

Luxembourg sought to legitimize his hegemony in local Slavic-speakers' eyes. Since premodern texts propounding Slavic unity are so sporadic, we rely on descriptions by outsiders, hardly any of them well-rounded or sympathetic. "Slav" features effectively as synonym for "underling," whether one consults Arabic geographers or western churchmen. When writers like Adam of Bremen denote neighboring populations as "Slavs," rather than using a tribal name, the term is largely pejorative, while *Sclovania* and *provinciae Slavorum* are geographical designations based on linguistic kinship, rather than denoting a Slavic-speaking community. This has not dimmed scholars' and political figures' visions, from Johann Gottfried Herder's idealization of the stateless unity of the early Slavs to Iosif Stalin's propagation of the "Slavic Idea" to legitimize Soviet domination reaching to the Elbe. The "Idea," if not its enforcer, lives on (for example, the International Congress "St Petersburg and the Slavic World" in 2017).

Merely outlining principal themes and vignettes from this work should indicate its erudition and chronological range. No less awesome is the marshalling of sprawling source-materials into well-organized sections, presented in jargon-free terms. Without ignoring the diversity of interpretations of many items of literary evidence, Mühle offers a clear, consistent thesis. His "Epilogue" sums this up: "Neither the individual Slavic-speaking communities nor the Slavic-speaking people in general developed during the Middle Ages an awareness of belonging to or affinity with 'Slavdom' in terms of a community of all the speakers of a Slavic language" (401). What hinders wholehearted endorsement of this conclusion, besides the etic nature of nearly all our written evidence for early Slav self-awareness, is what Mühle himself calls "the astonishingly fast and far-reaching Slavicization of East-Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe," involving both demographic expansion of "what initially had been a rather small 'Slavic people'" and "cultural transfer" of household pottery and language (71). Yet the surface-area of supposedly Slav settlements excavated is often modest, while scientific standards have not always been high. So one wonders whether sixth-century Byzantine historians' and commanders' descriptions of loose-knit Slav warbands' ferocity and trickiness deserve the dismissal as *topoi* they now generally receive. After all, as Mühle points out, their accounts of roving Slavs' "wretched huts" and cattle-breeding correspond with archaeological data quite well. Could such warbands—open to virtually all-comers—not have spread fast across the power-vacuum left by the likes of Attila's Huns? Hopefully, rigorous archaeological investigations on a massive scale may help answer such questions.

Samantha K. Knapton. *Occupiers, Humanitarian Workers, and Polish Displaced Persons in British-Occupied Germany.*

London: Bloomsbury, 2023. xii, 246 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Maps. £76.50, hard bound. £61.20, eBook.

Jan Rydel

Pedagogical University of Cracow

Email: janrydel@gmail.com

doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.462

In 2023, after many years of absence, thanks to Samantha K. Knapton's monograph, the topic of Polish Displaced Persons (DPs) in Germany, specifically in the British occupation

zone, returns. This topic is only seemingly local, or even marginal, because it is—in my opinion—an almost perfect “pars pro toto” of the extremely complicated fate and mutual relations among the Poles, Germans, and the British in the final phase of World War II, the first post-war years, and the beginning of the Cold War.

Knapton was prompted to take up this topic by the fact that—as she writes—while conducting classes with history students at an English university, she came across their deep ignorance about the fate of Poland and the Poles during WWII. The intention to provide the reader with basic knowledge about the circumstances in which hundreds of thousands of Poles, including men, women, and children, found themselves in the western occupation zones of Germany at the end of the war, as well as to present the motives and dilemmas driving the behavior of these people, is very visible in the second and third chapters of the monograph. While it is understandable that these chapters are not addressed to Polish readers, certain generalizations and simplifications nonetheless raise concerns. Knapton—in my opinion—took too little into account about the political diversity of Polish DPs, who were divided not only into those who, for various reasons, were ready to return to communist, Soviet-occupied Poland and those who rejected the new reality in Poland and intended to stay in the west. The DP community naturally included Polish nationalists, but also supporters of the agrarian party, socialists, and liberals. It is worth recalling that several Polish politicians from the western occupation zones of Germany participated in the work of international bodies that were initiating European integration in the 1940s.

An interesting and important finding is that Polish DPs living in the American occupation zone had a better position than Poles living in the British zone, because the former received political and logistical support from the large Polish diaspora living in the US, while the latter did not. The number of Polish emigres that came to the United Kingdom before WWII was small and had no influence, while the large Polish wartime emigration was frowned upon after London recognized the Polish Provisional Government and itself had great problems with starting a new life in the UK. It is worth noting that the only tight-knit group of Polish citizens liberated in Germany who managed to settle in the UK were female Home Army soldiers who had participated in the Warsaw Uprising and were liberated as POWs. Some of them were formed into the Women’s Auxiliary Military Service Battalion within the Polish First Armored Division shortly after the war, and together with the Division left Germany and were transported to the UK in 1947 and demobilized there.

Knapton’s Ch. 4 is devoted to the relations between the British Military Government and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in connection with their care for Polish DPs. She analyzes both the issues of cooperation between these institutions and the attitude of individual people towards these Poles. This was possible thanks to Knapton’s use of individual archival heritage and private collections. The findings show that British Army officers serving in the Military Government treated Polish DPs as a “troublesome nuisance,” which seriously hampered the management of the German occupied zone. They considered removing them from the part of Germany under British administration the main goal of their work. Knapton quotes in this context the comments of Frederic Morgan, a British general acting as the head of UNRRA operations in Germany, who, comparing Polish and “Baltic” DPs, spoke of a “very clear superiority of the Balts over the Poles, from the point of view of civilization,” betraying a colonial mentality and racial prejudices. A different story altogether concerns the rank-and-file UNRRA employees who, especially at the beginning, considered it their main goal to provide impartial care for DPs and their main duty to support them in the spirit of humanitarianism. A different understanding of the tasks of UNRRA employees and Military Government officers towards DPs was a source of many tensions between these institutions.

Over time, both UNRRA and its successor from 1947—the International Refugee Organization (IRO)—focused on the issue of repatriation, that is, removing as many Polish

DPs as possible from the western occupation zones of Germany. At the same time, the community of Polish DPs in the British zone, which had already lost its most active members, dropped all illusions as to the prospect of shaping their own future in Germany and sank into apathy. In 1951, the IRO withdrew from Germany and transferred its tasks in caring for the DPs to the Federal Republic of Germany. DPs were now given the status of “homeless foreigners.” From then on, Poles who had stayed in West Germany began to experience discriminatory behavior.

Samantha K. Knapton’s work deserves our recognition for being based on archival research conducted in six countries and producing a very extensive bibliography. This book represents a big—although off course not the last—step towards learning about and appreciating the fate of Polish post-war refugees who ended up in the western occupation zones of Germany. Until now, we have had research conducted from the Polish and German points of view, but this work adds the important British perspective to the overall picture.

Ed. Andriana Benčić Kužnar, Danijela Lucić, and Stipe Odak. *Jasenovac Concentration Camp: An Unfinished Past.*

Routledge Series in Genocide and Crimes against Humanity. New York: Routledge, 2023. xxiii, 308 pp. Index. Illustrations. Tables. \$160.00, hard bound. \$47.65, eBook.

Mark Biondich

Carleton University

Email: markbiondich@cunet.carleton.ca

doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.463

In July 2022, a diplomatic row erupted between Croatia and Serbia after the Croatian authorities blocked an ostensibly private trip by the Serbian president, Aleksandar Vučić, to the Jasenovac memorial site commemorating the victims of the Second World War concentration camp of the same name. The majority of the camp’s victims were Serbs murdered by the Croatian fascist Ustaša regime. The Croatian authorities accused Vučić of attempting to exploit the proposed visit for his own domestic political purposes, while some Serbian tabloids compared the current Croatian government to the Nazi-aligned Ustaša regime. The incident not only epitomized the poor state of bilateral relations between the two Balkan countries but also served as a reminder of Jasenovac’s relevance to contemporary memory politics.

The Jasenovac concentration camp was in reality a system of camps erected between August 1941 and February 1942 and operated by the Ustaša authorities until April 1945. It was one of the largest concentration and extermination camp networks in eastern Europe, where between 80,000 and 100,000 people, mostly Serbs, Jews, and Roma, were killed between 1941 and 1945. Outside the former Yugoslavia, however, Jasenovac remains relatively under-researched. In the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, principally in Croatia and Serbia but also in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it remains a subject of controversy and contested memory.

The contributors to this interdisciplinary collected work—originally published in Croatia in 2018 as *Jasenovac—Manipulacije, kontroverze i povijesni revizionizam* (Jasenovac: Manipulations, Controversies and Historical Revisionism)—examine several aspects of Jasenovac’s history