

and some of the choices she made are left unexplained. Given her conceptualization of identities as not just revealed but constructed in the context of interviews, it does not seem appropriate to limit the pool of potential interviewees to members of the respective ethnic majorities, thus excluding Crimean Tatars and Moldova's people of Slavic origin whose identity thus seems as already established. Equally regrettable is the author's failure to problematize her Moldovan interviewees' discussion of their country's foreign and security policies in terms of relations with Romania and Russia only, without ever mentioning another big neighbor, Ukraine. Perhaps the latter omission can be corrected in the author's future research, thus contributing to the exploration of less-studied influences in still under-researched societies, such as Moldova and, by extension, to the decentralization and decolonization of post-Soviet and east European studies. But then Knott herself presents an extensive program for future studies in this field that calls for further examination of fractured identities and, at the same time, the removal of the "blinkers" of identity politics (257) diverting scholars' attention from other phenomena, such as corruption and democratic backsliding. Her suggestions should be taken into account in a future change of topical priorities and methodological approaches in the field, the need for which was laid bare by Russia's full-blown invasion of Ukraine.

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Das deutsch-russische Jahrhundert. Geschichte einer besonderen Beziehung. By

Stefan Kreuzberger. Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 2022; 670 pp. Appendix. Notes.

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In the last sentence of his book, Stefan Kreuzberger expresses the hope that, despite Moscow's increasingly aggressive actions since 2014, the political actors in Germany and Russia will revive "the positive traditions of German-Russian relations in the not too distant future" (562). These "positive traditions" will be very restrained in Germany for the foreseeable future: while Kreuzberger's book was being printed, Vladimir Putin was deploying his troops to subjugate Ukraine—and many observers see the German-Russian relations of the past decades as a major factor in the Russian president's daring empowerment to wage this war of conquest and annihilation.

To publish a book exactly at the time when a new era begins, with which many assessments on the subject are put to the test, is undoubtedly a great challenge for the author. For the readers, on the other hand, it is very enlightening, as it enables them to view the historical events described from two perspectives—the quasi-historicized one in the book and the present one of the current readers.

Adopting a diversity of perspectives is also Kreuzberger's stated goal: in view of the polarized debate on German-Russian relations, he wants to provide the "authoritative historical points of reference" (17), because this would

be the only way to understand the motives, experiences, and influences of both the Kremlin leadership and the Russian population that would make Moscow's current behavior explainable.

After a short introductory chapter in which he begins a "search for traces" and outlines the history of the Russian-German entrepreneurial family Heuss and the Moscow-born "Eastern researcher" Klaus Mehnert with their entanglements in Russia, Creuzberger traverses the "German-Russian century" in three thematically structured chapters. The conceptual pairs "revolution and upheaval," "terror and violence," and "demarcation and understanding" are intended to serve as analytical categories to convey the interconnections of bilateral relations and in this way gain insights that a purely chronological account could not offer.

However, what seems original and plausible at first glance is not really convincing in the end. On the one hand, these categories force the author to treat interrelated thematic complexes separately from each other, and on the other hand, he himself does not maintain the categorization consistently. This results in redundancies and contradictions as well as gaps in the narrative that are only filled when the author jumps back in the chronology in the next chapter.

The inconsistencies begin early, in the opening of the first chapter, "Revolution and Upheaval," where Creuzberger analyzes the economic ties between Germany and Russia before the First World War and describes how these were perceived by Russian nationalists as part of German dominance. His comments on this are just as revealing as those on German images of Russia at the time, which fluctuated between sentimentality and Russophobia. It is not clear, however, what "upheaval" even existed at this time in German-Russian relations. Creuzberger only turns to the overarching topic of the chapter in the next sections, in which he describes in detail how first the German government supported the Bolsheviks during World War I to destabilize Russia, and then how the Soviet leadership under Lenin worked towards a coup in Germany via the KPD (German Communist Party) until 1923. In great leaps in time, the book then deals with the reactions of the Soviet leadership to Hitler's "seizure of power" in 1933, the Hitler-Stalin Pact in 1939, the forced implementation of socialism by the Soviets in East Germany after 1945, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union in 1955, as well as the negotiation of the Moscow Treaty by Egon Bahr and Willy Brandt and finally the path to reunification in 1989.

All of this is written in line with current research. For example, the passages on the Bolshevik legation in Berlin of the early 1920s, which served as a control center for revolutionary activities, or on the meticulous preparations for the negotiations of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer during his visit to Moscow in 1955, seem like interspersed contributions to a cultural history of diplomacy. Against the backdrop of the current debate on NATO's eastward enlargement, it is also particularly fascinating to read how Egon Bahr, in the run-up to German reunification, agreed with Valentin Falin, the head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Central Committee's International Department that they wanted to prevent a unified Germany from becoming a member of NATO.

But the question arises why, for example, the sections on the negotiations of 1955 and 1970 are found in the chapter “Revolutions and Upheavals” instead of in the third chapter, “Demarcation and Understanding,” where the West German “New Ostpolitik” is dealt with once again. It is only in this chapter that Creuzberger then explains the coming about and significance of the Treaty of Rapallo, with which Berlin and Moscow established diplomatic relations in 1922, without which the repeatedly referenced “Rapallo complex” of west Europeans—their fear of a German-Soviet power bloc—must remain incomprehensible. A number of themes emerge, again presented with great leaps in time, which were already dealt with in the first chapter: the Hitler-Stalin Pact, now interpreted as a continuation of the economic and military cooperation interrupted after 1933; the Soviet occupation of East Germany, now with a focus on “forced cooperation” (namely the dismantling of industrial plants and the deportation of Germans for forced labor); and Brandt’s Ostpolitik.

Conversely, it is only in this chapter that readers learn about the “pre-history” of German reunification—of the vividly described estrangement between the GDR leadership around Erich Honecker and the new Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, and the complementary rapprochement between Bonn and Moscow that culminated in a West German “Gorbimania.” The absurdity of fragmenting the narrative arc in this way can be seen, for example, in the fact that Moscow’s reactions to Hitler’s seizure of power are presented twice—the first time primarily from the perspective of Soviet diplomats (109–17) and the second time with a focus on the reports of Soviet foreign intelligence (396–402). In this way, Creuzberger misses the opportunity that is the core task of such syntheses. Instead, the reader has to piece together for herself or himself the observations, convincingly presented in each case, about how Iosif Stalin, on the one hand, assumed a rationally calculating Nazi leadership would have to continue cooperation and, on the other hand, saw the western powers as his main enemies in due to his ideological imprint.

The most serious shortcoming of this book, however, is that Creuzberger largely equates Russia with the Russian empire and the Soviet Union, respectively. For example, in the second chapter, “Terror and Violence,” he describes the events in Ukraine and the Baltic States at the end of World War I only along these two categories—and with a focus on the Bolshevik units and the German Freicorps. Ukrainians, Balts, Poles, or Belarusians appear at best as victims, but not as actors in their own right. His assessment that Winston Churchill’s statement that in 1918 the “war of the giants” had ended, and the “war of the pygmies” had begun might be condescending in tone but was “perceptive in substance” (228) seems downright disconcerting. This is characteristic of the author’s approach, which almost completely omits the perspective of non-Russian nations in the Russian or Soviet empires and, for example, describes the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk in the first chapter as a Russian experience of loss without mentioning in more than a half-sentence that Ukraine was founded as a modern nation-state at that time. Such a reduced history of German-Russian relations cannot be written after 2014. Especially against the background of Russian propaganda working off Stepan Bandera and the

Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Putin justifying his war of aggression in February 2022 by saying that he had to “denazify” Ukraine, the author should have also addressed the complex conflict situation during the German-Soviet war, when communist and nationalist partisans fought against each other and against the German occupiers.

A final assessment of this book must therefore be ambivalent. On the one hand, the author succeeds masterfully in presenting the core issues of German-Russian relations in the twentieth century and, for example, in working out how Germany played a decisive role in first stabilizing Soviet power and then paving the way for it to become a world power with the 1939 Pact, while Stalin promoted the westward integration of the Federal Republic with his repressive policies in the GDR. On the other hand, he remains trapped in peculiarly narrow perspectives. By concentrating on the spheres of “big politics” and by leaving out the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union, his portrayal resembles a play with only two sets and just a few actors. And although Kreuzberger advises German policy-makers in his chapter taking stock to act decisively against Putin’s aggression against Ukraine, which began in 2014, he also sees his role as a historian in pulling the “Cassandra calls from politics, diplomacy and daily journalism” about the deepest crisis in German-Russian relations into perspective (549). With this assessment, his book has now itself become a testimony to a definitively ended era.

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Replacing the Dead: The Politics of Reproduction in the Postwar Soviet Union. By

Mie Nakachi. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. xvi, 327 pp. Glossary. Notes.

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“If men got pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament.” This quip, attributed to a Boston taxi driver by Gloria Steinem, is mostly associated with reproductive policy in the US, where anti-abortion politics have been fueled by religious institutions, notably the Roman Catholic Church. But Mie Nakachi shows that in the very different ideological and demographic circumstances of the postwar Soviet Union, the same wry observation holds. In her well researched and perceptive study, Nakachi assesses the response of the overwhelmingly male Soviet leaders to the demographic crisis caused by the massive population losses of the Great Patriotic War/World War II, and abortion as a key part of their policy decisions.

Since the 1986 publication of Joan Wallach Scott’s pathbreaking American Historical Review article, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” discussions of gender have become essential aspects of historical scholarship. The field of Russian and Soviet studies has not been exempt from this expansion of the usual historical categories. Elizabeth Wood’s germinal *The Baba and the Comrade*, published just over a decade later, in 1997, claimed to be the first to examine “the role of women in Soviet society” through examining