REVIEWS

Europe after 1945

by Geoff Eley

Tony Judt, *Postwar: a History of Europe since 1945*, Penguin, New York, 2005; xviii + 878 pp., $39.95; ISBN 1-59420-065-3.
Tom Buchanan, *Europe's Troubled Peace 1945–2000*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2006; xiv + 356 pp., £60.00 or $74.95 h/b; £16.99 or $34.95 p/b; ISBN 0-631-22162-X and 0-631-22163-8.

For European historians to begin seeing the second half of the twentieth century as a distinct period has taken a very long time. Despite the lengthening gap between then and the ever-moving now, the time since 1945 was treated mainly as an aftermath, appearing in twentieth-century textbooks as a coda to the main story, which centred on the two world wars and the 'interwar'. In the earliest versions this was undoubtedly connected to generation: for those who lived and wrote under the immediate shadow of Nazism, postwar Europe was the quiet and livable normality of the present tense, whereas *history*, in contrast, was to be found in all the spectacle and turbulence that came before.[1] For a long time for the purposes of teaching and disciplinary identity – for distinguishing history from social science – the boundary ran straightforwardly through 1945. Only in the 1990s did a number of general histories begin to appear, self-consciously taking stock of the twentieth century from the vantage point of its end, most of them covering the world as a whole rather than Europe as such.[2] But with one or two early exceptions European historians still seemed reluctant to appraise the post-1945 era discretely and on its own terms.[3]

The usual nervousness about distance and perspective cannot by itself explain this reticence. While 'Europe between the wars' was already being tackled in the 1960s at a mere quarter-century's remove, the post-1945 era had to wait for almost double that time to elapse. This need for much greater distance had something to do with the psychology of the momentousness of the end of the war, which established '1945' as a remarkably durable baseline. So long as the stability of Western European political arrangements, the effects of the peacetime affluence and the Cold War's determinative framework still held, the indefinitely expanding present of the 'post-1945' could also continue to unfold. While the watershed of 1968–73 and the ensuing disorder of the 1970s and 1980s certainly damaged

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those certainties, moreover, it required the Gorbachev era, the Revolutions of 1989, and the end of Communism to prepare the ground for closure.[4] Once the twentieth century as a whole had been captured in Eric Hobsbawm's and Mark Mazower's magisterial summations, accordingly, others began the work of conceptualizing the long postwar.[5]

This provides an avowed starting point for each of the two books under review. Thus Tony Judt opens his account on a platform of Vienna's main railway station in December 1989, where his own journey between Prague and western Europe becomes an allegory for Europe's passage between eras, the extended 'postwar' of his book's title and the 'new Europe' then in process of being born. If for Judt it was the 1989 revolutions that opened the way for necessary reappraisal, then for Tom Buchanan the vantage point came from the larger process of continental unification which the changes of 1989–91 also brought to fruition. Each of these accounts then becomes cast in the long shadow of the war. Buchanan begins with a late speech of François Mitterand, who in January 1995 reminded the European Parliament of the 'grief, the pain of separation, the presence of death' inflicted by the nationalist rivalries reaching their brutal climax during 1939–45, to which the intervening history of 'peace and conciliation' could now be counterposed. Judt likewise builds his entire 871-page account around the process, unevenly accomplished country by country in east and west, of negotiating an escape from the unfinished legacies of the war's psychic effects. Together, the cover images of the two books emblematically frame the story. Judt's *Postwar* shows a lone man facing away from the camera, apparently well dressed, treading a deserted and immaculately swept cobbled street, contemplating the rubble of complete devastation remaining around him: he is walking to meet an uncertain future, on a partially sanitized pathway, with the ruins of the past looming, dreamlike, in front and on either side. Buchanan's cover photograph, taken on 12 November 1989, shows the colour silhouette of a figure with a mallet attacking the Berlin Wall. If Judt strikes a complicated elegiac tone (Europe's postwar remains the scene of terrible loss, which can finally be let go), Buchanan's mood is more straightforwardly optimistic: the glow behind the silhouette might be either sunset or dawn, but at all events marks the passage to something attractively new.

These are very different books. Buchanan's is conceived as a general survey, the final volume in the *Blackwell History of Europe*. As such, it will surely find a secure place in the syllabi of appreciative modern European history teachers. Buchanan handles the balance between international and domestic political arenas extremely well, moving adeptly between the generalized narrative and particular countries, although after an early nod towards the smaller countries of western and southern Europe in Chapter 3 ('Restoration, Reconstruction, and Revolution: Europe, 1945–1950'), the main burden of illustration becomes predictably borne by the big four of France, Britain, West Germany, and Italy.[6] While Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia necessarily receive special attention along the way, the

equivalent big-country bias tends to matter less for the eastern European chapters, where the exposition is carried by the generic analysis of Soviet-type societies. The balance between east and west is less well handled: after the opening three chapters on the war and immediate postwar years, the book treats the two halves of the continent discretely but asymmetrically, giving the west five chapters and the east only two. It ends with another general chapter on 'Europe after the Cold War'.

Integrating social and cultural history provides another familiar conundrum, which Buchanan resolves by means of the 'value change' perspective associated in different ways with Daniel Bell and Ronald Ingelhart.[7] Almost inevitably, given the enforced brevity of treatment, the illustrations chosen for intellectual life and broader cultural histories become at best highly subjective. Overall, these treatments seem attenuated and arbitrary. The book makes a strong claim about the pivotal importance of the 1960s, arguing that 'in most areas of European life a clear continuity can be traced between the world that emerged from the 1960s and that of the century's end'.[8] But it says little about changing structures of public communication, about the more elaborate contexts of generational change, about the 'popular arts' or about everything now encompassed by cultural studies. On the other hand the later chapters on the 1980s (Chapter 8: 'The era of Thatcher, Mitterand and Kohl') and European integration (Chapter 9: 'From Rome to Maastricht, 1957–1992') are very successful, perhaps because they impart a kind of telos to the book as a whole.

Turning to Judt, we find a much larger and more elaborate book. Its almost nine-hundred pages represent a genuinely extraordinary achievement. In fact, it is hard to think of a general European history on this scale that knows as much, that provides quite as informative a map to such a vastly complex landscape of particular problems, or that threads its way through such dense thickets of diverse historiography quite as sure-footedly. In contrast with the general works of Hobsbawm and Mazower, for instance, whose century-long (and in Hobsbawm's case global) scope necessarily limits them to essayistic and synthetic topical cuts into the histories concerned, Judt builds detailed analytical narratives of much substance and detail. Because of the extra space, he can provide much richer contexts than Buchanan, more detailed narratives, more developed portraits, and a more comprehensive guide to the range of particular histories Europe contains. The proportionalities are also good. Far better than most general European histories, Judt integrates east with west, small countries with big.[9]

He also well integrates the social and the cultural with the political, rather than consigning them to separate chapters in the time-honoured tradition of most general histories, which include cultural history as an afterthought. Instead, culture – including everything from 'the life of the mind', literature, philosophy and the arts, or the universities, academic knowledge and student life, to popular culture in its diverse and manifold forms, including taste and fashion, the distinctive stylistic posturing of the young, public

broadcasting, film-going, rock music, leisure and recreation, patterns of consumption and so forth – is discussed where relevant to the rest of the general argument. Judt's tenth chapter on 'The Age of Affluence' between the mid 1950s and late 1960s provides an excellent example, moving through succinct renditions of the economics of the new prosperity, the demographics of migration, and the emergent patterns of a consumer economy to a beautifully elaborated account of the associated cultural changes.

If *Postwar*'s overall periodization is predictable, it remains no less apposite for that. Judt divides his account into four equal parts, of which the first is an eight-chapter treatment of the war's immediate aftermath entitled 'Post-War: 1945–1953'.[10] Part Two, 'Prosperity and its Discontents: 1953–1971', and Part Three, 'Recessional: 1971–1989', receive six chapters each. The slightly shorter final Part, 'After the Fall: 1989–2005', is given five chapters, plus a 28-page Epilogue called 'From the House of the Dead: an Essay on Modern European Memory'. Each of the book's four parts covers roughly a quarter of the whole.

In the course of his book, Judt shifts back and forth between a strongly argued generalized account borne along by appropriate emblematic illustrations and one consisting more in the detailed explicating of national cases. Part One observes mainly the first approach, beginning with one chapter on the demographic turmoil, social devastation, and human wreckage left by the war's end ('The Legacy of War'), and another on the settling of scores with Nazis, Fascists, and collaborators ('Retribution'). It continues on through the immediate politics of social and economic reconstruction ('The Rehabilitation of Europe'), the international dimensions of the division of Europe ('The Impossible Settlement') and the institutionalizing of tension between the Soviet Union and the West ('The Coming of the Cold War'). A sixth chapter deals with the imposition of Stalinism in eastern Europe ('Into the Whirlwind'); a seventh addresses the impact of the Cold War on intellectual life ('Culture Wars'). In drawing this first Part to a close, a Coda then postulates a key point of transition. Citing Luc Sante's evocative childhood memoir of industrial Wallonia and his own early years in Putney, Judt finds the immediate post-1945 time in many ways still continuous with the 1920s, whereas by the early 1950s Europeans were able to see a future that was starting to be different. If here organized religion signifies tradition and the weight of the past, then popular cinema heralds the future.

A chapter on 'The Politics of Stability' opens Part Two of the book. It first surveys the settling of international relations into an assured pattern of predictable and routinized confrontation, which became properly entrenched during 1961–62 through the crises over Berlin and Cuba. It then considers in turn Italy, Austria, and the Benelux Countries, before dwelling the longest on the Federal Republic of Germany. There his account nicely joins a discussion of Adenauer's 'CDU state' to a commentary on the

Heimat genre of kitschy nostalgia films and the beginnings of critical intellectual culture typified by the novelist Günter Grass and the social theorist Jürgen Habermas. The next chapter on 'Lost Illusions' combines decolonization (Algerian War, Suez Crisis), the beginnings of western European economic integration and the crises of the Soviet system in Poland and Hungary. Then comes 'The Age of Affluence' focusing on the new migrant labour markets and the emergent consumer economy, together with a six-page postscript ('A Tale of Two Economies') counterposing British economic difficulties against the West German 'economic miracle'. The pivotal chapter of this second Part of the book, 'The Social Democratic Moment', lays out the ground of the so-called Keynesian welfare-state synthesis, with its expansive and largely benevolent machinery of public goods, before surveying the liberalizing of public morality, the flourishing of European art film, and the wider contexts of public support for the arts. This is where Judt treats the Scandinavian model, with accompanying nods to Austria, the Low Countries and Britain. Appropriately, this chapter ends with the bleak downside of postwar urban modernism, or what Jane Jacobs called 'the Blight of Dullness' and Rayner Banham the 'New Brutalism': massive urbanization, especially in the socialist east and the Mediterranean south; disastrous failures or misfires of planning; soulless public architecture; alienated urban living.[11]

After this very successful tour of the solid reformist accomplishments of western Europe's postwar settlement, the next chapter on the contexts of 1968 turns out to be one of the weakest in the book. 'The Spectre of Revolution' begins well enough with an excellent succinct analysis of the pan-European higher-education expansion. But it then meanders into an oddly diffuse and decontextualized treatment of the surrounding cultural radicalism, before launching into a nine-page dismissively-toned polemic against the so-called 'theory revolution' of the 1960s, dealing with the resurgent Marxism and innovative cultural theory of the time. As intellectual history this is neither persuasively contextualized nor interestingly attuned to the ideas themselves. In fact this highly partial commentary is far more faithful to the partisan tones of the intellectual conflicts that came to dominate the following decade of the 1970s, when academic intellectuals lined up so angrily for or against the forms of theory Judt is trying to describe, including first the different strands of structuralism and what came to be called Western Marxism, and later the reception of Michel Foucault and the wider arrival of poststructuralist thought. Apart from a travesty of a paragraph on Herbert Marcuse and the obligatory sneer at Louis Althusser, Judt provides little explication of either the ideas themselves or the needs that gave them purchase, making his own preferences into a substitute for what might have been a more careful history of ideas. This chapter then lurches into a glibly disconnected account of the political explosions of 1967–69, which manages to empty them of meaningful substance while entirely dissolving their historical consequences and excitements.[12] Part Two ends

with the denouement of Communist developmentalism in eastern Europe, from Khrushchev to Dubcek, called 'The End of the Affair'.

Part Three then loses some of the strong narrative coherence that binds the first half of the book together, not so surprisingly perhaps given the shortening of perspective from the present. The opening chapter on 'Diminished Expectations' opens strongly with a capsule analysis of the encroaching economic difficulties of the early 1970s, passing into a discussion of the emergent language of 'ungovernability', which bespoke 'the fear, widely expressed in the course of the 1970s, that Europe's democracies had lost control of their fate'.[13] The chapter's centrepiece becomes a reading of the two types of 'violent challenges' faced by Western European society during that decade: first, a surefooted treatment of long simmering nationalist revolts in the Basque region of northern Spain and in Northern Ireland, brought to a new pitch of ruthless exemplary violence by the ETA (*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* or Basquia and Freedom) after 1978 and the Provisional IRA after 1971–72 respectively; and second, the turning to 'armed struggle' strategies by small minorities of the self-avowed Marxist revolutionary Left, including the West German Red Army Fraction (RAF) or Baader-Meinhof Group (named after Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof) and the Italian Red Brigades. Somewhat tendentiously, Judt's account here blurs into a broader reflection on the outlook of the West German intellectual Left, allowing the RAF to stand in for a larger and more complex set of histories. Both the Italian discussion and Judt's concluding assessment fortunately avoid this trap: 'The net effect of years of would-be revolutionary subversion at the heart of Western Europe was not to polarize society, as the terrorists had planned and expected, but rather to drive politicians of all sides to cluster together in the safety of the middle ground.' But the chapter ends with another brief stab at the history of ideas, capped with a few paragraphs on Punk Rock and the Eurovision Song Contest: 'In the life of the mind, the nineteen seventies were the most dispiriting decade of the twentieth century.'[14]

Next, a rather short chapter ('Politics in a New Key') considers the 1970s from a different angle, pointing to a reversal in the preceding trend toward two main camps of Left and Right in most western European polities. Instead, 'the political landscape of western Europe started to fracture and fragment', responding to 'a tectonic shift... in the political sociology of European voters.'[15] Judt exemplifies this development by the rise of single-issue movements like anti-tax parties, the women's movement and the new environmental activism that often culminated in Green parties, rounding the chapter off with a brief reference to Eurocommunism and (rather incongruously) a more extended treatment of the West German *Ostpolitik*. The following chapter ('A Time of Transition') provides fine distilled accounts of the end of the Greek dictatorship and the Portuguese Revolution, and a less satisfying one of the democratic transition in Spain, before concluding with an excellent treatment of the expansion of the European

Community between 1973 and 1986. Chapter 17 on 'The New Realism' deals with the dismantling of the postwar settlement in western Europe, described by Judt as 'the cumulative unraveling' of the assumption 'that the activist state was a necessary condition of economic growth and social amelioration'.[16] Conceived saliently as 'privatization' and becoming pan-European by the 1990s, Judt defines this process of 'economic liberalization' in a compelling analysis of the two primary cases, namely, Margaret Thatcher's Britain and François Mitterand's France.

All in all, these chapters are unevenly successful. Lacking the unifying narratives and larger conceptual frames of the first two parts of the book, they match particular discussions rather uneasily together – for example, the Single Europe Act with the southern European democratic transitions, or the *Ostpolitik* with the New Social Movements. Without a strong overarching analytical framework – which 'the decline of the postwar settlement' might have provided, for example, or other possible rubrics like 'capitalist restructuring, deindustrialization, and the postfordist transition', or 'class recomposition and value change', or Judt's own argument about 'ungovernability' – the actual sequence of discussions in this third part of the book, chapter by chapter, leads to much scrambling of particular temporalities without a very clear rationale. The final two chapters on eastern Europe and the Soviet Union hang together far more convincingly, mainly because the generic or structural elements in what Judt has to say about the region can be bound together conceptually and narratively by an explicit argument about these Soviet-type societies as such. In surveying the power of the anti-Communist critiques circulating among the dissident intelligentsias of eastern Europe, moreover, 'The Power of the Powerless' not only provides one of the strongest and most convincing intellectual histories in the book, but also enunciates precisely the general argument that might have shaped the chapters that precede it. What Judt here calls 'the Master Narrative of the Twentieth Century' had rested upon 'a widely-shared understanding of Europe's recent past [that] blended the memory of Depression, the struggle between Democracy and Fascism, the moral legitimacy of the welfare state, and – for many on both sides of the Iron Curtain – the expectation of social progress'.[17]

In the final part of the book ('After the Fall: 1989–2005') Judt reimparts a stronger degree of coherence, although in their chosen thematics and empirical ground the last three of these six chapters possess a ruminative quality whose terms become slightly diffuse. 'The Varieties of Europe' maps the continent's new social geography, paying attention to mobility, recreational travel, language change and the practical hegemony of English, the geographical contrasts of centre and periphery (Russia and Turkey) and the ubiquitous presence of heritage and nostalgia which became especially pronounced in Britain and France. The question of 'a distinctively European identity' (which in Judt's view '*was* emerging' during the 1990s) is tackled in 'Europe as a Way of Life', which moves briskly from high culture

through sport ('What really united Europe was football') and the decline of public intellectuals to anti-Americanism, the continuing resilience of the 'European Social Model' and the uncertain futures of the national state.[18] Finally, the Epilogue ('From the House of the Dead') develops Judt's argument about 'modern European memory', supplying retroactively the metanarrative of the book.

These closing discussions are preceded by three chapters which superbly summarize three leading contexts of dramatic European-wide eventfulness. The impact of those events massively extended across Europe's public spheres as a whole and vitally shaped the possible co-ordinates of European cohesion in both institutional and cultural or discursive senses. The first of these ('A Fissile Continent') deals with the final end of the Soviet Union and the division of Czechoslovakia. The second ('The Reckoning') turns to the breakup of Yugoslavia and the larger process of post-Communist transition. The third ('The Old Europe – and the New') begins with the rise of aggressive regionalisms like the Italian *Lega Nord* (Northern League), the progress of devolution and settlement of the Irish question in Britain, and the hostility of Flemish nationalists and Walloons in Belgium, before segueing into a masterful description of the ratcheting forward of European integration via the Single Europe Act of 1987–92, Treaty of Maastricht in 1994 and 'big-bang' enlargement toward the east culminating in 2004. This important chapter lays the foundations for the book's concluding discussions of European identity mentioned above. The institutional strengthening and territorial expansion of the European Union provide the basic infrastructure of that account. Analysis of the emerging pan-European labour markets and associated class structure is then joined to the structural salience of migration, including both the inner-continental migration from the new eastern periphery and the racialized presence of immigrants from the ex-colonial and Islamic Mediterranean worlds. There follows a survey of the new anti-foreigner movements of the radical right, leading with Jörg Haider's Freedom Party in Austria and continuing through France, Denmark, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Britain. This chapter ends with references to political corruption scandals in Italy, Spain, France, and Belgium, although the precise link to the preceding treatment of anti-immigration politics seems rather blurred.

Overall Tony Judt succeeds with this book to an outstanding degree. Some of its strengths have already been mentioned. The ability to hold so much complexity together in a single account, seamlessly keeping its European-wide vision while constantly attending to distinctions, variations, exceptions, and the historian's cardinal rule of managed exemplarity, is really impressive. So is the combination of judicious appraisals, telling illustrations, and sustaining general argumentation. The complex and variegated knowledge deployed for *Postwar* is rare indeed. While Judt worked originally as a social and political historian of French socialism in the earlier twentieth century, shifting during the 1980s into a series of broad-gauged histories of the

conflicts among French intellectuals since 1945, one of his book's best features is its command of the classic territories of high-political history, diplomacy, military strategy, and international relations.[19] Judt may pause only occasionally for any extended biographies – even the fine accounts of, say, Thatcher, Mitterand, Gorbachev, and other primary figures coalesce cumulatively around the unfolding of the detailed narrative rather than presenting more rounded portrayals – but his grasp of the stature of the major political players, for example from Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer to Alcide de Gasperi and Ernest Bevin – is always shrewd and often brilliant. It is both pleasurable and illuminating to find de Gaulle in December 1944 likening his dealings with Stalin to those of Francis I with Suleiman the Magnificent, or to encounter António Salazar as a keen environmentalist.[20] The integrated comprehensiveness of the book (political economy and cultural life, social change and political watersheds, east and west, small countries and big) has already been mentioned, but cannot be applauded enough. On a different front, this book provides splendid vindication for the continuing vitality of a certain kind of public intellectuality: its author's success in bestriding his subject owes no small debt to his career as an essayist in the *New York Review of Books*.[21]

How about the weaknesses? One of the clearest is the absence of either a bibliography or a decent footnote apparatus. No citations are provided, whether for quotations, judgements, or facts. Judt promises that 'the sources for *Postwar*, together with a full bibliography, will in due course be available for consultation on the Remarque Institute website [*http://www.nyu.edu/pages/remarque*]'. Yet two years on the website contains no such thing, merely 'a small selection of the English-language books that I have found most interesting or helpful'. In other words, none but the most dedicated, bibliophilic and persevering of specialist scholars will manage to track any of the sources down. I have not the slightest suspicion of Judt's care or reliability, but this severely diminishes the usefulness of his book. One of its signal virtues is the sheer richness of the questions it prompts us to ask, whether inspired by its grand arguments, more particular claims, or vast array of facts. To take one small example, during Saturday morning children's matinée shows in 1940s Britain 'songs were flashed on the screen, with the audience encouraged to sing along in harmony with a little white ball that bounced from word to word'. As it happens, this is one of the few times an exact citation is supplied.[22] But how common was that practice? When did it start and how long did it last? Was it a purely British phenomenon? A general history can scarcely be expected to deliver on that degree of detail, but even a modest footnote apparatus could expedite the following up. Not to provide that help is a disservice, whether the publisher or author (or literary agent) can ultimately be blamed.

On an organizational front, even a modicum of graphs, diagrams, and tables would have improved the book's pedagogical accessibility and made it easier to oversee. For a book of such complex thematics and

geographical scope, a wide range of topics might have been captured in that way: population growth and distribution; urbanization and the flight from the country; immigration and mobility; religious observance and belief; literacy and education; newsprint and books; cinema, broadcasting and electronic media; trains, cars and planes; phones and computers; armaments and armed forces; labour markets and unemployment; the gendering and regendering of work; deindustrialization and growth of services; trade unionism and industrial conflict; parties and political affiliations; elections, parliaments and governments. All of these topics are dealt with superbly in the course of the book, but basic comparative details can be retrieved from its pages only very laboriously at best.

Otherwise, some unexpectedly neglected subjects, like the changing place of women, changing gender relations and sexualities, might have emerged far more strongly. Neither the transformations of family and household between the 1950s and 1990s, nor the vastly changed relationship of women to education and employment, nor the startling alterations in attitudes towards women in public, properly receive their due. Nor do all the aspects of the changing European 'socio-sexual order' since the 1960s.[23] The active presence of girls and women of most ages in European societies, varying regionally and culturally across the continent, has shifted and expanded radically during Judt's period as a whole. The visibility of women, their legitimacy as public actors, has profoundly increased, whether in the representational domains of the media, in their recruitment to politics, in their modalities of participation in the public sphere or in their forms of physical and symbolic access to public space. Both the empirical dimensions of these structural changes and their ramified socio-cultural and political meanings surely deserved greater attention. But contemporary feminisms are almost entirely subsumed into Judt's treatment of the new reproductive politics surrounding abortion at the turn of the 1970s. Neither the wider repertoire of feminist political interventions nor the complicated diffusion of ideas about sexual equality and gender equity are usefully engaged. Nor are the wider changes in sexual practices and sexual mores, whether in ideas about sexual pleasure, in alternatives to heterosexuality, in the crumbling of older marital orders, in the widened legitimacy of experimentation or in the general queering of what used to be the boundaries of the permissable.[24]

Race, colonialism, and the legacies of empire receive only dispersed and relatively muted treatment. Decolonization is presented emblematically using the Algerian War and the Suez Crisis, but the decisive damage dealt to European colonialism immediately after 1945 goes virtually unmentioned. In that connection the book contains no Gandhi, no Nehru, no Sukharno; no Partition of India, no Madagascar Uprising, and no Chinese Revolution. Moving into the 1950s, the silence becomes deafening: there is no Malayan counter-insurgency, no Mau-Mau, no Nkrumah, no Mossadeq, no Bandung, and later no Lumumba. By its positioning in a chapter that progresses into a treatment of European integration and the Polish and

Hungarian crises, the centrality of Suez for the wider field of Europe's relations with the rest of the world becomes somewhat occluded, whether as a dimension of international relations or as a syndrome of the European unconscious (a matter of no small importance given Judt's emphasis on the difficulties of 'modern European memory'). If we consider the question of empire from this other perspective (from the book's end rather than its beginning), the complex discursive presence of 'race' in European societies, in troublesomely material as well as ideological ways, also receives unexpectedly thin and partial treatment. Interestingly, neither 'race' nor 'racism' has an entry in the index. 'Islam in Europe' receives a couple of paragraphs in one of the closing chapters on 'The Varieties of Europe'.[25] In the course of a sharp and excellently contextualized discussion of migrant labour between the late 1950s and early 1970s, Judt manages not to mention Enoch Powell's speech of April 1968. The relationship of the new tensions surrounding non-white immigration into western Europe to the processes of decolonization then reaching their bloody and contentiously protracted (and unfinished) climax, from Congo through Aden to UDI and anti-Apartheid, is not given the prominence it deserved.

There is a more subtle and only partially explicated standpoint at the centre of this excellent book which is more to do with its basic intellectual positioning than anything more overt. There are two main aspects to this standpoint, which deserve to be brought out for the purposes of debate. One has to do with the place of economics or, in the very broadest of senses, material life. The other concerns some consequences of Judt's foregrounding of European memory.

To suggest that Judt's book is 'reductionist' in its treatment of economics would be a travesty. His thinking is too complex, too nuanced and sophisticated, too attentive to contingencies and messiness, too committed to the importance of a political ethics that fundamentally disallows any such intellectual standpoint, either as creed or analytic approach. There are many prime instances to be cited, among them his chapters on the 1990s which are strongly organized around the agency of the leading human actors concerned, from Mikhail Gorbachev to Slobodan Milosevics. But the deep structure of the book's vision nonetheless tends towards the primacy of economics. When building his main accounts of the middle two parts of the book ('Prosperity and its Discontents: 1953–1971' and 'Recessional: 1971–1989'), for example, Judt certainly proceeds on this basis: the key foundation-laying chapters, whose terms manage the rest of the exposition, are those dealing with change in the economy in 'The Age of Affluence' and 'Diminished Expectations'.

Lest I be misunderstood, I should say that I agree with this broadly materialist starting point: I would build my own account in much the same way. But there is a further aspect to Judt's particular version, which vitally affects how he handles questions of political change, the meanings of major political events like those in May 1968 and the general relationship of big

politics to ordinary life. At the heart of that account is the conviction that for the vast majority of people 'politics', meaning the main logics and directions of large-scale developments and change as *Postwar* presents them, claimed at most a tangential and fleetingly episodic place in ordinary life.[26] In other words, for most people most of the time any relationship to the historic eventfulness and transformative excitements of national politics is defined by remoteness, potential anxiety, scepticism, and disbelief. This juxtaposition between 'the political' and 'the ordinary' runs through the various periods of the book. For most ordinary actors, Judt implies, the prevailing modalities of history have been either the depletingly dominant exigencies of survival and the teeth-grittingly dogged determination needed to make it through (hard times); the relief of newly arriving stabilities and modest improvements (better times); or the pleasures and satisfactions of enjoyment in the modestly good life (the best of times). But that is only to make one kind of observation. Such prosaic and unknowing day-to-dayness is certainly one dominant mode of being in the world. But many other sorts of agency can further intrude. Inspiring ideas, dramatic political events and actions, large-scale social currents and disturbances, the breaking apart and disordering or normal expectations, the arresting rhetorics of historic choice, the sense of an ending – all these may move people at times, vitally determining the issues, outcomes and effects. The mass of an ordinary citizenry may acquire political agency only quite rarely, but such large-scale collective interventions also deserve our attention. Judt also knows this, agrees with it, and sometimes builds it into his account. So I make this observation not as a simple or polemical criticism, but as an occasion for fruitful pondering and debate.

I have similar unease about Judt's foregrounding of 'memory'. In most respects this emphasis is entirely appropriate. His treatment of the dialectics of memory and forgetting in the book's Epilogue is careful and eloquent. The functional necessity of the selectiveness of the prevailing memorial consciousness across Europe as a whole during the 1950s and 1960s is compellingly explained, as too is our contemporary excess of memorializing enabled by the changes of 1989: 'The first post-war Europe was built upon deliberate *mis*-memory – upon forgetting as a way of life. Since 1989, Europe has been constructed instead upon a compensatory surplus of memory: institutionalized public remembering as the very foundation of collective identity.'[27] The ramifications of this insight are textured into the particularities of Judt's interpretations throughout the book. He both registers the manifold forms of the earlier silences and explores the conflicts through which the pasts of fascism, Nazi occupation, anti-Semitism, genocide and collaboration eventually became more openly addressed, while acknowledging the impermanence of that more recent memorial regime:

> All the same, the rigorous investigation and interrogation of Europe's competing pasts – and the place occupied by those pasts in Europeans'

> collective sense of themselves – has been one of the unsung achievements and sources of European unity in recent decades. It is however an achievement that will surely lapse unless ceaselessly renewed. Europe's barbarous recent history, the dark 'other' against which post-war Europe was laboriously constructed, is already beyond recall for young Europeans. Within a generation the memorials and museums will be gathering dust – visited, like the battlefields of the Western Front today, only by aficionados and relatives.[28]

But if we conceive of the importance of 'memory' only or primarily in these terms, as the long-term and underlying continuity of the terrible burden of the past (as the nightmares sent from 'the house of the dead' to weigh on the minds of the living), we can easily misrecognize the optimisms that moved Europe's history during some key moments of the long postwar. Some of those vital complexities in the relations between past and future, what we might call their enabling indeterminacies, through which alternative ways of imagining the future (or 'the horizon of expectation') may require and sustain particular constructions of the past (or 'the space of experience'), are easily missed.[29] The power of the political languages of anti-fascism during the immediate postwar years, extending in a variety of ways, society by society, well into the 1960s and 1970s, is one place where Judt's account seems weak. Moreover, his primary stress on the *burdensomeness* of memory – to see the 'new Europe' as primarily 'bound together by the signs and symbols of its terrible past', and its accomplishment as 'forever mortgaged to that past' – neglects the inspirational momentum of the languages of innovation, remaking, and imagining anew. Those languages of futurity, which allowed the social and political horizon to be redescribed, or enabled the horizon to be seen in the first place, have been every bit as crucial in Europe's histories of reconstruction since 1945. The disappointing thinness of Judt's account of the 1960s is also connected to the tilt of his disposition in this regard.

In Judt's *Postwar* the dramatic eventfulness of the grand moments of post-1945 history has somewhat faded away. The dismissive and oddly de-dramatizing quality of its treatment of the May events in 1968 has already been mentioned. But in Judt's telling, the drama and distinctiveness of 1945 itself too threatens to be lost. These days there is a way in which our readiness to re-enter the full intricacy and immediacy of the Liberation – our ability to see the undecidedness of the political outcomes and the evolving opportunities for doing things differently which presented themselves once the fighting and the bombing had stopped – has been immensely complicated by the retroactive fallout from our changing political values in the present. Contemporary transformations since the 1980s ineluctably shape the kinds of questions we are now able or inclined to ask. Most obviously, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the end of Communism, and the collapse of the contemporary Left have decisively shifted our motivation to

reconstruct what Europe's citizenries might have been imagining in 1945. Those events seem to have compromised any earlier legitimacy conceded to the 'national Communisms' emerging so confidently from the various national resistance struggles under Nazi-occupied Europe, while the rolling indictment of Stalin's rule in the Soviet Union makes it much harder than before to build any alternative account of the origins of the Cold War. In both respects the actually realized forms of the postwar settlement and the political coalitions that sustained them – the lasting framework of policy, reforms and dominant thinking that eventually solidified out of the intensely contested politics of 1945–46 – have now retroactively acquired a much stronger logic of inevitability. Europe's Cold War political alignment and the new patterns lastingly institutionalized during 1947–48 have been projected backwards onto the preceding moment of Liberation. Fewer historians are interested in making a case any more for the viability in 1945 of a 'Third Way,' as a possible vision of social and political change situated somewhere between or beyond the starkly polarized options of Stalinism and the anti-Communist consensus of 'the West'.

In each of the general histories under review the exciting but transitory openness of the political circumstances produced by the end of the war recedes almost entirely from view. In Buchanan's case that openness receives barely a paragraph's mention in a four-page section on 'Liberation, 1943–1945' during the opening chapter on the war. Judt offers a much richer and more detailed account of the years 1945–53, rightly awarding them disproportionate space in his book as a whole. But in characterizing the political landscape his account presumes that very process of political clarification, the crucial separating out into mutually opposing camps, which in 1943–47 had yet to be secured. Similarly, his fine discussion of ordinary life, organized around religion, cinema, and consumption, which carries the burden of looking forward to the emergence of a new social world distinct from the one before 1939, gives no place to the more radical expectations materializing in 1945. Thus in both these books, the by-now familiar outcomes, powerfully institutionalized into our consciousness via the transformations since the 1970s, have become subtly inscribed in how the possibilities for reconstruction in 1945 may now be perceived.[30]

Yet we can surely accept 'the durability of the political cultures brought into existence after "the great watershed" at the end of the 1940s' without either subsuming the distinct and rebellious meanings of the Liberation into that framework of a new 'democratic age' or occluding the powerful impact of the events of 1945 on the forms which the postwar settlement eventually assumed.[31] Over the important longer term of Judt's 'postwar' we may identify the emergent and perduring structural features of Europe's reconstruction *without* effacing the popular cultures of hope and expectation accompanying the immediate ending of the war and in large part making them possible. Both those dimensions – the structural and the cultural – were essential to the stabilities of the postwar settlement after 1945.

Moreover, that settlement brought an enormous increment of democratic enlargement. The very constituting of the adult populations of European societies into democratic collectivities of citizens was the most important political accomplishment of the founding of the peace. In sharp contrast to the postwar settlement of 1918–19, the settlement after World War Two also proved remarkably long-lasting and resilient, extending until the later 1970s and early 1980s. That long-lastingness had presumed a definite and pervasive popular culture of positive identification with the form of the polity fashioned through the process of reconstruction after 1945. In that sense, the most important accomplishment of the latter was to have assembled the conditions of possibility that allowed a powerful structure of common-sense assumptions about the attainable good society, about the importance of public goods and about the responsibilities of government for society to coalesce. That underlying political ground of common-sense assumptions held together remarkably effectively until the 1970s, when it came under sustained adversarial attack. As a result of the conflicts of the 1980s, it sustained persistent and relentless damage, before being comprehensively broken apart and overturned. But for the period between the mid 1940s and the late 1960s, those assumptions, the assumptions cemented into place by the politics of 1945, provided a kind of template for the popular political imagination.[32]

So there remains important room for debate with the ideas that Tony Judt's imposing general history contains. A certain unevenness in his capacity for balancing distance and partisanship, for finding 'the dispassionate engagement of the historian' affirmed in the second paragraph of his Preface, can certainly be found.[33] The various treatments of ideas and intellectual life are notably more balanced before he gets to the 1960s, for example. He also controls his dislike of Communists more successfully in his treatments of the earlier period, providing notably more careful appraisals of Stalinism in eastern Europe or the Italian Communist Party (PCI) under Togliatti than of Eurocommunism in the 1970s, where the references are perfunctory in the extreme.[34] But in general, *Postwar* is admirably nuanced and even-toned. Judt's forthrightly 'opinionated' approach ('Without, I hope, abandoning objectivity and fairness, *Postwar* offers an avowedly personal interpretation of the recent European past') splendidly succeeds. Among the four 'classics of modern history writing' he admires as models, his book may deservedly join Hobsbawm's *The Age of Extremes* and A. J. P. Taylor's *English History 1914–1945*.[35] Occasionally his touch fails, or his guard drops, and one may take issue with all sorts of particular comments and judgements. But as a book with which to argue and think, *Postwar* can hardly be bettered.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 Until recently, most twentieth-century textbooks fitted this description, including those covering only the years up to 1945. While periodically updated, they were mostly written during the 1950s and 1960s within close experiential reach of the war. For example, Robert O. Paxton's *Europe in the Twentieth Century* was originally published in 1975 (Orlando FL), with new editions in 1985, 1996, and 2001 (Belmont, CA); Felix Gilbert's *End of the European Era* originally appeared in 1971 (New York), entering its fourth edition in 1991; James Wilkinson and H. Stuart Hughes, *Contemporary Europe* was published for the first time in 1961 (Upper Saddle River, NJ), with a ninth edition in 1998; George Lichtheim's *Europe in the Twentieth Century* appeared in 1972 (London); James Joll's *Europe since 1870: an International History* in 1973 (Harmondsworth). For many years only Roderick Phillips, *Society, State, and Nation in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1996), was a more recent addition to this genre, although now see also Eric Dorn Brose, *A History of Europe in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2005). Some serviceable general textbooks were published more recently for intellectual history, economic history, and social history: for example Gerald Ambrosius and William H. Hubbard, *A Social and Economic History of Twentieth-Century Europe*, Cambridge, MA., 1989. In a category all of its own for many years was Geoffrey Barraclough's *An Introduction to Contemporary History*, London, 1964; rev. edn Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.

2 Close to the coffee-table genre of chronicles and picture books, both Oxford University Press and Columbia University Press published multi-authored world histories of the twentieth century, edited by Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (1998) and Richard W. Bulliet (1998) respectively. In the conventional textbook mould, Harvard University Press published J. A. S. Grenville's *History of the World in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, MA, 1997, after earlier British editions of 1980 and 1994. A variety of non-academic general histories also appeared, the best being Clive Ponting's *The Twentieth Century: a World History*, New York, 1999 and Harold Evans's *The American Century*, New York, 1998. Among all this activity, the most impressive achievement was certainly Eric Hobsbawm's justly acclaimed *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*, New York, 1994.

3 See James E. Cronin, *The World the Cold War Made: Order, Chaos, and the Return of History*, New York, 1996. Aside from the proliferating bibliography on all aspects of the European Union and its genealogies, J. Robert Wegs and Robert Ladrech, *Europe since 1945: A Concise History*, 4th edn, New York, 1996, was for many years the sole serviceable general textbook. See also Peter Lane, *Europe since 1945: an Introduction*, Totowa, NJ, 1985. Published originally in 1970, Walter Laqueur's *Europe since Hitler: the Rebirth of Europe*, rev. edn Harmondsworth, 1982, was a superficial and tendentious work.

4 I first began teaching 'Europe since 1945' in January 1989, when survey courses on that period in the U.S. undergraduate curriculum were still uncommon. Interestingly, this was also nine months before the Revolutions of 1989. The impetus for my own interest in offering such a lecture course came from the impact of Gorbachev and the manifest dismantling of the British postwar settlement under the government of Margaret Thatcher. At that time there were virtually no serviceable textbooks: most covered the twentieth century as a whole while giving post-1945 short shrift; or they covered only one half of Europe, East or West.

5 See Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, and Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, London, 1998. So far, aside from Judt and Buchanan, post-1945 histories remain few and far between. On a global front, see David Reynolds, *One World Divisible: a Global History since 1945*, New York, 2000. For a prime example of the proliferating histories of European integration, see John Gillingham, *European Integration,1950–2003: Superstate or*

New Market Economy?, Cambridge, 2003. Utterly indispensable is Göran Therborn, *European Modernity and Beyond: the Trajectory of European Societies 1945–2000*, London, 1995. See also his remarkable *Between Sex and Power: Family in the World, 1900–2000*, London, 2004.

6 Scandinavia reappears briefly in Chapter 4 ('Consolidating Western Europe, 1950–1963') but hardly ever again. Spain, Portugal, and Greece fare a little better: after a similar appearance in the benchmark Chapter 4, they return in Chapter 5 ('Western Europe in the 1960s') as 'The Persistence of Dictatorship', and again in Chapter 7 ('Western Europe in the 1970s: Downturn and Détente') under the rubric of 'Transitions'. The Low Countries and Ireland are hardly treated at all. Of course, constraints of space typically leave the author of a general European history in a quandary in this respect, and Buchanan does a far more subtle and conscientious job of being comprehensive than most, referring to particular countries as frequently as possible for exemplary descriptions during his generalizing expositions. But more might still have been done in the form of comparative statistical tabulations, comparative mapping, and other diagrammatic representations. For an indication of what can be done with imaginative graphics and comparative methodologies within a social-science analytical idiom, see Therborn's wonderfully useful *European Modernity and Beyond.*

7 See Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: a Century in Social Forecasting*, New York, 1973, and *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, New York, 1976; Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics*, Princeton, 1977, and *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*, Princeton, 1990.

8 Buchanan, *Europe's Troubled Peace*, p. 119.

9 Again, it is hard to think of other works achieving such integration quite as successfully. Despite its idiosyncracies, Norman Davies, *Europe: a History*, New York, 1996, set an exacting new standard in this regard. In my own *Forging Democracy: the History of the Left in Europe, 1850–2000*, New York, 2002, I aspired to the same kind of integration.

10 Strictly speaking, the eighth chapter is a 'Coda' entitled 'The End of Old Europe', which signals the opening of what for Judt becomes the true (and unhyphenated) 'postwar', as opposed to the years coming immediately 'after the war'.

11 Judt, *Postwar*, pp. 386–7.

12 Here are a few examples: The mood of May 1968 was 'fundamentally apolitical' (p. 412). The May events were sparked by 'parochial and distinctly self-regarding issues' (p. 409). 'As their critics had insisted from the outset, the boys and girls of the Sixties just weren't serious' (p. 407). In the May events there was 'remarkably little *anger*' (p. 413). After the Gaullist victory in the French elections of 23–30 June 1968, 'The workers returned to work. The students went on vacation' (p. 412).

13 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 462.

14 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 477.

15 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 484.

16 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 558.

17 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 559.

18 The two quotations come from Judt, *Postwar*, pp. 777 and 782. Judt's case for the strengthening of European integration is especially interesting in light of his earlier *A Grand Illusion? An Essay on Europe* (New York, 1996), which expressed extreme scepticism about any further European coalescence beyond the regulative regime of the Common Market. The classic work of relative scepticism is Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State*, 2nd edn, London, 2005, from which Judt marks some careful distance. See also Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945–51*, London, 1984, and *Politics and Economics in the History of the European Union*, London, 2005.

19 See sequentially the following: *La Reconstruction du Parti Socialiste 1921–1926*, Paris, 1976; *Socialism in Provence 1871–1914: A Study in the Origins of the Modern French Left*, Cambridge, 1979; *Marxism and the French Left: Studies on Labour and Politics in France 1830–1981*, Oxford, 1986; *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944–1956*, Berkeley, 1992; *The Burden of Responsibility: Blum, Camus, Aron, and the French Twentieth Century*, Chicago, 1998. Less visible in his published bibliography is a further migration of interest during the 1980s towards eastern Europe and Czechoslovakia in particular.

20 For the first, see Judt, *Postwar*, p. 115, and for the second p. 491. As Judt says, de Gaulle shared with Winston Churchill a predilection for 'reason[ing] in grand historical analogies' and at one level they each profoundly misrecognized the new time they were entering. De Gaulle

made his Stalin-Suleiman remark while en route to Moscow 'to negotiate a rather meaningless Franco-Russian Treaty against any revival of German aggression'. The difference, he quipped, was 'that in sixteenth-century France there wasn't a Muslim party'.

21 For example Judt's discussion of nationality conflicts in contemporary Belgium, *Postwar*, pp. 707–13, originated in 'Is There a Belgium?,' *New York Review of Books* 46: 19, 2 Dec. 1999. His Epilogue, 'From the House of the Dead: An Essay on Modern European Memory', was originally published in *New York Reivew of Books* 52: 15, 6 Oct. 2005.

22 Trevor Grundy, *Memoir of a Fascist Childhood*, London, 1998, p. 19. See Judt, *Postwar*, p. 234.

23 See above all Therborn, *Between Sex and Power*.

24 The new literatures available for these questions are steadily expanding. For an indication, see especially Hera Cook, *The Long Sexual Revolution: English Women, Sex, and Contraception 1800–1975*, Oxford, 2005; Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany*, Princeton, 2005; Julian Jackson, 'Sex, Politics, and Morality in France, 1954–1982', *History Workshop Journal* 61, spring 2006, pp. 77–102.

25 Judt, *Postwar*, pp. 774–5.

26 I am unsure whether for Judt this is more a contingent characteristic of the era since 1945 (as opposed to the years before 1939, for instance), or a characteristic of politics in general.

27 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 829.

28 Judt, *Postwar*, p. 830.

29 For this conceptual framework, see Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, Cambridge, MA, 1985, p. 268; David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: the Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*, Durham, NC, 2005, pp. 23–57.

30 Buchanan, *Europe's Troubled Peace*, pp. 20–24; Judt, *Postwar*, pp. 226–37. Similar applies to *Europe since 1945*, ed. Mary Fulbrook, Oxford, 2001. For useful discussion of this issue, see Martin Conway's two essays, 'The Rise and Fall of Western Europe's Democratic Age, 1945–1973', *Contemporary European History* 13, 2004, pp. 67–88, and 'Democracy in Postwar Western Europe. The Triumph of a Political Model', *European History Quarterly* 32, 2002, pp. 59–84.

31 Martin Conway, 'Reply to [Erik] Jones', *Contemporary European History* 13, 2004, p. 98.

32 This is what I refer to earlier in the text above as Judt's 'Master Narrative of the Twentieth Century', based on 'the memory of Depression, the struggle between Democracy and Fascism, the moral legitimacy of the welfare state, and... the expectation of social progress'. See Judt, *Postwar*, p. 559.

33 Judt, *Postwar*, p. xiii.

34 The nuance and care of his commentaries on the circumstances of Communism in eastern Europe, on the broader related histories of the Left during the Cold War, and on the political stands taken by Jean-Paul Sartre and other fellow travellers and critics of capitalism make a welcome contrast with the more polemical tones of his previous books. See note 19 above.

35 The other two works are George Lichtheim's *Europe in the Twentieth Century* and François Furet's *The Passing of an Illusion: the Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, Chicago, 2000. I share Judt's admiration for Lichtheim, whose commentaries on the earlier twentieth-century history of ideas remain unsurpassable in a general work of this kind. But in contrast his treatments of political and social history were lacklustre and even pedestrian. Furet's book is in a different category altogether: polemical and ill-informed, it remains an unbalanced and unreliable tract rather than a rounded and grounded general history, 'opinionated' in the deservedly pejorative meaning of the word.

doi:10.1093/hwj/dbn002