

This beautiful tapestry of thoughtful, well-researched, original essays de-familiarizes Woolf, making her fresh and calling into question received wisdom about her status in world literature. By placing Woolf in conversation with so many thinkers, new Woolfs emerge in a kaleidoscopic panoply.

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JULIE V. GOTTLIEB, DANIEL HUCKER, and RICHARD TOYE, eds. *The Munich Crisis, Politics and the People: International, Transnational and Comparative Perspectives*. Cultural History of Modern War Series. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021. Pp. 312. \$140.00 (cloth). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.61

The four-power Munich Agreement of 30 September 1938, which led to the cession of much of western Czechoslovakia to Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany, remains more than eighty years later, among the most notorious diplomatic settlements in modern history. British prime minister Neville Chamberlain, one of the chief architects of the agreement, returned to London from Munich to be greeted with adulation by crowds deliriously relieved that war had been averted at the last moment. From his Downing Street window, Chamberlain promised peace to a Britain and a world which just forty-eight hours earlier had feared Armageddon was nigh. War broke out less than a year later anyway, notwithstanding Chamberlain's hopeful pledge. By then, Munich looked like not just a disappointment but a defeat: a concession to strength over principle and a spur to the belligerent ambitions of Hitler and other dictators. The agreement has been a popular byword for foreign policy failure ever since, and Chamberlain excoriated as hopelessly naïve.

Whether Munich was a defensible agreement or not has been fought over in monographs and scholarly journals ever since 1938. Cycles of revisionism, counter-revisionism, and neo-revisionism have exhausted every possible argument on the subject as far as its high politics are concerned. Unless some important extant records in the diplomatic archives that have remained hidden from historians until now become available (with the Soviet archives the likeliest source of these) there is little new to be said on the subject. But as Julie Gottlieb, Daniel Hucker, and Richard Toye, the editors of the imaginative essay collection *The Munich Crisis, Politics and the People: International, Transnational and Comparative Perspectives* suggest in their introduction, there is plenty that still can be said about the social, cultural, material, and emotional histories of Munich. The crisis in fall 1938 that culminated in Chamberlain and Hitler's meeting in Bavaria was an international public drama and a mass media spectacle that millions of ordinary people followed keenly from hour to hour and felt themselves personally and passionately invested in the outcome. This intense engagement is memorialized in a rich archive of sources that go beyond the memoranda of civil servants and diaries of statesmen to reveal something of how Munich was experienced and understood by the masses.

Several essays in this volume deal specifically with the British popular experience of Munich. Gottlieb shows how self-consciously Britons understood themselves to be both actors in and audience of a great collective drama in 1938. Appeasers and anti-appeasers were united in a sense of communal crisis. Psychologists and psychoanalysts sought to understand what was going on and to offer advice to the government about the management of a volatile public. Michal Shapira uses the specific case of pioneering British psychoanalyst Melanie Klein to assess the medical professional response to Munich. Drawing on the fascinating evidence in clinical notes, Shapira describes how Klein framed her patients' responses to Hitler as a

dialogue between their conscious selves and an internal Hitler inhabiting a mental inner world. Helen Goethals offers an interesting literary perspective, examining Louis MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* written in late 1938 as a case study of how poetry might be used by the historian as evidence of the emotional past.

One of the main virtues of this collection, however, is that it goes beyond the Anglophone world to consider popular responses to Munich on the European continent. Mary Heimann and Jakub Drábik offer an extremely useful Czech perspective in the opening essays, in which they avoid simplistic tropes of Czechoslovakia as a passive and innocent victim in 1938. They look at the ways in which Munich was perceived at the time in the Czech lands, and how its narrative was subsequently exploited as a means to legitimize postwar communist rule. Subsequent essays consider Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Italian, French, and German perspectives. The last of these, by Karina Urbach, is especially interesting given the special methodological difficulties of assessing popular reactions to public events in a dictatorship. Urbach analyzes reports by the exiled German Social Democratic and Communist Parties and the domestic intelligence surveys conducted by Himmler's *Sicherheitsdienst*, all of which offer surprisingly similar interpretations of the popular mood in the Third Reich in 1938, which oscillated between "anger, black humor, indifference and utter fear to elation" (174).

This collection comes strongly recommended not just to those with a particular interest in the Munich Crisis and the Appeasement process of the 1930s but also to those more widely engaged with the history of popular opinion in a mass media age, the history of emotions, and comparative international history.

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MATILDA GREIG. *Dead Men Telling Tales: Napoleonic War Veterans and the Military Memoir Industry, 1808–1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. 272. \$85.00 (cloth). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.58

In *Dead Men Telling Tales: Napoleonic War Veterans and the Military Memoir Industry, 1808–1914*, Matilda Greig offers a well-researched and highly informative account of the popular military memoirs written by veterans of the Peninsular War (1808–1814). The book is organized into two sections, the first of which concentrates on the authors who produced the memoirs, while the second examines the ongoing publication history of the memoirs and questions whether they form a recognizable genre. What stands out from the study is the popularity of these works. Greig observes that there has been considerable uncertainty about this question of popularity because former researchers have been divided over whether they were relatively marginal texts or well loved and commercially successful. Greig comes down firmly in support of the latter claim, as she demonstrates that the memoirs sold well, ran to multiple editions, generated lasting fame for numerous authors, and prompted a diverse range of fictional imitations and parodies right across the nineteenth century.

A key argument advanced by Greig is that the memoirs were saleable items: they were marketed as entertaining reading and as interventions into historical memory. This is a critical point because it allows Greig to challenge what she describes as a common assumption that military memoirs are based on materials discovered by accident or simply composed as a record of wartime memories for friends and family. Taken at face value, the memoirs appear to support this assumption—many include prefatory material that alludes to accidental authorship or apologizes for an unpolished writing style. Yet, as Greig demonstrates, such remarks