

Verzweiflung, Verhärtung und zaghafte Liberalisierung abwechselten. Außerdem erfahren wir detailliert, wie sich die großen Krisen und Mobilisierungen von 1956, 1968 und 1980 aus der Sicht Studierender darstellten. Der Vf. beleuchtet die enge Bindung der Studenten an die Politik, aber damit auch an die restliche polnische Gesellschaft. Entgegen der zeitgenössischen Wahrnehmung spielten sie eben keine Sonderrolle; Studenten waren vielmehr Teil des vielschichtigen, eigensinnigen Umgangs der polnischen Gesellschaft mit der kommunistischen Diktatur. Wer sich in Zukunft mit der Sozialgeschichte des kommunistischen Polen beschäftigt, der kommt an J's hervorragender Studie nicht vorbei.

Potsdam – Berlin

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Stephan Scholz: Vertriebenendenkmäler. Topographie einer deutschen Erinnerungslandschaft. Schöningh. Paderborn 2015. 440 S., Ill., graph. Darst. ISBN 978-3-506-77264-0. (€49,90.)

Cornelia Eisler: Verwaltete Erinnerung – symbolische Politik. Die Heimatsammlungen der deutschen Flüchtlinge, Vertriebenen und Aussiedler. De Gruyter Oldenbourg. München 2015. 664 S., graph. Darst. ISBN 978-3-110-41004-4. (€74,95.)

Ever since the 1990s, German politicians, commentators, and historians have reechoed that expellee suffering in the aftermath of the Second World War has endured a longstanding taboo status that must finally be broken. Expellee political leaders have used this rhetoric as a political weapon to secure funds and attention, and have insisted that Germans who fled or were expelled from Germany's former eastern territories are being returned to their rightful, privileged place in a larger commemorative hierarchy—a direction that threatens to extract German victims from the historical context that made their suffering possible. It is therefore timely that, building on previous argumentation by scholars such as Jutta Faehndrich (2011), Eva and Hans Henning Hahn (2010), and Maren Röger (2011), Cornelia Eisler and Stephan Scholz decisively prove that expellee commemorative culture has been ubiquitous, state-supported, politically prominent, and culturally active since the very founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949. Looking respectively to private expellee museum collections (*Heimatsammlungen*) and expellee monuments, both scholars explore the political intentions that promoted expellee commemorative culture, illustrate its long-term cultural influence, and so reveal that there has never been a taboo about expellee suffering.

In her deeply researched and pioneering archival study, E. offers the first ever systematic treatment of the circa 590 West German expellee *Heimatsammlungen* that formed after 1946 as repositories for photographs, maps, models, furniture, coats-of-arms, costumes, and other material traces said to embody intimate *Heimat* spaces which had been lost in the East. Looking to *Heimatsammlungen* as both neglected archival sources and objects of study, she identifies the conservative political intentions usually inherent in their founding and official forms of staging memory that 'pushed the plurality of memories in the background' (p. 29). The West German government consistently supported the creation of *Heimatsammlungen* at the national (meta-eastern-German), regional (Silesian, Sudeten, etc.), or local (county, town, village) level, sometimes under the auspices of city sponsorships (*Patenschaften*) or expellee homeland associations (*Landsmannschaften*). Although *Heimatsammlungen* were founded continuously through the end of the Cold War, particular surges came in the early 1950s (as expellee commemorative needs were particularly acute) and 1980s (as many expellees retired and grew nostalgic about their youth). Having first served to 'psychologically support the process of arrival in West Germany' by providing familiar spaces where expellees could feel rooted, *Heimatsammlungen* also created the notion of a distinctive 'expellee identity', in which incoming settlers could demonstrate their place in the German racial family to skeptical western natives who often looked down on them as eastern outsiders. State Secretary for Expellee Questions (and former Nazi war criminal) Theodor Oberländer was clear, however, whilst creating the highly influential

‘cultural paragraph’ 96 in the 1953 Federal Expellee Law which justified state funding for expellee institutions: the preservation of eastern German cultural memories was to support integration but not the loss of expellee identity; it was above all to support the long-term goal of return to the old *Heimat*. Indeed, the portrayal of inherent German qualities in each former eastern space also gave *Heimatsammlungen* a political urgency, since without border revision unique branches of German culture might die out; continued establishment of new *Heimatsammlungen* after the 1970 Treaty of Warsaw thus explicitly challenged the idea that a unification of Germany including the lost eastern territories was now impossible.

Sch. meanwhile examines the ‘topography of memory’ represented in 1,584 expellee monuments, whose construction across West Germany peaked in the 1950s and 1980s: the same commemorative chronology traced by E. Especially in the first postwar decade, monuments served primarily as places of mourning—a function which waned but never disappeared. Amply disproving that mourning was somehow forbidden in West Germany, Sch. demonstrates that over one-third of all monuments arose on cemeteries, a traditional mourning space. Indeed, had this study more fully examined local expellee newspapers of the time, even more precise documentation could have been offered for how expellee monuments in local cemeteries featured in the mourning process. Not unlike *Heimatsammlungen*, monuments also spurred integration in the new, Western community by sustaining a sense that one could put down new roots without surrendering identification with the old *Heimat*—an act of “Heimattransfer” made all the more authentic at times through the use of actual stone from the former German East in West German monument construction (p. 143). Of course, as was also the case in the *Heimatsammlungen*, expellee leaders usually hoped that continued identification with the East through monuments might make expellees that much more ready to one day return and rebuild it. Finally, by the last decades of the Cold War, monuments’ political, mobilizing function was increasingly contested—for Sch. in big cities or university towns ‘where a political and intellectual critical mass existed’ (p. 365). Yet, if taken broadly, perhaps ‘contestation’ transcended these spaces—after all, in Siegburg (neither a university town nor a big city) leftist radicals vandalized a 1960 expellee monument in 1985. Was this contestation, misinterpretation, or hooliganism, and how can this be measured?

Both of these scholars are aware that their research disproves a popular illusion that the expellee story was ever taboo; at least on the official level, it was in fact a nationwide commemorative obsession. On the cover of his book, Sch. features a 1957 obelisk in the center of Oldenburg commemorating the eastern German regions from which the town’s expellees had come. This monument’s dominance (overshadowing the monument to Oldenburg’s former synagogue in the background) exposes the absurdity of the 2005 League of Expellees (BdV) drive to ‘finally’ establish a monument which would ‘fill the hole in the theme of expulsion’ in local memory (p. 9). As Sch. observes, ‘public memory of flight and expulsion in the Federal Republic was everything other than a taboo. Far more, it always possessed a great space in the public arena in the form of monuments, markers, and commemorative plaques. It was thus in keeping with a thoroughly federal German monument tradition that after 1945 no centralized national monument was erected, but rather a network of local and regional monuments to further memory in a decentralized form’ (p. 361). In this light, the push for a centralized Center Against Expulsions in Berlin since 1999 (currently continued by the Foundation for Flight, Expulsion, and Reconciliation) rests on the fallacious reasoning that expellees have failed to receive serious commemoration. E. likewise questions the political reasoning that, after decades of Federal support for *Heimatsammlungen*, a new museum in Berlin should be proposed as a means to fill a gap that never really existed. The fact that the 400 *Heimatsammlungen* that yet survive across western Germany are ‘hardly noticed by the broader public’, E. provocatively argues, rests on a ‘taboo the expellee functionaries brought on themselves through activities orientated toward the political right of the spectrum’ (pp. 12, 564).

In this light, however, it is important to nuance between an official, state-sponsored West German taboo (which has never existed, in contrast to the longstanding taboo about expellees in East Germany) and widespread public disapproval or disinterest, which has in fact increasingly surrounded expellee questions since at least the 1970s. Sch. contests the claim in Jeffrey Luppés's as-yet unpublished dissertation that, by the 1970s, expellee commemorative culture had split off more and more from mainstream West German culture; as Luppés adds, general responses to expellee monuments also shifted with the emphasis on the Holocaust in historical scholarship by the 1980s. Indeed, I wonder if it was not *because* they saw that they were losing public interest (and even the interest of their own children) that expellee organizations pursued their greatest heyday in monument and *Heimatsammlung* construction in the 1980s. Hence, rather than a 'hole' or 'taboo', I would like to propose that, notwithstanding an obvious tradition of overwhelming state support and ubiquitous physical presence, expellees and their commemorative culture were increasingly *segregated* from mainstream memory (I would argue even before 1970). Indeed, the sheer ubiquity of physical emblems to expellee identity, inextricably associated more and more with rightwing speeches by a few expellee leaders, stimulated a widespread disassociation by West Germans (and even some expellees) with public narratives of expellee suffering and the lost German East, and with time this disassociation even turned into a disinterest which remains widespread in German society to this day, notwithstanding the new renaissance for German victim narratives since the 1990s.

It is also crucial to reinforce that expellees themselves very often distanced themselves from the rightwing and revanchist political statements of their so-called leaders, such that the meanings officially inscribed in monuments or *Heimatsammlungen* in the sources extensively cited by Sch. and E. often fail to capture how expellees in fact responded to and adopted these important markers of identity. Sch. rightly observes that local administrations (not just expellee leaders) often encouraged the creation of these monuments, in keeping with the longstanding tradition of official support from Western political leaders. Yet does this proliferation of monuments through the 1980s actually prove that 'not inconsiderable parts of the larger society and political' leadership 'firmly and continuously' oriented themselves toward a commemorative 'victim perspective' (p. 365)? It is a slippery thing to try to assess what the 'larger society' thought about a monument or museum, and Sch.'s source base is not entirely convincing in proving this part of his claim. E. also walks a fine line when she observes that *Heimatsammlungen* were always an expression of instrumentalized memory by political and administrative structures, rather than any purely grassroots memory expression (p. 231). That official intentions in speeches, funding allocations, and pedagogy sought to anchor a politicized memory need not imply that expellees (much less the larger society) imbibed just the official meanings. E. touches on this tension when exploring the particular relic of *Heimaterde* (soils from the East venerated by expellees in the West) first stored in expellee homes and later donated as relics to *Heimatsammlungen*, observing: 'the multivalent potential meanings of the material predestined it just as much as an object of individual memory and potential "healing" of homesickness as for instrumentalization by politicians and Landsmannschaften' (p. 430). Although officially venerated for political ends, relics in *Heimatsammlungen* could unintentionally help individual visitors to deal with the permanent loss of their distant *Heimat* in the East. In like manner, I would add, the personal effects an old woman donated to her *Heimatsammlung* need not have been intended to foster Oberländer's eternal claims to border revision, nor did visitors to *Heimatsammlung* exhibitions have to perceive their surroundings in terms that resonated with official speeches.

Such nuancing aside, however, it is hoped that both of these excellent studies challenge the constructed narrative of an official taboo against expellee suffering. Furthermore, as both authors observe, German victim narratives have to be contextualized and problematized against the broader trends of a dark age that was inaugurated and exported across Europe by Nazism and that peaked in the destruction of Europe's Jews. One does not mar-

ginalize German victim narratives by privileging the Holocaust in one's analysis of the catastrophe wrought across Europe by Nazism, nor is one constructing some sick hierarchy of suffering. Rather, if done with the proper scholarly care and vision demonstrated by E. and Sch., the real suffering of Germans can reenter the historical narrative in a context that allows an effective understanding of where that suffering came from, and in what ways it has been construed, exploited, and unpacked through the decades of the Cold War. This sober analytical exercise is that much more important today, as the last eye-witnesses die out, expellee monuments and *Heimatsammlungen* (among other cultural artifacts) lose most of their remaining ties to their original context, and certain political players insert themselves to fashion a new cultural memory that serves their own political ends.

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Die Erinnerung an Flucht und Vertreibung. Ein Handbuch der Medien und Praktiken. Hrsg. von Stephan Scholz, Maren Röger und Bill Niven. Schöningh. Paderborn 2015. 452 S., Ill. ISBN 978-3-506-77266-4. (€39,90.)

Man ist versucht zu fragen, ob denn dem regalfüllenden Konvolut von Büchern und Broschüren zu „Flucht und Vertreibung“ immer noch Neues hinzuzufügen ist – ganz nach dem Motto „Es ist zwar alles gesagt – aber noch nicht von allen“. Die Rezensentin gesteht: Sie ist mit diesem Vorurteil an die Lektüre herangegangen und jetzt eines Besseren belehrt: Zum einen steht nicht der Vorgang „Flucht und Vertreibung“ im Fokus der Autoren, sondern es sind die verschiedenen Formen der Erinnerung daran. Zum anderen ist die Erinnerung selbst ein Prozess, der im Verlauf von sieben Jahrzehnten Wandlungen erfahren hat und neu zu bewerten ist – das gilt insbesondere für die Zeit seit dem Ende des Ost-West-Konflikts. Dass es in BRD und DDR unterschiedliche Paradigmen des Umgangs mit dem Thema gab, ist bereits hinreichend erörtert und in Ausstellungen präsentiert worden (erinnert sei nur an die – wenn auch im Band nicht erwähnte – Ausstellung der „Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland“ unter dem Titel „Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration“, die 2006/07 in Bonn, Berlin und Leipzig gezeigt worden ist). Aber mit der deutschen Wiedervereinigung und der EU-Erweiterung ergeben sich neue Möglichkeiten, das zur Zeit des Eisernen Vorhangs stark ideologisierte Kapitel europäischer Nachkriegsgeschichte aus der Distanz zu betrachten und Ursachen wie Folgen dieser erzwungenen Völkerwanderung ins Blickfeld zu rücken. Das ist auffällig und unterscheidet die einschlägigen Beiträge dieses Kompendiums wohlthuend von früheren Darstellungen, in denen die Opferrolle der Vertriebenen ohne historischen Kontext thematisiert worden ist.

Diese neue Perspektive versöhnt mit dem Umstand, dass mancher Beitrag (bereits ausführlicher aufbereitetes) Material auf das einem Sammelband zuträgliche Maß verkürzt und damit auch Wertungen verschiebt – so geschehen z. B. in dem Beitrag zur Belletristik in der DDR. Dafür gibt es eine Reihe von Aufsätzen, die darauf verweisen, dass sie nur einen ersten Zugriff auf ein Erinnerungsphänomen darstellen und weitere Untersuchungen notwendig sind. Das gilt beispielsweise für die Erinnerung an Flucht und Vertreibung in Schulbüchern (Stephan Scholz), auf Plakaten (Tobias Weger), in Zeitungen und Zeitschriften (Maren Röger) oder im Hörfunk (Christoph Hilgert) – welch ein Themenfundus für Masterarbeiten, denen das Schicksal erspart bliebe, in Aktenschränken zu verstauben!

Leerstellen anderer Art fallen der Rezensentin auf: Wo ist der Beitrag, der die Arbeit der Kulturstiftung der Vertriebenen beleuchtet, die gerade seit der deutschen Einheit mit Publikationen und Veranstaltungen eine verdienstvolle Erinnerungs- und Aufklärungsarbeit leistet? Wo findet sich eine Bemerkung zur Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung und den entsprechenden Landeszentralen, die mit ihren Publikationen, Seminarreihen und Studienreisen nicht nur auf dem Gebiet der Erwachsenenbildung tätig sind, sondern auch für den schulischen Bereich spezielles Material zu den „historischen deutschen Ostgebie-