possible to write a book about Eichmann as "an ordinary German"—neither psychologically abnormal nor robotically obedient—and "how he became a genocidaire." Having argued against others' universal paradigms as outmoded, Cesarani then concludes with a universalization that, he argues, is more appropriate to our current world in which the "matrices" that generate genocide—racism and fanaticism—have multiplied: "Eichmann appears more and more like a man of our time. Everyman as genocidaire."

One can quibble with certain aspects of the book. In my opinion, Cesarani dismisses too readily Eichmann's testimonies as a potential source for reconstructing the historical record, especially during the turning point to genocide in 1941–42 for which he was a crucial witness. He critically engages the earlier Eichmann historiography, some of it easily dismissed "potboilers." He uses and acknowledges the work of Safrian, Lozowick, and Wojak, but I wish that he had more explicitly engaged interpretational differences. None of them, for instance, deemed the demise of the Cold War and the appearance of Goldhagen's book as crucial to rethinking Eichmann. But if one wants a good sense of Eichmann's life, told as unfolding contingently rather than predetermined, as well as a sense of how that life has been represented over the decades, this is the book to read.

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Homecomings: Returning POWs and the Legacies of Defeat in Postwar Germany. By Frank Biess. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. 2006. Pp. xiii + 367. $35.00. ISBN-13 978-0-691-12502-2.

Frank Biess' excellent new book shows why it is important to understand not only what post-war Germans remembered about World War II but also how these memories affected their behavior. What distinguishes Biess' book from most other recent studies of post-war memory is his insistence that German representations of the Nazi past deeply affected social relations, shaped social policies, and produced important material consequences for millions of Germans. The memories that are the focus of the story Biess tells, and of German confrontations with the Nazi past in the first ten years after World War II, are not memories of the Holocaust and its Jewish victims, but of the war, of the German soldiers who fought in it, and above all of the millions who became POWs. By 1945, some eleven million POWs found themselves

in Allied captivity. Those unfortunate enough to have fallen into Soviet hands did not return for many years. A third of the three million German soldiers captured by the Russians did not survive the harsh conditions in the Soviet camps (p. 4).

Biess' book also shows us why the story of the German "postwar" must be written as a comparative history of its two parts—east and west. In West Germany, POWs played a prominent role in postwar remembering because they constituted a significant organized interest group, because stories of the suffering of German POWs in Soviet captivity served the anti-Communist ideological needs of the West, but above all, because POWs' experiences of suffering could be integrated into a compelling narrative of moral redemption. This narrative claimed that in captivity POWs had survived by (re)turning to their Christian faith, by asserting the worth of the individual against the homogenizing forces of Soviet "massification," and by their commitment to timeless German values. Returnees were depicted as noble survivors, even Christ-like figures, destined to become ideal citizens. These redemptive narratives de-historicized and de-politicized the consequences of an extremely ideological war. Even hard-core Nazis and soldiers who had committed war crimes could find a place in this particular community of memory.

In the attempt to construct its own meaningful narratives that would explain the legacy of the war to its citizens, the East German communist state was at a distinct disadvantage. It simply could not acknowledge the sufferings of POWs in Soviet captivity. Instead it had to insist upon an uplifting story of the POW camps as schools of anti-fascist enlightenment in which German POWs had been taught the errors of Hitler's and of their own fascist ways. While this narrative may have described the experience of some German POWs, it certainly did not reflect the memories of the great majority, making it very difficult for the new East German regime to win the hearts and minds of returning POWs, their families, or the wider population. In fact the official anti-fascist narrative, which was meant to function as the founding myth of the East German state, often alienated many East Germans from the regime. Official anti-fascism and the East German authorities' dependence upon their relationship with the Soviet "friends" made it very hard for the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED) regime to respond to or even to recognize the needs of POWs and their families.

Both societies sought to transform former soldiers and POWs into male citizens on opposite sides of the Cold War. Yet state social and health agencies refused or were simply unable to deal with many of the economic, psychic, and emotional costs of defeat. These burdens were "privatized," left to the resources of individual families which thus became key sites for the transformation of returnees into postwar citizens. Many West German families could not bear the strain. In Lower Saxony, for example, every third returnee marriage

ended in divorce (p. 121). The official rhetoric of the East German authorities allotted the family a much less important role in postwar reconstruction. Yet because the East German state provided no specific material support for POWs or war victims, East German families actually had to bear even more of the burdens of defeat than their West German counterparts.

East German representations of the legacies of World War II resisted any significant changes right up to 1989. Like the style of East German consumer goods, official East German war memories remained "frozen in social time" which meant that the "incongruities between public and private memory" (p. 12) were always much greater in the GDR than in the Federal Republic. West German official memory was more open to change. Confrontation with the pathologies of late returnees (the last returnees came back from Soviet captivity in 1955–56) promoted the acceptance of new diagnoses of the causes of POWs' psychic problems which eventually transformed compensation law and also encouraged West Germans to acknowledge the trauma of Holocaust survivors. And whereas all of the earlier returnees were exonerated from any complicity in Nazi crimes, regardless of their actual guilt, the West German response to the last returnees was more differentiated—several were prosecuted. Overall, Biess detects the development of a more comprehensive West German confrontation with the Nazi past by the late 1950s, symbolized, for example, by the founding of the Central Agency for the Prosecution of Nazi Crimes at Ludwigsburg in 1958 which opened new possibilities for dealing with German guilt and responsibility.

Historians of twentieth-century Germany should certainly read this book. It is an impressively rich synthesis of cultural and social history approaches to the first decade of Germany's postwar history. But Biess' study will also be of great interest to scholars in other national fields who are engaged in research on the history of memory, in particular memories of the Second World War. This book shows that in the right hands, "memory" can be a very powerful category of historical analysis.

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In Pursuit of Memory: History, Television, and Politics after Auschwitz. By Wulf Kansteiner. Athens: Ohio University Press. 2006. Pp. x + 438. $26.95. ISBN 0-8214-1639-1.

With his prodigious essays over the last decade, Wulf Kansteiner has established himself as one of the most authoritative and inventive voices on the perpetually