

EDITED BY NICHOLAS MARTIN,
TIM HAUGHTON AND
PIERRE PURSEIGLE

Aftermath

Legacies and Memories of War
in Europe, 1918–1945–1989



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Legacies and Memories of War in Europe, 1918–1945–1989

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 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2014 by Ashgate Publishing

Published 2016 by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

The Library of Congress has cataloged the printed edition as follows:

Aftermath : legacies and memories of war in Europe, 1918–1945–1989 / edited by Nicholas Martin, Tim Haughton and Pierre Purseigle.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4094-4428-2 (hardcover)

1. Europe—History, Military—20th century. 2. War and society—Europe—History—20th century. 3. War and civilization—Europe—History—20th century. I. Martin, Nicholas, 1962- II. Haughton, Timothy. III. Purseigle, Pierre. D424.A36 2014

303.6'60940904—dc23

2014008228

ISBN 9781409444282 (hbk)

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Preface

The chapters contained in this volume are revised versions of invited papers originally presented at an international conference, entitled 'Aftermath: Legacies and Memories of War in Europe, 1918–1945–1989', held at the University of Birmingham in September 2010. The editors would like to thank the Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence at the University of Birmingham and its Director, Professor Cillian Ryan, for a generous grant, which made hosting the conference possible.

We would also like to thank the European Research Institute (ERI) at the University of Birmingham for providing important logistical support for the conference as well as a congenial environment in which to hold it. This interdisciplinary conference is one of the more significant achievements of the ERI under its new management.

Above all, though, the editors wish to thank the contributors to this volume for their original input to a fruitful and stimulating conference, their willingness to revise their papers for publication, and their patience during a somewhat protracted editorial process.

NICHOLAS MARTIN
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Chapter 1

Introduction: Through the Fog of War

Pierre Purseigle

This volume originated in a conference organised at the University of Birmingham in September 2010 by its Centre for First World War Studies, Department of German Studies and European Research Institute.¹ By bringing together historians, literary scholars, political scientists and cultural studies experts to discuss the legacies and memories of war in twentieth-century Europe (1918–1945–1989), the organisers aimed to create conditions for a genuine and fruitful interdisciplinary conversation on the impact and legacies of twentieth-century Europe's three major conflicts.

This venture was born of the conviction that modern warfare raises a unique combination of problems that demands a collaborative intellectual response.² In place of the monopoly once enjoyed by military historians, transformations in warfare and belligerence have led to the emergence of interdisciplinary 'war studies', a field whose very plurality accounts for its vitality across continents and academic cultures. Our focus on the legacies of wars reflects the centrality of these questions in contemporary and historiographical reflections on the experience of armed conflicts. This volume does not, by any means, offer a comprehensive view of the interdisciplinary perspectives that scholars now mobilise to elucidate the experience of war. It does, nonetheless, underline the fact that the problematic relationship between the experience of conflict and its representations concerns most students of war, irrespective of their disciplinary training or institutional setting.

That the European experience of warfare in the twentieth century should continue to exercise scholars would surprise few, if any, readers. The European origins, experiences and legacies of both world wars, of the Holocaust and of the Cold War continue to raise questions of profound contemporary relevance,

¹ The conference was made possible by a generous grant from the University of Birmingham's Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence.

² See, for example, Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

within and beyond the confines of the European Union. Though the 'Age of Total War'³ brought about and confirmed the relative relegation of European nations on the global stage, Europe retained a pivotal if diminished role in subsequent reconfigurations of the world order. While European economic and political unification was a self-conscious response to the ravages of war, this volume adopts a critical approach to the twentieth-century European experience. It recognises the existence of common cultural dynamics as well as the resilience and continuing relevance of national and local specificities across the continent. In a modest but resolute way, the following chapters also attempt to bridge the analytical gap inherited from the political division between Western and Eastern Europe, a division all too often replicated by scholars.⁴ The inclusion of a chapter on Japan also allows us to place the European situation into a larger context, at a time when European exceptionalism is often misleadingly invoked to account for the virtues and – more often than not – the limitations of the European Union's political project.

A seemingly omnipresent feature of human life, war is often treated as a natural phenomenon that no degree of civilisation, cultural refinement or political modernisation could ever consign to history; it is as if war belonged to the realm of inevitably recurring ecological disasters. The prevalence of armed conflicts in traditional agricultural societies does perhaps account for the polysemic resonances of 'aftermath', the unwanted crop that immediately follows the scything.⁵ This is, perhaps, an appropriate metaphor for belligerent societies attempting to rebuild across a landscape of devastation, a scorched earth whose meagre yield could only leave a bitter taste. Of course, the aftermath of wars – particularly but not uniquely that of modern conflicts – does not simply call into question the material fortune of former belligerents. Just as the aftermath of war calls for the reconstitution of productive capacities, infrastructures and dwellings, it also demands the reconstruction of lives and communities shattered by the conflict. The obvious material challenges are compounded by the political and psychological necessity to come to terms with the experience of war and to make sense of devastation and human loss on an unprecedented scale.

³ The title of the first chapter of Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994).

⁴ Outstanding exceptions to this tendency include Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), and Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005).

⁵ See Azar Gat, *War in Human Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), Part 2 ('Agriculture, Civilization, and War').

Further etymological reflection on the term ‘aftermath’ leads us to its synonym and to one of Clausewitz’s most celebrated phrases, the ‘fog of war’. Pursuing this metaphor could, however, be misleading in many respects and would also be somewhat at odds with Clausewitz’s original formulation: ‘War is the realm of uncertainty: three-quarters of those things upon which action in war must be calculated, lie hidden in the fog of greater or lesser uncertainty.’⁶ Proceeding in this associative fashion nonetheless points to a common characteristic of wars and their aftermaths. Indeed, irrespective of the outcome of the conflict, post-war periods are – like combat itself – typically laden with uncertainty. Even when a victor nation self-righteously presented the end of the war as the working of immanent justice, as France did, for instance, in 1918, such dominant conviction could hardly suppress and disguise the internal debates that called, in a profound and lasting way, for a reappraisal of the nature and directions of the national community.⁷ For in the aftermath of Europe’s twentieth-century conflicts, uncertainty undermined and destabilised conventional visions of the past and understandings of present challenges. As a result, former belligerent societies strove and struggled to project themselves into the post-war future.

In this respect, the aftermath of military conflicts proves as complex and messy as the business of war itself. Through their training and their leadership in the field, military commanders endeavoured to impose some order onto the ‘fog of war’. The very concept of ‘order of battle’, like the sophisticated mapping of military operations, testifies to this systematic attempt to address the operational challenge of prosecuting war in an orderly manner. For this challenge, like those issued in the aftermath of war, is both political and representational.⁸ As the following chapters demonstrate, the seemingly ordered legalities of the international treaties and judicial proceedings that followed both world wars belie the extraordinarily complex and ambivalent processes of coming to terms

⁶ ‘Der Krieg ist das Gebiet der Ungewißheit; drei Vierteile derjenigen Dinge, worauf das Handeln im Kriege gebaut wird, liegen im Nebel einer mehr oder weniger großen Ungewißheit.’ Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege* [On War] (Berlin: Dümmlers Verlag, 1832), Book 1, Ch. 3.

⁷ The literature on defeated countries has produced some of the most stimulating explorations of the aftermath of wars. See, for example, Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat* (New York: Picador, 2004), which compares experiences of national trauma, mourning and recovery in the American South after 1865, in France after 1871 and in Germany after 1918; and Jenny Macleod, *Defeat and Memory: Cultural Histories of Military Defeat in the Modern Era* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

⁸ For a remarkable treatment of this representational challenge in literature, see Kate McLoughlin, *Authoring War* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

with war. While diplomacy sought to define a clear outcome to conflicts, societies in victorious and vanquished nations alike faced an uncertain, confusing and messy aftermath. The political division of the continent and the subsequent Cold War added further layers of complexity to the processes of coming to terms with war, often overturning accepted configurations of victimhood and guilt; not infrequently, dictatorships and civil wars saw victims and perpetrators exchange roles and positions. Studying the aftermath of the wars that ravaged Europe in the twentieth century therefore calls for reflection on the nature of these conflicts and on the types of mobilisation – political, military, industrial, social and cultural – that they required. In Britain, for example, as Dan Todman shows in this volume, the country's strategic position explains the relative balance of civilian and military losses that helped to shape British memory of the Second World War.

Determined by the conduct of war, entangled in the memory and legacies of previous conflicts, aftermath is not an end, as Stephen Forcer demonstrates. Rather, it denotes the multifarious processes whereby belligerent societies attempted to resolve the open-ended questions raised by the experience of war. In so doing, former belligerents grappled with the difficult transition from war to peace. The comforting linearity of the chronologies inherited from diplomatic and military history tends to obscure the fact that the aftermaths of war were defined by the uneasy conjunction of different temporalities. For peace between nations did not necessarily mean that the war was over for individuals and communities. It is critical to highlight the continuing presence of war in the aftermath. Jay Winter stresses in his contribution to this volume that one should not equate silence with forgetting and that conventional, binary approaches to memory and forgetting must be transcended.

This volume is therefore an invitation to reconsider conventional chronologies of conflict and aftermath, for the aftermath of the conflicts discussed here was defined during and after these conflicts both by projections into the future and by regressions and nostalgic ruminations on the pre-war period. Linear temporalities were further subverted by the emergence of generations defined by the experience of war and not merely by biology. Indeed, the transmission of memory within families and kinship networks was disrupted by the untimely deaths of soldiers and civilians. As Mary Fulbrook demonstrates in her chapter, conventional chronologies often fail to do justice to the experience of generations forged by wars, dictatorships and their aftermaths. War literature provides further illustration of the dynamics at work here. Martin Hurcombe, in his exploration of French writings of the First World War, shows how

witnesses of and participants in the Great War sought to address the political and representational challenges raised by the conflict.

The wars of the twentieth century dramatically demonstrated the capacity of the State to mobilise the material and cultural resources of the belligerent nations for the prosecution of war. The State also emerged as a critical, though by no means always dominant, agent in the process of commemoration. As a result, the competition over access to its resources and political instruments often revealed a larger contest over the meaning of past conflicts. The politics of commemoration are addressed in several contributions. John Paul Newman's analysis of the paradigmatic value of the First World War in Serbia and Geoffrey Swain's study of Latvia underline the critical centrality of these countries' contested pasts as they charted their national courses through the twentieth century. This volume also reveals the importance of a host of initiatives, often taken at the supra- or infra-national levels. Tara Windsor thus investigates the mobilisation of transnational cultural networks in the aftermath of the First World War, while Gabriela Welch underscores the roles of religious organisations in post-Soviet Moldova. In Europe as in Japan, the cultural and political legacies of conflicts were, and remain, defined by their plurality and multivocality, as Aaron William Moore argues persuasively in his contribution.

Fraught and contested, the legacies of wars and conflicts in twentieth-century Europe continue to exercise commentators, policymakers and scholars alike. Recent crises in the Eurozone have given rise in Greece and elsewhere to unreconstructed visions of a common past defined by violence, victimhood and war. One might perhaps bemoan Europeans' apparent inability to bring the twentieth century to a long-awaited closure. Yet it reminds us that the initial objective of the founding fathers of the European Union – the political unification of the continent through ever-closer economic ties in order to prevent future armed conflict – has not yet been fully secured. In this respect, Europe's citizens continue to grapple with the aftermath of war.

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Chapter 2

Generations and the Ruptures of 1918, 1945 and 1989 in Germany

Mary Fulbrook

There is a hidden generational dynamic to the history of twentieth-century Germany.¹ Wars created huge ruptures in the lives of millions of individuals in ways that were strikingly related to their ages at the time; and these ruptures had implications for the regimes that followed wars, such that the past was always in some sense present, influencing the future in ways going far beyond the obvious legacies in terms of material destruction and rebuilding, the reconfiguration of international relations and domestic politics, and diverse cultural representations. Wars had dramatic implications for and gave distinctive significance to the formation of social generations: they shaped the very character of those who survived, whether or not they explicitly recalled aspects of a violent past. Not only age, class, political outlook, role and experiences, but also the political balance and character of subsequent regimes in a changing international situation affected the aftermath of wars for distinct generations. To make comparisons and seek for generalisations is therefore a fraught but potentially highly illuminating undertaking.

How should one compare the legacies and memories of war and the significance of regime caesurae across the transitions of 1918, 1945 and 1989–90 in Germany? These were sequential transitions, with each previous transition having consequences for the next, and with each succeeding generation taking lessons forward into subsequent periods and regimes. I would like here to take a comparative approach in terms of different aspects of each transition, laying them out side by side while also taking into account the significance of preceding

¹ This chapter is in part based on research supported by a Leverhulme three-year Major Research Fellowship; it also relates to my AHRC-funded collaborative project, 'Reverberations of War in Germany and Europe since 1945'. I am very grateful to both the Leverhulme Trust and the AHRC for their generous support. Further details on the generational aspects may be found in my book, *Dissonant Lives: Generations and Violence through the German Dictatorships* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

periods for what came later. This may make for less easy reading, since it to some extent (though not entirely) runs against chronology and the desire for a simple story; but it also serves to highlight the relative significance of different aspects of each transition, each post-war period, for the people who lived through these historical moments at different ages and life stages.

'Memory' is a highly contested concept, and is perhaps particularly problematic when treated as though it relates to and is rooted in an anthropomorphised collective entity such as a nation state (as in phrases such as 'French collective memory of the war'), leading some scholars to prefer terms such as 'remembrance'.² Without entering into these debates here, it seems to me that a useful way of looking at legacies of the past is through their appropriation by and significance for different kinds of communities – which I define as communities of experience, connection and identification – who stand in a special, often emotional, relationship with a particularly significant past.³ That salient past I shall refer to here in abstract terms as the 'defining event'. We may then distinguish among those who stand in a distinctive relationship to any such defining event. Those who personally lived through it and for whom it is later directly significant may be considered to constitute a 'community of experience'; they are capable of real 'memories' in the sense of personal images and traces within the brain of what it is they have lived through, even if these memories are always refracted and inflected by succeeding periods and contexts of remembering. These communities of experience are to be distinguished from those who did not themselves live through or directly experience this defining event, but are inescapably connected to it in some way (as, for example, many but by no means all children and grandchildren of Nazi perpetrators or Holocaust victims); and others who neither experienced the specific event nor have inescapable personal connections to it, but who nevertheless deeply identify with some aspect of that event or what they consider to be its driving, mobilising lessons and legacies for the future. The latter two categories have much in common with each other, and the boundaries

² There may of course be very useful insights to be gained even by this sort of approach: see, for example, Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). See more broadly Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between History and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

³ This paragraph summarises briefly the theoretical and conceptual approach that I am developing for a larger comparative work on the post-war reverberations of Nazi persecution in the three Third Reich successor states compared with France and Poland. There is not space here to outline this more fully.

between 'connection' and 'identification' are fluid, often overlapping. It should also be noted that 'community' is used here in the sense of 'imagined community', members of which do not necessarily know each other personally; many members may indeed not even be aware they form part of the wider set that historians may wish to explore and that some contemporaries can vividly imagine.⁴

The ways in which particular events become salient at later times, and different communities of experience, connection and identification develop, are shaped by a wide variety of factors. Only a minimal overview of some aspects can be given here as they relate specifically to generations in the aftermath of war. I shall first review briefly the ways in which each of the three historical ruptures was in some way a 'defining event' for the periods of aftermath. I shall then look at communities of experience, focusing particularly on questions relating to allegedly 'key formative experiences' for those who were young adults at times of major historical transitions – a feature emphasised particularly by Karl Mannheim in his still-classic reflections on the character of social generations.⁵ I shall argue, however, that this alone is insufficient to explain the striking generational implications of each historical break. Rather, in order to explain why certain cohorts appear to 'rise' in the historical record at the expense of others we need also to look at demographic, political, social and cultural aspects of the post-war transitions, and in particular at questions relating to what I call 'structural and cultural availability for mobilisation'. We also need to cast our eyes well beyond the immediate post-war period and look at later constellations, in order to understand the longer, lingering reverberations of war through succeeding regimes, not only among those who actually experienced the defining events, but also among those who later felt a sense of connection or identification in the periods of aftermath.

'Defining Events': War and the Transitions of 1918, 1945 and 1989–90

In what respects were these – and other – ruptures of the twentieth century 'defining events'? It is important briefly to compare the extent and character of the historical transitions in each case. Even in such a brief survey, it readily becomes apparent that subsequent interpretations are highly significant, and it is

⁴ A concept originally coined by Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁵ Karl Mannheim, 'Das Problem der Generationen', in *Wissenssoziologie* (Berlin: Luchterhand, 1964; orig. article 1928), pp. 509–65.

almost artificial to seek to separate them – however much of a misrepresentation they may be – from some notion of the ‘events themselves’.

The First World War, with its long-drawn-out trench warfare on the Western Front, as well as its unprecedented implications on the domestic front, was clearly a shattering experience: ‘before’ and ‘after’ came to seem like radically different worlds to many contemporaries. Notions of a ‘generation of 1914’ or a ‘front generation’ were more mobilising myths in the wake of war than any accurate reflection of reality; but the impact of war on those too young to fight, who did not witness violence at first hand but avidly followed the fortunes of war at a distance, was a key factor in rendering certain sections of the ‘war youth generation’ more readily available for mobilisation by right-wing forces in succeeding years.⁶

The defeat of Germany in 1918 and the apparent harshness of the post-war settlement were made far more of by certain factions than was entirely warranted. Germany certainly lost the war, but the war had not come onto German territory in the way it did in 1944–45, and the experience of defeat in 1918 was not as unambiguous as in 1945. Germany at the end of the First World War was not subjected to total occupation by the victorious powers; it retained sovereignty, and the abdication of the Kaiser and proclamation of a new Republic in November 1918 were the outcome of domestic, not international, pressures for regime change. There was a radical political break, but this was not accompanied by similar revolutionary changes in socio-economic structure; the power and status of old elites was affected, but not fatally. The balance of power in the new Republic remained precarious with concessions to existing military and social elites who continued to represent and yearn for the ‘old order’. Many people, particularly on the right, refused to accept that the end of the war was the outcome of superior military might on the part of Germany’s enemies, but rather sought to portray defeat as resulting from a domestic ‘stab in the back’, attributed to the vague and conglomerate scapegoat of ‘Jews and Bolsheviks’. This opened the way to constant revisionism in the following years, exacerbated further by the related ways in which the post-war settlement was portrayed. The terms of the Versailles Treaty were certainly stringent, but not as harsh as subsequently made out. To be sure, Germany lost colonies overseas and territory within Europe, including the contentious loss of eastern territories with the creation of the ‘Polish corridor’

⁶ See, for example: Robert Wohl, *The Generation of 1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); Alexander Watson, *Enduring the Great War: Combat, Morale and Collapse in the German and British Armies, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Richard Bessel, *Germany after the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

separating East Prussia from the rest of Germany; this occasioned innumerable skirmishes and continuing disputes over the new Polish–German border, an area rife with paramilitary activity and nationalist unrest on both sides (and this was of course not the only border in central Europe occasioning revisionist movements and exacerbating unrest). Furthermore, the dire economic developments, particularly hyper-inflation, that were attributed to reparations were both rooted in the way the war itself was financed at the time, and notoriously exaggerated and exacerbated by the politicians and economic policies of the Weimar Republic. The post-war transition after 1918 was thus accompanied by economic and political instability, prolonging the dislocations and immediate effects of war for far longer than the four years through which combat had actually lasted. The ‘defining event’ as constructed by parties on the right in Germany was not so much that of shell shock, as emphasised by literary intellectuals in Britain, or the war memorial culture of France, but rather that of national humiliation through defeat. It was the way in which defeat was interpreted, as much as the character and experiences of war itself, that served to shape the aftermath and the longer-term legacies of the First World War in Germany.

In comparative perspective, experiences of the Second World War and defeat in 1945 proved to be a far greater historical rupture. Germans were involved in violence as never before: atrocities were committed and witnessed not only by the members of the SS, the *Einsatzgruppen* and soldiers on the murderous Eastern Front and in the extermination camps after 1941, but also right from the very start of the war with the invasion of Poland.⁷ Civilians, too, experienced unprecedented violence, with devastating effects on people in cities subjected to air raids, youngsters mobilised to assist in war-related activities, and the millions who fled from the Red Army or were expelled from eastern territories towards the end of the war. Further millions of Europeans in states collaborating with or defeated by the Germans were caught up in the system of Nazi persecution, whether as supporters or opponents of Hitler’s regime, as perpetrators or victims of racism, as deported forced labourers, or as those who simply sought to survive oppression and exploitation through a combination of quiescence, resistance, co-operation and complicity. For those caught up in deportations, incarceration and murder, including not only European Jews but also the Sinti and Roma, the mentally and physically disabled, homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, communists and many other political, moral and religious opponents of Nazism, the sheer scale of murder, terror and suffering was unprecedented: millions were

⁷ See, for example, Alexander Rossino, *Hitler strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology and Atrocity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003).

murdered, and those who survived suffered massively traumatic experiences with long-lasting physical and psychological effects. In 1945, for those within Germany who had remained loyal or at least quiescent to the end, the defeat of Germany was beyond any dispute: the Führer had committed suicide, and the capital city lay in ruins; the presence of enemy troops bore ample witness to the fact that Germany was totally defeated; and indeed there was a widespread sense that Germans had been struggling on well beyond what should have been 'the end'.⁸ Total defeat in May 1945 was accompanied not only by further loss of territories but also by loss of sovereignty, and by a highly proactive, if continually contested, military occupation and administration by the victorious powers. It was rapidly made clear to the German population, however much some persisted in clinging on to older ways of thinking, that revisionism was not on the historical agenda in the altered Germany and Europe of the post-1945 era. This was no 'zero hour', but it was certainly the fulcrum of the century.

Differences among the occupying powers rapidly became the key element in the development of a 'double' post-war settlement, with growing distinctions between the western zones and the Soviet zone of occupation. There was extremely limited freedom of manoeuvre for domestic forces, beyond what was permitted or differentially supported by the respective occupying powers. Defeat was soon followed by hunger, indeed famine, in a context of massive population movements as millions of displaced persons – survivors of Nazi persecution liberated from slave labour and concentration camps, forced labourers who had been brought to sustain the German war economy, refugees and expellees from eastern Europe, prisoners of war released from internment – roamed across Europe in search of former or new homes. The post-1945 transition was lengthy and far more painful for some groups and in some areas than others. While the economy of the western zones and subsequently Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) began rapidly to pick up after (and even to some extent before) the introduction of the Marshall Plan and currency reform in 1948, in the Soviet zone and subsequent German Democratic Republic (GDR) any post-war recovery was complicated both by reparations to the USSR and also the radical restructuring of the economic and social as well as political system in what became the Soviet bloc.

Explicit rejection of the former Nazi regime was emphasised, in mutual competition, on both sides of the 'Iron Curtain' that descended across Europe and divided Germany into two quite separate states and societies. While the

⁸ See, for example, Ian Kershaw, *The End: Hitler's Germany, 1944–45* (London: Allen Lane, 2011).

word 'holocaust' was used on occasion to refer to the mass persecution and intended extermination of European Jews even before 1945, the capitalised term 'Holocaust' designating specifically and primarily this set of events, unqualified by any adjective (as in 'nuclear holocaust'), only gradually came into widespread currency some considerable time after the war.⁹ But eventually, in stages that have been well rehearsed (often recounted in terms of the Eichmann and Auschwitz trials, and the screening of particular films and television series), the Holocaust arguably became a major defining event and internationally significant reference point in the latter half of the twentieth century. Although the ways in which the various national inflections of this past were interpreted varied over time, across the political spectrum and in different contexts, there was in general terms more widespread mainstream agreement on at least the negative 'lessons' of this salient past than had been the case in 1918.¹⁰

The transition of 1989–90 can really only be termed a 'post-war rupture' in the sense that the Cold War between the superpowers – who had been brought into Europe with Hitler's war of aggression and remained to preside over a precarious frozen peace – now came to an end, with radical consequences as far as the division of Germany was concerned. The end of the Cold War was certainly a major transition in the lives of those who lived through the regime change from the communist dictatorship of the GDR to the capitalist democracy of the enlarged Federal Republic of 1990. It was inaugurated in large part by a non-violent revolution from within, in a particular combination of domestic and international circumstances: when Gorbachev's Soviet Union renounced its claim to hegemony over the former Soviet bloc, and the surrounding states began to dismantle the protective barriers of the Cold War, citizens of the GDR took the opportunity both to flee to the West and to engage in domestic protests for reform. Yet after the break of 1989–90 – unlike after the transition of 1945, and somewhat more akin to the transition of 1918 – many East Germans came, rather unexpectedly, to re-evaluate selected aspects of the 'world they had lost': they hankered nostalgically after the social security and allegedly warmer

⁹ For a very useful survey of the changing uses of the word 'Holocaust', see Jon Petrie, 'The Secular Word Holocaust: Scholarly Myths, History, and 20th Century Meanings', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2/1 (2000): pp. 31–63.

¹⁰ The ways in which the Nazi past was variously debated by political elites, in cultural responses and in the public media, have been the focus of widespread attention by historians and political scientists. The largely hidden histories of 'private' – individual, family and community – responses to and reconceptualisation of the past remain to date far less well researched by historians, who have generally not as yet fully connected with psychological and anthropological studies of survivors, perpetrators, and their children and grandchildren. The relevant literatures are too extensive for a footnote.