

England completely misread the Japanese aims, writes Anthony Best in his fine study of the struggle between Japan, the revisionist power in the Pacific, and the champion of the status quo, England. The same might be said of the USA., although Jonathan Marshall makes the point that more than anything it was America's dependence on Asia's raw materials that caused the war in the Pacific. Nicholas Tarling shows rather more understanding for British policies. For him the world war starts in 1941, with the Japanese occupation of South-East Asia and the threat posed by the American navy to the Japanese lines of communication.

With an eye on the final struggle in Asia, where they reckoned the Japanese would go the limit in defending their coasts, both the British and the Americans strove to keep the losses in Europe to a minimum. And indeed, by the time America dropped its A-bombs, breaking all resistance, 1.5 million soldiers had already been killed. The decision to drop the bomb keeps drawing fire on both sides of the fence. Revisionists reject the view that the bomb was necessary for victory and explain its use as a political weapon.
designed to intimidate the Soviet Union at the beginning of the Cold War. The controversy has found a sober analyst in Richard B. Frank.

Peter Wetzler discloses that emperor Hirohito was well informed of the decisions of the military and that his participation was consistent with his passionate belief in the significance of the imperial tradition for the Japanese polity (kokutai) in pre-war Japan. Edward Drea's essays resolve that Hirohito "does not measure up as a fighting generalissimo. He constantly reacted to military operation; he did not initiate them... he valued the imperial institution more than his people, his army and his empire". His subjects' reaction to capitulation, is well told in John Dower's fine study Embracing Defeat. Japan in the Wake of World War II, which concludes: "The ease with which the great majority of Japanese were able to throw off a decade and a half of the most intense militaristic indoctrination offers lessons in the limits of socialization and the fragility of ideology that we have seen elsewhere in this century in the collapse of totalitarian regimes". But it was not only the defeat and democratization of Japan that changed the political landscape more fundamentally in Asia than in Europe. The Chinese revolution, the Korean War and the decolonization of South-East Asia were but the most important developments directly resulting from the war.

The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945 traces Japanese efforts at mobilizing colonial work forces and the colonial people's reactions. Many of the contributors to this splendid addition to Asian comparative histories of occupation demonstrate that the Japanese did not generally succeed in winning over the Asiatic masses, for lack of what Peatty calls "area expertise". That the history of Japan's modernization is closely tied to the growth of its imperialism, as Chushichi Tsuzuki argues in The Pursuit of Power in Modern Japan, 1825-1995, is borne out by the example of Manchuria in Louise Young's study.

Shigeru Sato, a Japanese-Australian historian, for the first time presents a picture of the trials of the Indonesian people, specifically the sufferings of the Javanese farmers and their employment as romusha. So many people died of hunger and disease in the final stage of the occupation as a result of the misrule of the Japanese occupier that the population of Java experienced a significant decline. Scholars have given remarkably little attention to the part played by food in wartime. Food supplies and the Japanese occupation in South-East Asia allow us to compare conditions in different South-East Asian countries - a comparable study for Europe has still to be written. Separate studies afford a detailed look of the Japanese occupation policies in Malaya and Sarawak.

The Japanese military interregnum was analyzed in the Netherlands as an integral part of the process of long-term changes in Southeast Asia.
Representing the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia is an exemplary portrayal of the Japanese occupation as seen through Indonesian, Dutch and Japanese eyes.\textsuperscript{293} Research still has to be undertaken into differences in the experience of occupation between the peoples of North-East Asia, who had a longer experience with Japanese colonization, and South-East Asian peoples who were overrun for a period of three years.\textsuperscript{294} Also, more attention will have to be paid to the impact of the experience of war on popular consciousness in the different Asian regions.

With the Japanese treating the Pacific War as distinct from their continental war and American scholars focusing on the Pacific War, events in China usually get lost in the shuffle. But if Edward Drea is right, that situation is about to change: “If anything is certain,” he writes in a useful historiographic essay, “it is that we can expect more high-quality historical studies of the momentous events in Asia and the Pacific that occurred between 1937 and 1945”.\textsuperscript{295}

On November 10, 1942, Ernst Jünger wrote in his diary regarding the landing of the Americans in North Africa: “Die Art der Anteilnahme, die ich in mir der zeitgenössischen Geschichte gegenüber beobachte, ist die eines Menschen, der sich weniger in einen Weltkrieg als in einem Weltbürgerkrieg verwickelt weiss”. If Jünger had not lived in Europe, he might well have made this observation earlier - at the moment, for example, that China, upon America’s entry into the war, became the battleground of the Second World War in East Asia. Here, too, spatial distance is translated into distance in time. For China the Second World War began earlier (1937) and ended later (September 9, 1945) than in most countries. Nineteen million people died.\textsuperscript{296}

\textit{Conclusion}

There is much to be said for dividing the twentieth century into a catastrophe-ridden first half and a second half of unknown prosperity, at least in the Western world. The second half is still overshadowed by the memory of the first half. There is a possibility that future historians of the Second World War will reinsert it into the context of the European power struggle that was ignited in 1914 and again push Auschwitz to the periphery. “The final solution of the Jewish question was to be merely a prelude to the wholesale reorganization of Central and Eastern Europe,” writes Modris Eksteins referring to the huge migrations that were the consequences of World War 2.\textsuperscript{297}

Another possibility is that the world wars, in the words of Ernst Jünger, will be regarded as \textit{Weltbürgerkriege}. The intensity of suffering and destruction which struck civilians for six long years profoundly transformed European and
Asian societies. Works like Mazower's and Kolko's indicate the direction for research on the impact of the war on social life and its postwar ramifications.

Among the many studies on the twentieth century that have recently appeared, Marc Mazower's stands out for being less teleologically informed than the works of others, for he always remains aware of those crucial moments when things could have turned out quite differently. Historians know both more and less than the people they study. More, because they know what the future will bring, less, because they will never quite be able to imagine what it was like not to have had this foreknowledge - the fact, for example, that until late 1941 official Nazi policy, at least with respect to German Jews, called not for extermination but forced emigration. Raymond Aron already dreamed of a history with the fatalism taken out. With that approach historians would rather try to understand than explain, à la Vaclav Havel. Understanding, not judging, should be the watchword of the historian, declared Marc Bloch, himself a victim of Nazism.

To this end, the historians must be less bound by the political and moral agendas of the past and strive to overcome the attendant reluctance to draw more general conclusions. As Omer Bartov puts it: “To employ the knowledge so meticulously collected by scholars and yet not to get lost in the details and lose sight of what it is that one is actually confronting.” There will be new generations of historians, and new questions posed, and a day may well come that we ask ourselves why we even bothered with the present historiographical controversies. Historians should be aware of the inevitably revisionist nature of their work. Therefore, I cannot think of a better piece of advice on which to close than to echo Norman Davies' plea “for a more reflective and imaginative approach”.

Translation: Jacob Boas
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