

which was not exempt of poetical effusion, all contributing to a reevaluation of the role of Nature in depicting metonymically the homeland and its inhabitants. The last two chapters of the study argue that while nationalism roots the community in a defined space, it equally anchors the nation in a distant past, the Middle Ages becoming for writers and artists a preferred reference in the late eighteenth century, an age in which developments in historical research emphasized the need for archival documents. In that view, nations are experienced as temporal communities with specific origins and trajectories, the destiny of which artists contributed to embodying through the depiction of foundational historical events, or with the commemoration of heroes and heroines whose virtuous selflessness and sacrifice for their country were supposed to inculcate a spirit of emulation among the viewers. In that respect, Smith points out that before 1850 artists relied at times on historical events or figures beyond their own national boundaries when they had the potential of conveying the “national ideal” or moral *exemplum* they were interpreting. Conversely, events such as the Seven Years War could entail stressing the national characteristics of the hero.

The issue of audience participation and the response of the viewer had been stressed by “art critics” or *Salons* commentators such as Diderot. Smith makes the point that if it is not always clear whether the public grasped all the political allusions of a work of art, its pedagogical import ensured that later generations would ultimately come to understand its relevance to national identity and adopt the image as an apt representation of that consciousness. Likewise, Smith shows that there are cases when the didactic, and especially nationalist, intention of an artist may be impossible to determine with any certainty, although the artist’s works may definitely be said to have successfully conveyed the notion of belonging to a national community. *The Nation Made Real* insists on the variety of artistic techniques and depictions in the time frame considered, differences that reflect for Smith what he calls the “ambiguities of nations and nationalisms” (p. 174), such as the reliance on nature or history, on authenticity or idealization, to signal national belonging. In the conclusion, Smith modestly proposes that “As far as the relationship between the novel kinds of visual art and the emergence of modern nations is concerned, the evidence presented here suggests some degree of correlation” (p. 173); indeed the study demonstrates the plasticity of the modes of articulation of art to politics over time. The book covers a wide temporal and geographical range (particularly the Netherlands, Britain and France, but also Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Norway), while providing close readings of some of the major works by artists such as Jacques Louis David, John Constable, Benjamin West, or Johan Christian Dahl, that testify to pioneering modes of addressing national identity. With its restrained apparatus of endnotes and judicious choice of plates, *The Nation Made Real* presents a clear, seemingly effortless thesis, which will be of interest to informed readers and non-specialists alike.

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STONE, Dan (ed.) — *The Holocaust & Historical Methodology*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012. Pp. 324

Jean-Martin Charcot once remarked that “Theory is good, but it doesn’t prevent things from existing” – a view that effectively describes most Holocaust historians’ dogged empiricism and methodological conservatism when faced with producing historical representations of

the Nazi Final Solution. *The Holocaust & Historical Methodology*, the latest volume in the "Making Sense of History" series, examines, with an eye to unsettling, what editor Dan Stone describes as this methodologically "staid" character of Holocaust historiography, which contrasts sharply with the sensationalism of much contemporary Holocaust representation in art, film, fiction, and elsewhere. This book aims, therefore, to indicate "how historians can respond in innovative but responsible ways to the horror of the Holocaust" (pp. 8-9). Stone, who has been indefatigable in probing the limits of Holocaust historiography over the last decade, has collected contributions from 14 Holocaust historians organized around four topics: cultural history, memory, and the Third Reich; testimony and commemoration; Saul Friedländer's *Nazi Germany and the Jews*; and the Holocaust in world history. The result is a stimulating and important exploration of how, as Frank Ankersmit described it, we "write ourselves" by writing histories of the Holocaust (pp. 14-15).

In part one, Stone and Alon Confino make separate but complementary arguments for using cultural history – concerned with "symbolic, anthropological modes of thinking" – as the means to better understand how individuals and groups understood themselves in these events (p. 52). Confino's provocative claim that the "Holocaust is over" supports his appeal for new narratives explaining how the Nazis were able to conceive of "a world without Jews" (p. 24). His own proposal is that the Holocaust be viewed "as a problem of culture: the making of and believing in a moral community of fantasies" that made the murder of millions imaginable (p. 34). Stone, troubled by Peter Burke's recent critique of cultural history's future, recommends Confino's argument, while also acknowledging the theoretical and methodological limits of cultural history in studying the Holocaust, "for how can a method devoted to explicating meaning be applied to account for the opacity of meaning?" (p. 52). Stone's interest in the contributions of the professions and academic disciplines to Nazi mythmaking is shared by Dirk Rupnow, who, rejecting claims that the Nazis planned to commit "memorycide" against the Jews, shows how they intended "a complex construction and preservation of memory," to which non-Jewish academics – historians in particular – contributed through *Judenforschung* (research on Jews) that legitimized anti-Jewish beliefs and policies (p. 75). Amos Goldberg shifts the focus to ghettoized Jewish academics who produced extant texts on social psychology, ethnography, anthropological history, and linguistics – texts cultural historians should use to write what Goldberg calls "a history of helplessness" that neither sanctifies, valorizes, nor obscures the Jewish ghetto experience. But it's Boaz Neumann's wide-ranging essay on National Socialism, the Holocaust and ecology that's perhaps most promising, as it convincingly demonstrates how "ecologism" can function as both a historical characteristic of the Holocaust and a new methodology that reveals Nazism and the Holocaust phenomenologically, "as they manifested themselves" (pp. 118-119).

Samuel Moyn and Zoë Waxman both examine survivor testimony in part two: Moyn from the perspective of a Judeo-Christian religious framework of witnessing, which in the Cold War West (re)assigned to Jews the role of suffering witness in a Christianized understanding of the Holocaust; Waxman with the aim of immanentizing testimony so that it might be usefully, but respectfully, employed by historians struggling to overcome the "mystification" of the Holocaust (p. 154). The peculiarities of writing Holocaust history also occupy Doris Bergen, whose superb essay on how history must remain independent of commemoration, even while anchoring it, should be required reading for all history undergraduates, if only for her critical reading of the so-called "lessons" (e.g. "All that it takes for evil to triumph...") that studying the Holocaust purportedly teaches.

Friedländer's attempt to make an "ethical intervention" in Holocaust historiography via *Nazi Germany and the Jews* form the subject of part three (although Friedländer's

book is also discussed in almost every other essay in this volume) (p. 201). Neither Friedländer's nor Hayden White's essays offer anything new here, but they do nicely introduce Wulf Kansteiner's fascinating account of how Friedländer's now "classic" work – in particular volume two, *The Years of Extermination* – provides "elegant verification" for White's philosophy of history by means of an "innovative aesthetic design capable of communicating the horror of Nazi genocide and resisting the temptations of intellectual domestication" (pp. 203, 204). Friedländer's work, which alternates between straight up historical narrative and apparently unconnected victim testimony, destabilizes the reader's experience of reading Holocaust history, thereby replicating what Friedländer called that "initial sense of disbelief" felt by the Nazis' victims. According to Kansteiner, therefore, the book embodies White's narratological critique of historical practice, the result being a thoroughly postmodern history that deconstructs the "notions of causality that have informed professional historiography" since the nineteenth century (p. 219).

Studying the Holocaust in the frame of world history necessarily employs comparative methodologies developed in genocide studies, as part four indicates. Dirk Moses addresses this issue specifically, noting how the depiction of the Holocaust as a world historical event has produced two rival narratives, one asserting the uniqueness of the Holocaust, the other its status as but one genocide among many resulting from European imperialism. Since both reflect an unacceptable subjectivity in defining an "enemy-other", Moses proposes we re-visit Raphael Lemkin's methods for studying genocide, which applied social scientific explanations that encompassed both victims and perpetrators, as well as using a comparative approach that refused to privilege any particular genocide as prototypical. Donald Bloxham – whose recent work Moses describes as exemplifying Lemkin's legacy – manages, in only 19 pages, to reassess the Holocaust "in the spatiotemporal *Raum* of great violence against population groups" (p. 233). Using ranked criteria that describe progressively increasing manifestations of violence against specified groups, Bloxham assesses the Holocaust against both the persecution of Muslims in eastern Europe between 1850 and 1920, and the Armenian genocide. The result is a model of comparative history, affirming the Holocaust's uniqueness while also showing that it was "a European process in European contexts" (p. 245). Similarly, Federico Finchelstein argues that global fascism's culture of violence and victimization forms a crucial link to the Holocaust – and that acknowledging this will enable historians to better map Nazism's place among fascist formations, and thereby see it as fascism's "most radical possibility" rather than as a generic "ideal type" (p. 265).

While the complete absence of any consideration of gender is a glaring omission from a 2012 book on historical methodology, this volume of essays nonetheless makes a valuable contribution to theory in a field thickly populated with empirical work. Well indexed and containing both informative notes and a superb bibliography of Holocaust historiography, it will be well used by both faculty and students.

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