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By Siobhan Kattago



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Why do certain places and not others symbolically capture the past and freeze time? Likewise, why does the process of memory, as a fluid and changing activity, seem to prevent its own solidification? Memory and Representation in Contemporary Europe reflects not only on the persistence of the past as a theme linked to modernity, media and time, but also discusses the politics of memory within a changing Europe. Drawing on the theoretical work of Hannah Arendt, Isaiah Berlin and Zygmunt Bauman, Siobhan Kattago uses examples from both Germany and Estonia in order to address the multiple layers of Europe's totalitarian past. Through reflecting on the legacy of totalitarianism and the revolutions of 1989, it becomes clear that the issue is less of whether one should remember, but rather how to internalize the various lessons of the past for the future of Europe. Memory and Representation in Contemporary Europe thus offers the reader occasions upon which to take stock of different but overlapping contours of past and present in contemporary Europe.



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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

'A remarkable synthesis of what has conventionally been referred to as the field of "collective memory." This is a gripping account in which Siobhan Kattago thoughtfully assesses the possibility of achieving democratic regimes and peaceful international relations albeit in the wake of intolerable pasts. This book should be an invaluable guide for those facing the challenge of remaking a world that desperately needs to come to terms with these pasts.' Vera Zolberg, New School for Social Research, USA 'Memory, Siobhan Kattago argues, is a slippery slope: too much memory can make one a slave to the past, but too little can undermine identity and lead to repetition. Insightfully addressing this tension, *Memory and Representation in Contemporary Europe* combines rigorous empirical analyses with state of the art theorizing. It is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand both contemporary Europe as well as the narrative constitution of modernity.' Jeffrey Olick, University of Virginia, USA 'Memory and Representation in Contemporary Europe comprises essays already published elsewhere, but gathering them together gives the reader a more coherent perspective on the topic. This collection of essays is an important contribution to the study of collective memory and to the theoretical analysis of the role of the past and history for today's European societies... Kattago's book is a good study on the importance of history and the past in contemporary Europe. The condensed format allows a good overview of the subject and thanks to that Kattago's book can be a useful starting point to explore the topic. Clear language coupled with a smooth style of writing add to the philosophy of history that Siobhan Kattago offers to both historians as well as others interested in the topic... Kattago's book is a solid and interesting piece of academic writing...' H-Memory 'Kattago's discussion makes a timely contribution to our understanding of democracy as something based not on consensus, but on respect for different understandings of the past and the different collective identities that have been constructed in response. This book can thus be recommended as of interest to students and scholars of history, politics and memory studies, but also potentially to a more general audience of those keen to understand, not how to put the past(s) behind us, but rather, how to live constructively with it/ them.' *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*

About the Author

Siobhan Kattago is Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy at the University of Tartu, Estonia. She is the editor of *The Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies* and the author of *Ambiguous Memory: The Nazi Past and German National Identity*.

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