

communists and Home Army fighters had united together to overthrow fascism, presenting a common body of national heroes more conversant with public memory wishes. Although communist suffering and heraldry still dominated, this “collision of interests” between state and society meant that “diverse groups of memory gained a voice” (158). So diverse was this sudden commemorative explosion that, in contrast to 1960s strident nationalism, some groups actually distanced themselves from nationalism and pursued commemoration for personal, rather than ideological motives.

Finally, through the 1960s (Chapter 5) the ZBoWiD “normalized” into a social welfare structure for aging soldiers and victims (much as Poland was a striving social welfare state), and momentary coexistence between diverse commemorative narratives gave way to a strident nationalist, even antisemitic approach spearheaded by the ZBoWiD but paralleled by broader social trends. Mieczysław Moczar’s rise as ZBoWiD head (1964–72) transformed it into a nationalist, antisemitic movement to gain mass appeal and legitimize the regime. Previous reluctance to feature Jewish suffering under Nazi occupation gave way to making Poles the “greatest victims,” whose heroic rescue of Jews was now betrayed by Israel’s alliance with Polish archenemy West Germany (200).

Wawrzyniak’s analysis ends with repercussions of the ZBoWiD’s dissolution in 1990. As in the immediate postwar period and 1956, rival interpretations became possible. After the IPN Institute of National Memory formed in 1998 to guard national memory of Polish victims and heroic struggle against Nazi and communist occupiers, critical works by scholars such as Jan Gross and the Polish Center for Holocaust Research stimulated open competition over memory.

It is unclear why Wawrzyniak skips the vast epoch from 1969–89. What was the interplay between Solidarity and war commemoration, not least as so many victims and veterans were dependent on the state due to welfare payments? Did it matter that commemoration increasingly stemmed from those without wartime memories? Also, as Wawrzyniak periodically observes, in each era the USSR was upheld as Poland’s protector against West German revanchism on the tenuous Oder-Neisse border; as in most Polish organizations, this rhetoric recurred in every ZBoWiD speech. Did West German recognition of Poland’s western border in 1970 diminish the ZBoWiD’s public resonance? The provocation of such queries only underlines the success of Wawrzyniak’s analysis of how the ZBoWiD mirrored and shaped Polish political and cultural memory. An incisive and well-organized case study, it is highly recommended to specialists on Poland’s politics of memory and postwar central and east central Europe more generally.

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***Belonging to the Nation: Inclusion and Exclusion in the Polish-German Borderlands.*** By John J. Kulczycki. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016. 402pp. Notes. Index. Tables. Maps. \$49.95, hard bound.

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John Kulczycki’s *Belonging to the Nation* highlights the wrenching, chaotic, and often brutal processes by which the Polish state attempted to “Polonize” its western borderlands after the Second World War. By focusing on how the founders of what became the Polish People’s Republic decided who might be counted as Polish people in the region, Kulczycki makes a valuable contribution to the history of postwar Europe and to the role played by ideas of national identity in shaping that history.

Kulczycki argues that accounts of the creation of ethno-national states tend to focus on mechanisms of exclusion at the expense of the equally consequential and messy mechanisms of *inclusion*. His narrative is driven by the tension between the Polish government's need to identify who, in the territories it "recovered" from Germany after the war, counted as Polish; and the way that local and regional conditions had nurtured identities that refused categorical assignment to either the German or Polish nationality. Much depended on the determination for those subject to this scrutiny; those deemed to be German were subject to violence, imprisonment, and deportation, while those who were declared Polish became citizens of the new communist state. The stakes were high for the new Polish government as well, who needed the population and resources of the recovered territories to rebuild Poland after the devastation of WWII, but who also needed to rid the strategically crucial area of a group viewed with deep suspicion and hostility.

Drawing on a wide range of German and Polish primary and secondary sources, Kulczycki shows that the sorting out of nationalities began with a period of "wild" ethnic cleansing, when marauding Polish and Soviet soldiers took their revenge on borderland inhabitants they saw as German. This then segued to several years of a more bureaucratized process of ethnic categorization, as authorities in Warsaw pushed local officials to figure out who was Polish so they could be integrated into the new polity, and who was German so they could be expelled. Predictably, the harried and overwhelmed local officials found this nearly impossible to do. One problem was the persistence of enduring regional and other identities that overrode, or at least coexisted with, national identity. Another question was what to do about borderland residents who had been enrolled on the *Deutsche Volksliste*, the list compiled by the Nazi occupiers of those who had supposedly retained their German nationality while living under Polish rule. While having been enrolled on the list would seem to automatically disqualify one from "Polish" status, Polish officials had to concede that signing up was often mandatory. In addition, the list was generally unreliable, as the Nazis had no more been able to force clear ethnic definitions on people than the Poles were. Kulczycki is particularly good at extracting quotes from official documents that crystallize how the tension between the demand for rigid classification and the complexities of life in the borderlands unfolded on the ground. "To resettle Germans from Upper Silesia is not as easy to do as it is to say," protested one exasperated local official (206). In the face of such realities, Polish ideologues and officials frequently had recourse to essentialist discourses of nationality, seeking traces of some eternal but obscured Polishness in the people whose fate was in their hands. Indeed, Kulczycki shows that such ideas had powerful historical antecedents in pre-war Poland. By highlighting the clear family resemblance between this kind of biological essentialism and Nazi racism, Kulczycki's book raises important question about the similarities and differences between 20th century German and Polish nationalism.

While a major contribution to the history of how western Poland became (or did not become) Polish, Kulczycki's argument would have benefited from a slightly longer chapter on the years between the World Wars. Kulczycki states in his introduction that he wishes his argument to shed light on universal processes that result from state building, while in his conclusion, he broadens this into a moral-political argument about the importance of respecting the rights of national minorities. He even suggests that the western allies committed some sort of moral transgression by agreeing to expel the Germans. But greater attention to the way that disputes between minorities and national states became internationalized after WWI, and the profound instability this created in Europe, would have cast the decisions made after the war in a somewhat different light. Those charged with the unenviable task of restoring order

to Europe after 1945 certainly had that uneasy era in mind; and they can perhaps be forgiven for thinking that multinational states were not the key to an enduring peace.

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***The Politics of Invisibility: Public Knowledge about Radiation Health Effects after Chernobyl.*** By Olga Kuchinskaya. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2014. xii, 249 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$28.00, hard bound. doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.35

The field of Chernobyl studies may appear to have been saturated some years ago, but this new book by Olga Kuchinskaya, Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Communication, provides an important addition to the literature on the consequences of the 1986 accident. Using archival and ethnographic sources, newspapers, interviews, and secondary literature in various languages, she provides new insights into why the impact of Chernobyl in Belarus has been downplayed.

Divided into six concise chapters, the author seeks to analyze how we have derived our knowledge of the medical effects of Chernobyl and the social mechanisms that ostensibly ensure that such knowledge is accurate and sufficient. She perceives the “invisibility” as affected by power relations, and whether those investigating the radiation consequences are intent on revealing or obfuscating them. She asks what information was available to the victims, and to what resources they had access.

The author notes that the early days after Chernobyl were fraught with problems for Belarus, which lacked laws to protect the population from radiation fallout, as well as relevant scientific institutions, which were based mostly in Moscow or in Ukraine. The “Soviet safe living concept,” devised by Leonid Ilin, Vice-President of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the USSR, limited itself to a maximum dosage of radiation exposure of 35 rems over a lifetime, meaning that once the initial 30-km zone of radiation had been evacuated, no further measures were applied to the populations of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine.

Although Belarusian scientists eventually devised their own more cautious concept based on soil contamination in 1990, the government soon superseded it with a new version that “protected” only populations receiving an annual effective radiation dose of over 1 Milli-Sievert per annum, thereby excluding the population of over 70% of the contaminated area of Belarus. Economic concerns further exacerbated the problem, as in 1992 almost one-fifth of the Belarusian budget was devoted to Chernobyl concerns.

In Chapter 5, entitled “No Clear Evidence,” the author critiques the role of the UN agencies dealing with Chernobyl: the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the UN Development Program (UNDP). In 2005, the UN agencies concluded in a report that fewer than 50 deaths were directly attributable to the disaster and conceded only that thyroid gland cancer was an observable consequence. She contrasts IAEA findings with local studies linked to chronic exposure to low-level radiation, including leukemia among clean-up workers and the general population, as well as many other illnesses in affected areas, findings completely absent from the UN reports.

Kuchinskaya includes comment from the late Evgeni Konoplya, one of the founders of the Belarusian Institute of Radiobiology, that scientists who study Chernobyl consequences in Belarus and Ukraine have a far better understanding of the effects “even than western scientists” do (133). She cites the American scientist John Gofman who noted that those participating in radiation protection committees are often