

Bacevičius (*Sinfonia de la Guerra*, composed in 1940 in Buenos Aires) and Eduardas Balsys (*Nelieskite mėlyno gaublio* [*Do Not Touch the Blue Globe*]), composed in 1969 in Soviet Lithuania. Stanevičiūtė argues for a semiotics of memory and trauma in the form of musical gestures.

Natalija Arlauskaitė's chapter is the only work not concerned explicitly with Lithuanian culture. However, she presents the problem of the construction of historical narratives that is relevant to the other chapters. Arlauskaitė focuses upon Sergei Loznitsa's 2006 film *Blockade*, which, she demonstrates, is a documentary that deconstructs the documentary as a form. Arlauskaitė's analysis shows Loznitsa organizing his footage according to various forms of narrative "logic"—chronological order, spatial order, for example—to create the illusion of a unified, coherent perspective that lulls the viewer with its narrative familiarity. But Loznitsa administers jolts to his audience throughout the film by violating those narrative rules: for example, at times he alters the pace, showing in long, unedited takes taboo subjects such as migrating Leningrad inhabitants pulling their possessions and dead bodies on sleds, allowing an uncomfortable, seemingly unedited reality to interrupt the documentary narrative. Arlauskaitė explains the abrupt end of the film, a brief clip of the execution of German soldiers in 1946, and the only piece of footage with an explanatory subtitle, as the inescapable "signature" of the archive owner, the Soviet government, whose power to limit the material's narrative possibilities must always be conceded. Loznitsa's (and Arlauskaitė's) pessimistic understanding of the elusiveness of the past, even now that the archives are accessible, brings a mature self-awareness to the reconstruction of national memory.

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***A Minor Apocalypse: Warsaw during the First World War.*** By Robert Blobaum.

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In most east European countries, the Great War is overshadowed by the subsequent state-building wars and the horrors of the Second World War. This is also reflected in historiography. We know immeasurably more about the Western Front and everyday life in Germany, Belgium, France, or Britain.

Robert Blobaum, Professor of History at West Virginia University, analyzes everyday life in Warsaw between 1914 and 1918. He does not have many sources or much research literature to draw on. Most of the documents of the Russian, German, and local Polish authorities have been lost. Blobaum analyzed the material that survived the destruction of Warsaw in 1944 and the fire in the Potsdam Reichsarchiv in 1945. These fragmented sources are complemented by personal accounts in the form of wartime diaries, memoirs, and local newspapers. It is difficult to say much about the everyday life of ordinary Varsovians. Their experiences can only be reconstructed using material written from the perspective of the authorities or published in censored newspapers or by analyzing ego-documents, almost all of them authored by members of the elite and middle classes.

In his introduction, Blobaum compares experiences in Warsaw during both world wars. He states that the living conditions of Poles (but not of Jews) in the First World War were comparable to those in the Second World War before the Warsaw

Uprising. Food supplies, the mortality rate from natural causes, and the employment rate were marginally better between 1914 and 1918, but it is also clear that this is only part of the story. German occupation in World War I was harsh, but the Nazi occupation was catastrophic for the Jewish population, and the Catholic Polish population also suffered more hardship in the Second World War. Nazi-Germany reigned through violence and mass terror, while imperial Germany sought Polish support for its war effort. Under imperial rule Polish self-administration increased, Polish culture was allowed to flourish, and the occupiers could be challenged without the challenger being shot.

The book is divided into six chapters. The only chronological chapter is the first one, which discusses the period from the beginning of the war when, Warsaw was still under Russian rule, until August 1915, when Warsaw was occupied by German troops. The chapter gives an overview of the living and housing conditions and discusses the refugee problem. Blobaum shows that the majority of the inhabitants appeared to have supported the Russian war effort. The other five chapters are systematic and cover Russian and German rule. Chapter 2 shows how the interruption of supply lines had a detrimental effect on Warsaw's economy and led to a deterioration of living conditions. The third chapter analyzes the organization of self-help by the Warsaw Citizens Committee. Under German rule, supplies of food continually decreased until, in 1918, the Polish city administration was no longer able to supply its public kitchens. Chapter 4 discusses the relationship between the Polish and the Jewish populations. Catholic Poles often viewed their Jewish neighbors as war profiteers and hoarders and considered them insufficiently patriotic. The war led to a rise in antisemitism and to outbursts of violence against Jews, but the German and, later on, the Polish authorities managed to prevent excessive violence. Chapter 5 discusses war and gender. Here the sources are even rarer, but the situation was similar across most of Europe. Gender boundaries were reset with women making use of the new opportunities to push boundaries. In the absence of men, women played a greater role in economic and public life. Chapter 6 deals with "culture wars," that is, the debates on what is the correct behavior in public space. Blobaum tells the curious story of the barefoot movement. Middle-class people walked barefoot to express their solidarity with the poorer strata of society who could not afford to pay the inflated prices for footwear. It was a protest against the occupiers but was also criticized by some conservative newspapers, who accused women walking barefoot of undermining public morale.

In the concluding chapter, Blobaum again attempts a general evaluation of wartime Warsaw. The German occupiers tried to win over the population by offering concessions with regard to cultural policies and education and by expanding Polish self-administration. This approach did not prove successful because, after 1917, anything short of Polish independence was no longer attractive. Moreover, under the impact of the Allied blockade, Austria and Germany prioritized their own countries and tried to extract as much food as possible from occupied Poland. This worsened the food supply situation and led to growing dissatisfaction with the occupation.

The book offers a fresh perspective and is a welcome addition to our knowledge about wartime experiences in eastern Europe. It is, in parts, rather impressionistic and does not offer a systematic and comprehensive discussion of everyday life, but this is not the author's fault. He has admirably compensated for the scarcity of archival documents by looking at a wide range of alternative sources.

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