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Suffering, Surviving and Coping: Experiences of Violence and Defeat in Post-War Europe

Seventy years after the end of the Second World War (WWII) and over twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, historical studies on both the 'short' and the 'long' post-war eras in Europe are flourishing. The perspectives and topics in this field are wide-ranging. At least from the early 2000s onwards, the emphasis has been shifting from the much-studied subjects of Cold War politics and the economic and social history of reconstruction toward cultural historical studies on individual and collective experiences and memory.¹

A key reason for this change is well expressed by Frank Biess, who has approached the post-war period in Germany from a cultural and social-historical angle, noting that 'postwar societies needed to face more than just the classical tasks of reintegrating returning soldiers or even of converting a wartime to a peacetime economy.' There was also the massive effort needed to 'come to terms with the legacies' of unprecedented ethnic cleansing and genocide.² Understanding and discussing – as well as willfully neglecting – these legacies have been fundamental elements of post-war European identities and politics. In this respect, it is still relevant today to study the after-effects of war in Europe. One crucial task is to map the different spheres and dimensions of the transition from war to peace and to try to find intranational, as well as international connections between them – if there are any – thus slowly gaining a fuller picture of the 'European aftermath' from 1945 to the 1990s.³

Nevertheless, the socio-cultural impacts of WWII have so far not yet attracted the same amount of scholarship as the impacts of the First World War. According to Pieter Lagrou, this is partly due to the broadly shared European experience of violence in 1914–1918, whereas the memories of violence in 1939–1945 were more varied, divisive and contested in different parts of Europe.⁴ Furthermore, right up until the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, Europe remained very much a post-war continent, scarred as it was by the Iron Curtain. This prolonged acuteness of the aftermath may have made it difficult to write a closing chapter to the era. Finally, sixty years after 1945, the late Tony Judt published his magisterial *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*, which is so far the most comprehensive account of

the long post-war period. This is largely due to Judt's skill and insight in including the oft-forgotten histories of Central and Eastern European countries in his narrative. Judt powerfully demonstrates the burdens and suffering of the civilian populations and the massive destruction of cities and infrastructure especially in German-occupied countries,⁵ where, east of the Elbe, the liberation from the Germans in 1944–1945 brought first the merciless maelstrom of war and then a new form of totalitarian regime under the Soviets. In this area between Berlin and Moscow, which had already suffered the worst of both the Stalinist terror and the Holocaust, the Anglo-American narrative of a 'good war' in 1939–1945 could hardly have been more inappropriate.⁶

'Zero Hour' and the Continuation of Violence

It is partly against this background that the popular concept of 'zero hour' (*die Stunde Null*) should perhaps be criticised. The term has been used to refer to Germany's total defeat and setting the clock back to zero, so that May 1945 would mark a fresh start and a decisive break from the past. There was a dire need to forget the horrors of the past decades and to start a whole new era, both politically and individually. Morally, too, the idea of a 'zero hour' helped to distance the post-war Germans from the Nazi regime and all its crimes. In this sense, the concept captures an essential (German) experience and sentiment at the end of the war.⁷ However, Mark Mazower among others has challenged the 'old idea that 1945 had been a kind of Year Zero'.⁸ For many in Central and Eastern Europe, the capitulation of Germany did not mean an end to violence and totalitarianism, but its continuation; and the direct consequences of war could not simply be pushed aside. In Germany itself, despite the denazification and re-education programs, many of the former Nazi officials and authorities retained their positions.⁹

After the war, the legitimacy of official authorities was weak everywhere in continental Europe. The reasons for this are obvious in the defeated countries. But also in those countries that had been occupied by Germany during the war, many of the local office-holders had served the occupiers in one way or another. In the Soviet-controlled areas, there was a strong pressure to purge fascist or allegedly fascist-affiliated functionaries.¹⁰ In addition to such systematic campaigns, spontaneous acts of revenge and cleansings by outraged people were also widespread. Tens of thousands of Europeans continued to be killed in this way, just as they had before the end of hostilities; while in Western Europe, too, death sentences were a common occurrence.¹¹

The continuation of wartime atrocities, expulsions, and purges well into the post-war period is now a widely recognised aspect of the human history of the aftermath, and there is a growing amount of research on these traumatic topics. The staggering number of refugees and displaced people in Europe threatened further human disaster and required huge and immediate relief efforts. In the area of the former Third Reich, there were over 10 million foreign slave labourers and concentration camp victims that

needed to either return to homes that had been destroyed or find new ones.¹² After the war, as many as 20 million people suffered forced migration and ethnic cleansing; around 13 million of these were Germans from Central Eastern Europe now moved to the new, smaller Germany.¹³ The situation of displaced and often also orphaned children was especially grave.¹⁴ In the final stages of the war and in its immediate wake, it has become clear that hundreds of thousands if not over a million girls and women were raped by Soviet soldiers in German areas or in countries allied to Germany.¹⁵ This violent mayhem, which Hitler's murderous regime had brought upon the German people as a whole, is still a source of the troublesome politics of memory and victimisation.¹⁶ Immediately after the war, Germans tended to downplay their concentration and extermination camps as no worse than the Soviet gulags. Frank Biess has categorised the narratives of victimisation in East and West Germany into Christian, social-democratic, and communist: in the West, 'the most influential promoters of narratives of victimisation were the Christian churches'.¹⁷

At the end of WWII, millions of men were either in military service or in foreign captivity. In Europe, the demobilisation of vast armies in different countries is still a relatively little-studied subject.¹⁸ In the United States, on the other hand, the homecoming of 'the greatest generation' and the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the G.I. Bill of Rights) has gained more attention. Michael D. Gambone has called this act 'arguably the greatest social-welfare program in U.S. history'.¹⁹ After the G.I. Bill, the educational status of American veterans improved greatly, and the number of university students soared – as it did in many European countries, too.²⁰ In the Soviet Union the demobilisation of over 8.5 million Red Army soldiers posed a gigantic task. All in all, the effort lasted until the end of 1948, and despite the positive tone of the official propaganda, there were serious shortcomings and much corruption involved in providing proper housing and jobs for the veterans.²¹

The brutal treatment of close to six million Soviet prisoners of war by the Germans in 1941–1945 had resulted in over three million deaths, and subsequently those who survived often had to face harsh treatment as 'traitors' from their own Soviet regime.²² In the case of Germany, the return of approximately two million prisoners of war from Soviet captivity lasted until the 1950s.²³ Of the former German allies, Italy, Finland, Rumania and Bulgaria had changed sides in 1943–1944 and turned their armies against the Germans. Hungary, by contrast, was occupied by Germany in March 1944 and was then made to follow the Nazi regime into the abyss of its final defeat. As a consequence, over half a million Hungarian soldiers and civilians were taken prisoner by the Red Army. Their return to Hungary continued until 1956, while an estimated 100,000–150,000 Hungarians perished in Soviet captivity.²⁴

Gendered Experiences of Reintegration

So far, according to David A. Gerber, the history of those left disabled by the war has not received enough attention. Their post-war situation was especially troublesome in defeated or occupied countries.²⁵ In Austria, for instance, the mere presence of war invalids was an unwelcome reminder of the Nazi past, clashing with the cherished myth of Austria as 'the first victim of National Socialism'.²⁶ Thus, the soldiers' homecoming did not just mean bringing celebrated heroes back into society; indeed, especially where defeated nations, prisoners of war, and serious physical and mental traumas were concerned. Rather, their return could be perceived as a crisis of masculinity;²⁷ in terms of the concrete wounds in men's bodies and the symbolic wounds in the image of military men. This image had been closely linked to the national identity, had now raised the question of redefining the ideals of manliness. In his fine study of prisoners of war in both Germanies, Frank Biess has studied the figure of a physically and mentally exhausted POW coming home from Soviet captivity and described how this figure contrasted so sharply with the previous wartime image of heroic, martial, and aggressive German soldiers. Especially in West Germany, homecomers were encouraged 'to win back their masculinity' by taking on a strong, even authoritarian, position in their families and becoming the breadwinners, thus allowing (or forcing) women to return to more traditional roles.²⁸ In the analysis of post-war masculinities and gender roles, the concept of 'remasculinisation' has been used to describe this social, cultural, and political process; one where manly subjectivity and authority is reclaimed in a post-war society and simultaneously regenerates a national self-image of coherence and strength.²⁹

Practically all war veteran surveys in different countries have shown that the veterans did not want to share their experiences with anyone else than their former military comrades.³⁰ For instance, General George S. Patton noted in his diary in the summer of 1945, '[n]one of them [civilians] realizes that one cannot fight for two and a half years and be the same',³¹ and there were many young war veterans who had fought much longer. During the past fifteen years, the terms 'shell shock' and 'trauma' have become focal keywords in studies on WWI.³² This vein of research is now also becoming visible in research on WWII and its aftermath, although the image of a mentally broken soldier is not so iconic here as for 1914–18.³³ There have been attempts to apply the present-day psychiatric diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in interpreting the psychological consequences of WWII, but such an approach poses some serious problems. Born in the wake of the Vietnam War (and thus in a particular societal and cultural context) PTSD as a medical category is perhaps not the best-suited concept for understanding the trauma of war in a historical context.³⁴

For a long time now, the study of women and war has been an active field in women's history. Among the key issues has been the question of the significance of war for the women's movement and female emancipation. As a consequence of total mobilisation in both world wars, vast numbers

of women entered formerly 'male-only spheres' of employment – e.g., farm work, various public services, schools, and military auxiliary work. Many contemporary feminists consider the years 1914–1918 and 1939–1945 to have represented periods that saw the greatest progress in women's self-confidence and the women's movement. On the other hand, as many scholars have stressed, this emancipatory progress seems to have been quite short-lived: on the level of cultural norms and values, war could also reinforce traditional gender roles and attitudes, and the wartime deployment of women to 'male tasks' was commonly followed by a post-war backlash in which women were pushed back into the 'female sphere' of the home and marriage.³⁵

Indeed, reuniting families and re-establishing homes became one of the major tasks in post-war Europe. Naturally, the urge to return to the normalcy and safety of 'how it used to be' was felt deeply by the majority of post-war populations; this is easy to understand socially and psychologically. However, the return was also a political project that aimed at stabilising and bolstering shattered societies. Usually this stability was conceived on the basis of a conservative view of the family. Our image of the 1950s as a decade of stability, homogeneity and traditional family values may be partly a cliché, but as a stereotype it certainly reflects the *zeitgeist* to some extent.³⁶ In Europe of the 1940s and 1950s, the shattering effects of war also gave birth to a moral panic about the 'immoral' attitudes and behaviour of post-war youth. With a future that looked dim and uncertain, it was commonplace to project these fears and insecurities onto the alleged moral depravity and deviance of adolescents.³⁷

Politics of Remembrance and Victimhood

The study of memories, remembrance, and memory politics has been one of the most flourishing fields in the cultural history of war.³⁸ This is especially true with regard to the memory culture of WWI, which has produced a rich body of literature.³⁹ The Second World War created a haunting memory of completely new dimensions, especially because of the Holocaust, the massive human costs of total war and forced migration, and the advent of the atomic age. Nevertheless, and despite the immediate post-war revelations and trials of war crimes, Western Europe in the 1950s was much more concerned with economic reconstruction and social stabilisation than making any critical evaluation of the recent past. It may be surprising to see how late in the 1960s and 1970s the testimonies of the Holocaust and the war of annihilation in the East made their way into European – and especially German – memory culture. Although not forgotten, this genocidal past had not occupied a central place in remembering the war. Today, this remembrance of perpetration seems to be contested by memory discourses which again emphasise the victimhood of the Germans produced by the Allied strategic bombing campaign and the expulsion of the civilian population from the East.⁴⁰

In the countries east of the Iron Curtain, the post-war memory culture was to a great extent dominated by an endeavour to legitimise the new Stalinist rule and to build up a cult of the glorious Red Army. As a result, the memory of non-communist victims and opponents of the Nazi regime was officially ignored, as was Stalinist responsibility for the war and any cruelties committed by the liberating Red Army. These harsh memories have nevertheless survived well in the form of personal and family remembrance in Eastern and Central Europe. As the historian Krisztián Ungváry has said of the Hungarian memory culture of the war, one of the tragic consequences of the Red Army's brutalities against the civilian population in 1944–1945 was that the Hungarians were thus allowed to escape from confronting their own responsibility for the war and the Holocaust: among the memories of the war, it was the suffering of one's own kin and people that remained in the foreground.⁴¹ After the collapse of the Soviet system there is now finally public space for the open contemplation of historical responsibilities and forgotten victims – but unfortunately also for revanchist and chauvinistic reinterpretations of the past.

The horrific legacy of 1939–1945 has made it quite difficult to remember WWII with much glory. Despite the Anglo-American memory narrative of saving democracy from totalitarianism and the Soviet epic of the Great Patriotic War, the fundamental experience of war for so many Europeans was that of immense personal losses and often meaningless hardships. Of the victorious European nations, only Great Britain (though greatly weakened) and the Soviet Union avoided total collapse and occupation. This means that overall, the memory culture of WWII in Europe is very much one of defeat.⁴² One of the central themes in research has thus been the memory and remembrance of the fallen, but here, too, most of the studies have focused on the victims of the First World War. However, the 'memory boom' of the past twenty years is clearly visible in studies dealing with WWII and its aftermath as well.⁴³ Instead of national or collective memory cultures, many recent studies have shown the fragmentation, diversity, and controversial nature of memories among different groups and individuals. Jay Winter, who is critical of the concept collective memory, prefers to use the term historical remembrance, which 'overlaps with personal or family remembrance on the one hand and religious remembrance, so central to sacred practices, on the other'. Historical remembrance may be seen as an interpretation of the past, which includes both history and memory.⁴⁴ Even now, seventy years after the end of WWII, our historical understanding of 1939–1945 is closely bound up with the active cultures of remembrance of those who have direct experiences of those years. In the aftermath of the seventieth anniversary of 1945, it is still too early to regard the post-war period as mere history; at the time of writing these lines, the memory politics and rhetoric of WWII and its aftermath are again being used, and perhaps abused, to serve contemporary power politics in Eastern Europe.

Between Victors: This Volume

The following six chapters will offer case studies that concretise many of the issues described above. This anthology brings into focus some of the lesser known histories of the aftermath; in addition to Germany, the studies discuss the different aspects of the post-1945 situations in Estonia, Poland, Austria, Finland, and Hungary. The rationale of the book is to study the aftermath of WWII from three overlapping angles: defeat, gender, and the countries between the victors. It is very important to pay attention to these countries that have escaped the standard Western and Soviet narratives of liberation and post-war development as they produce a more nuanced and often ambiguous picture of that troubled period. This is what makes the study of Hungarian, Austrian, Polish, Estonian, Finnish, and German cases interesting.

During WWII, the Baltic countries were subject to successive occupations by the Soviet Union and Germany. **Anu Mai Kõll** writes about the situation in Estonia at the end of the war. Estonia had to deal with a foreign occupying power yet again, and a new political regime. Establishing a new political order in Estonia meant vetting the population in order to find trustworthy citizens as well as possible traitors and threats to the new rulers. Thus, for the Estonian people, reorientation meant understanding and complying with the requirements of the new regime. The Estonian case shows how people survived a difficult new situation by adapting in one locality (Viljandimaa). As Kõll points out, the success of the repressive Soviet policies was possible because local Estonian people agreed to cooperate. Cooperation could be, for instance, either a survival strategy, an opportunity for social mobility, or a means of settling scores. There is no one single story to explain post-war reorientation in Estonia.

Marta Kurkowska-Budzan examines Polish post-war experiences in a country that was forced to become a part of the communist bloc. Her chapter's focus is on anti-communist partisans in Poland and how they afterwards explained their decision to join and then to leave the anti-communist resistance. Kurkowska-Budzan presents the perceptions of the people themselves, the recollections of 'ordinary' soldiers, and especially of those who at some point ceased to pursue the anti-communist struggle and tried to adapt to civilian life. Those who did not do so, either died in fighting or vanished in prisons. The former soldiers interviewed by Kurkowska-Budzan between 2003 and 2008 give us a glimpse into a kind of lost post-war history, which was subsequently vindicated after the collapse of communism. However, the life histories of former anti-communist partisans are less tales of unfaltering heroism, and more often of survival and adaptation to usually undesirable circumstances.

Unlike in 1918, the German defeat of 1945 was total and unconditional. With millions of working-age men in foreign captivity and the country in ruins, the immediate post-war era in Germany has been called the hour of the woman. **Marianne Zepp** studies those West German women activists, who early on rose to the task of drawing inevitable conclusions about the bankruptcy of Nazism and who were ready and able to seek out a new path

towards a democratic, liberal and more gender-equal Germany. Their efforts ran in parallel with the re-education policies of the western powers, the aim of which was to eradicate Nazism and totalitarianism. At the onset of the Cold War, this anti-totalitarianism was increasingly meant to counter the spread of communism, too, and so in this emerging, polarised context of the 1950s, public and non-partisan women's activism then had to give way to party-centred and largely male-dominated politics.

Maria Fritsche looks at the processes of normalisation and the redefinition of masculinities in post-war Austrian film culture. In her discussion of three distinct film genres, Fritsche demonstrates how the construction of a national identity is intertwined with the construction of masculinities: 'real' Austrian males were depicted as sensitive, peace-loving and cheerful – thus distancing both Austrian men and the Austrian nation from the common past with Nazi Germany. Although this new masculinity enabled 'softer' versions of manliness and more equal gender relations, it did not mean giving up the traditional, patriarchal hierarchy altogether. Fritsche's analysis reminds us how cultural identities and a changing society are mutually constitutive and how constructions of gender have a crucial significance in this process.

The memory of war is tightly connected to a nation's self-image and collective imagination. **Tiina Kinnunen** analyses Finnish memory culture of war from the 1950s to 2005 through a discussion of public representations of war that point to important changes in the social, cultural and political frameworks that shape public remembrance. The image of the Finnish woman in wartime played a crucial role in the 'memory wars' after 1945. Representations of wartime women as pure and innocent have maintained the patriotic values of the nation, whereas the image of an immoral, sexually active women has been used to depict the wretchedness of war and the decay of pre-war and wartime conservative patriotism. During the 1990s, as Kinnunen shows, the dutiful sacrifice and suffering of Finnish women came to symbolise the victimhood of a small nation defending itself against a huge aggressive Soviet neighbour. In the midst of these national redefinitions and contested memory politics, the vast variety of women's personal memory narratives is easily forgotten, instrumentalised, and sometimes silenced.

In Eastern and Central Europe, the end of WWII did not mean the end of violence. Together with ethnic cleansing and deportations in 1945 and the years immediately after, the question of sexual violence has perhaps been the most difficult and painful to address. **Andrea Pető** investigates here the ways in which the rapes committed by Red Army soldiers in Hungary could be studied and made visible; but there are two problems. First, the 'ethnisation' of rape crimes blurs the gendered nature of this violence in a wider military culture, and neglects the fact that Hungarian soldiers also committed rapes in the Soviet Union when they were the occupying force. Second, a study into this topic should respect the dignity and agency of the women who suffered sexual violence, instead of forcing them to remain eternal victims. The images of raped women are also very strong and can draw attention away from the women's own voices. Thus, the real sufferings

from the past may become political instruments in constructing collective victim identities, and projecting the perpetrator status on specific targets.

The six chapters in the current volume offer useful points of departure for examining this history between victors. Regarding the experience of defeat, the case of Germany is quite clear – the total war ended with a total defeat. But the national cases of Hungary, Estonia, Poland, Austria, and Finland all also present defeats of various sorts: they had either fought the war on the German side at one point, or suffered occupation and vast-scale destruction, or lost part or all of their national sovereignty. Linked to these different levels of defeat, the processing of war experiences had to adapt to the victorious war narratives in one way or another. This meant the downplaying of former cooperation with Germany and/or the presence of domestic Fascism, while in the Soviet sphere of influence it more usually meant the outright silencing of those experiences, in contrast to the glib narrative of the liberating Red Army. This straitjacket of remembrance was stripped off when communism collapsed, but the effects were not simply emancipatory. Over the past decades, much of Eastern and Central European memory politics of WWII comes across as a bizarre competition for ‘real victimhood’, so much so that the uniqueness of the Holocaust has been in danger of being subjected to historical relativism. Yet the history of those countries in 1944–1945 and after cannot be reduced to mere identity politics but must be studied in all its complexity. As we see, this is the only means to overcome the continuous, ethnicity-based split to collective victims and perpetrating ‘others’. And this is one main reason why the questions of remembrance and memory also have a strong presence in the current volume.

In addition to the various aftermaths of defeat, a second theme brings together most of the chapters here: the ultimate importance of gender in studying post-war histories. This may be a universal phenomenon, connected to the issues of establishing and reintegrating families after years of separation. Yet gender seems to have particular relevance in the context of lost wars. On the level of concrete experiences, an occupation and/or defeat had several gender-specific ramifications: the absence of men and the collapse of male authority, women’s high responsibility in keeping the families together, their role in communal matters and in establishing new relations, and the sexual violence of foreign soldiers. On the level of collective ideals and identities, one must add the highly gendered representations of defeat, victimhood and violence. As the chapters here show, both masculinity and femininity were often renegotiated in a post-war situation and their redefinitions were an important vehicle in constructing new national self-images. On both levels – subjective experiences and collective identities – the analysis of gender is most useful in understanding the societal ruptures and coping strategies at the end of the war and in deconstructing national historiographies.

The third key theme of the book is to challenge the streamlined narratives of the post-war era. Even though Hungary, Estonia, Poland, Austria, Finland, and Germany each present here national cases, the chapters’ topics underline the asynchronous transition to peace in individual experiences, when compared to the smooth timelines of national and international

historiographies. Furthermore, it is important to note that instead of a linear chronology, both personal and collective histories tend to return back to the moments of violence and loss, thus forming continuous cycles of remembrance and forgetting. Several of the authors also pay specific attention to the constructed and contested nature of national histories in these cycles. The role of these ‘in-between’ countries – and even more their peoples’ multifaceted experiences – will add to the widening European history of the aftermath, thereby challenging the conventional dichotomies (Allied vs. Nazis) and periodisations (e.g., the ‘Zero Hour’ and the end of war, violence, and occupation in May 1945). An anthology with six case studies can only touch on some particular issues; yet we hope that the change of perspective will renew the focus on the Europe that lay between the victors.

NOTES

- 1 See L. Kettenacker and T. Riotte, “‘Old Europe’ and the Legacy of Two World Wars”, in *The Legacies of Two World Wars: European Societies in the Twentieth Century*, L. Kettenacker and T. Riotte (eds) (Oxford: Berghahn, 2011), 3; also T. Farrell, ‘Memory, Imagination and War’, *History* 87, no. 285 (2002), 62–63; R. Bessel and D. Schumann, ‘Introduction: Violence, Normality, and the Construction of Postwar Europe’, in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s*, R. Bessel and D. Schumann (eds) (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), e.g. 7–8. For two further extensive anthologies with a strong cultural and social historical focus, see F. Biess and R.G. Moeller (eds), *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe* (New York: Berghahn, 2010); K. Naumann ed.), *Nachkrieg in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001).
- 2 F. Biess, *Homecomings: Returning POWs and the Legacies of Defeat in Postwar Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2006), 8.
- 3 For an overview of post-war transition challenges and state-level coping strategies from the long-term Finnish and Swedish perspectives, see P. Karonen, ‘Coping with Peace after a Debacle: The Crisis of the Transition to Peace in Sweden after the Great Northern War (1700–1721)’, *Scandinavian Journal of History* 33, no. 3 (2008); P. Karonen and A. Holmila, ‘La guerra y la paz en la historia de Finlandia: 1590–1950’, *Istor* 12, no. 48 (2012).
- 4 P. Lagrou, ‘The Nationalization of Victimhood: Selective Violence and National Grief in Western Europe, 1940–1960’, in Bessel and Schumann (eds), *Life after Death*, 243–245, 252–253.
- 5 T. Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 13–17; see also J. Reinisch, ‘Introduction: Relief in the Aftermath of War’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 3 (2008), theme issue ‘Relief in the Aftermath of War’, 372–374.
- 6 For an idea of the geographical concentration of violence in 1933–45, see T. Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); for the continuation of violence in Central and Eastern Europe after 1945, see A. Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944–56* (London: Allen Lane, 2012). For a grim overall account, see also K. Lowe, *Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War II* (London: Viking, 2012).
- 7 R. Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 384, 390, 394–396. For a comprehensive account of the final stages of the Third

- Reich, see I. Kershaw, *The End: Hitler's Germany, 1944–45* (London: Allen Lane, 2011). For the inclusion of the Asian perspective, see also I. Buruma, *Year Zero: A History of 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2013); J.W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).
- 8 Cit. M. Mazower, 'Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues', *Past & Present* 210, theme issue 'Postwar Reconstruction in Europe', Suppl. 6 (2011), 22; R. Bessel, 'Establishing Order in Post-war Eastern Germany', 143 and note 14, *ibidem*; Judt, *Postwar*, 4; Biess, *Homecomings*, 43; G. Macdonogh, *After the Reich: The Brutal History of the Allied Occupation* (New York: Basic Books, 2007); D. Stone, 'Editor's Introduction: Postwar Europe as History', in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, ed. D. Stone (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 7; see also R. Overy, 'Interwar, War, Postwar: Was There a Zero Hour in 1945?', in D. Stone (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 60; F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011), Ch. 4.
 - 9 Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler*; K. H. Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans, 1945–1995* (Oxford: OUP, 2006); N. Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration*, trans. J. Golb (New York: Columbia UP, 2002).
 - 10 Judt, *Postwar*, 39, 43–44, 132; M. Mazower, 'Introduction', in *After the War Was Over: Reconstructing the Family, Nation and State in Greece, 1943–1960*, ed. M. Mazower (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2000), 10; P. Ballinger, 'At the Borders of Force: Violence, Refugees, and the Reconfiguration of the Yugoslav and Italian States', *Past & Present* 210, Suppl. 6 (2011), 158–176; Kettenacker and Riotte, "'Old Europe" and the Legacy', 9; Overy, 'Interwar, War, Postwar', 63; F. Tsilaga, "'The Mountain Laboured and Brought Forth a Mouse": UNRRAs Operations in the Cyclades Islands, c. 1945–46', *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 3 (2008), 527–528.
 - 11 Judt, *Postwar*, 42, 44–53; Stone, 'Editor's Introduction', 4; Overy, 'Interwar, War, Postwar', 73. For more on the Soviet Union and Ukraine, see A. Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2001), e.g. 176–179.
 - 12 B. Shephard, *The Long Road Home: The Aftermath of the Second World War* (London: Bodley Head, 2010); see also the theme issue 'Relief in the Aftermath of War' in the *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 3 (2008); as well as a critical commentary by S. Gemie and L. Humbert, 'Writing History in the Aftermath of "Relief": Some Comments on "Relief in the Aftermath of War"', *Journal of Contemporary History* 44, no. 2 (2009), 309–318.
 - 13 Judt, *Postwar*, 22–26; P. Ther, 'Ethnic Cleansing', in Stone (ed.), *Oxford Handbook*, 157; C. Vollnhans, 'Disillusionment, Pragmatism, Indifference: German Society after the "Catastrophe"', in Kettenacker and Riotte (eds), *Legacies of Two World Wars*, 188; see also *People on the Move: Forced Population Movements in Europe in the Second World War and Its Aftermath*, P. Ahonen et al. (eds) (Oxford: Berg, 2008); J. Reinisch, E. White (eds), *Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Postwar Europe, 1944–49* (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2011).
 - 14 T. Zahra, *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families after World War II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2011); M. Mouton, 'Missing, Lost, and Displaced Children in Postwar Germany: The Great Struggle to Provide for the War's Youngest Victims', *Central European History* 48, no.1 (2015): 53–78. The problem was also acute in Finland: during the war, over 60,000 children had been evacuated to neutral Sweden.
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- Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 339–357; Vollnhans, ‘Disillusionment, Pragmatism, Indifference’, 189; Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler*, 49–50.
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 - 21 R. Dale, ‘Rats and Resentment: The Demobilization of the Red Army in Postwar Leningrad, 1945–50’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 45, no. 1 (2010), 114–115, 120, 124, 126; M. Edele, *Soviet Veterans of the Second World War: A Popular Movement in an Authoritarian Society, 1941–1991* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), esp. 22–23. For a case study on the city of Rostov, see J. W. Jones, *Everyday Life and the ‘Reconstruction’ of Soviet Russia during and after the Great Patriotic War, 1943–1948* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2008).
 - 22 C. Merridale, *Ivan’s War: The Red Army 1939–45* (London: Faber & Faber, 2005), 122–124, 251–252, 303–304.
 - 23 Biess, *Homecomings*, 50–51, 62, 70–71, 75–76, 87–88, 91–94, 126; Moeller, ‘The Last Soldiers of the Great War’, 136–138, 141. For the return of the Austrian prisoners of war, see E. Hornung, ‘The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus: An Austrian Married Couple Narrate Their Wartime and Post-War Experiences’, in Duchon C. and Bandhauer-Schöffmann I. (eds), *When The War Was Over: Women, War and Peace in Europe, 1940–1956* (London: Leicester UP, 2000), 44; G. Weeks, ‘Fifty Years of Pain: The History of Austrian Disabled Veterans after 1945’, in *Disabled Veterans*

- in *History*, ed. D.A. Gerber, enlarged and rev. ed. (Ann Arbor: Michigan UP, 2012), 243. On the post-war German veteran culture, see T. Kühne, *Kameradschaft: Die Soldaten des nationalsozialistischen Krieges und das 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), Chs. VI and VII.
- 24 K. Ungváry, 'Kriegsschauplatz Ungarn' in *Das Deutsche Reich und der Zweite Weltkrieg*, Vol. 8: *Die Ostfront 1943/44*, ed. K.-H. Frieser, 2nd ed. (München: DVA, 2011), 955–956: quite amazingly, the last Hungarian prisoner-of-war was not repatriated to Hungary until 2001.
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 - 29 On the concept of remasculinisation, see S. Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989); on the German case of the 1950s, see the remasculinisation theme issue of *Signs* 24, no. 1 (1998) and also R.G. Moeller, 'Heimkehr ins Vaterland: Die Remaskulinisierung Westdeutschlands in den fünfziger Jahren', *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* 60, no. 2 (2001), 403–36.
 - 30 Hornung, 'The Myth of Penelope', 45, 47, 52; Moeller, 'What Has', 253; K. Tarjamo and P. Karonen, 'Kun sota on ohi: Loppusanat', in Karonen and Tarjamo (eds), *Kun sota on ohi*, 390–394; T. Haggith, 'Great Britain: Remembering a Just War (1945–1950)', in Kettenacker and Riotte, *Legacies of Two World Wars*, 236; J. Shay, 'Afterword: A Challenge to Historians', in Gerber (ed.), *Disabled Veterans*, 379. More generally on war and silence, see also Ben-Ze'ev, E., Ginio, R. and Winter, J. (eds), *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010).
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- 41 Ungváry, *Siege of Budapest*, 357.
- 42 See Macleod, J. (ed.), *Defeat and Memory: Cultural Histories of Military Defeat in the Modern Era* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Carl, H. et al. (ed.), *Kriegsniederlagen: Erfahrungen und Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Akademie, 2004); for the French memory culture of WWII, see H. Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1994).
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