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Latvija un tās iedzīvotāji cīņā par savu valsti un pretestība okupāciju varām, 1918–1991: piemiņas vietu ceļvedis pa Rīgu un Rīgas apkārtni = Latvia and its citizens in the struggle for freedom, and their resistance against the occupying powers, 1918–1991: A guide to memorial sites in Riga and vicinity, by Kristīne Čakstiņa and Rihards Pētersons, Riga, Latvijas Okupācijas muzeja biedrība, 2018, 358 pp., €21.00, ISBN 978-9934-8299-5-6.

From the quiet design competition for the Barricades square to the well-publicised discussions of the Memorial to Soviet Army Soldiers (as it is referred to in this guide and is more commonly known as 'Victory Monument'), memorial sites in the Latvian capital continue to be designed, built and contested. The introductory remarks to the guide, *So much to remember* by Valters Nollendorfs, offer an indication of the scope of these memorial sites that currently populate the capital and that a reader will encounter on the pages of this bilingual guide (the review will focus on the English translation). This brief introduction further sets the inclusive tone of the volume, where '[memorial sites] remember significant events and important people that shaped things to come' (18). With this broad guiding note and thematic-chronological confines captured in the title, the book covers a wide-range of tangible memorial sites such as monuments, plaques, historic sites, cemeteries, graves, and museums. As such, while the volume is not a formal study of the Latvian national memory on par the famous exploration of *les lieux de mémoire* under the direction of Pierre Nora, it offers an encompassing reference to its contours.

It is worth highlighting the fact that the guide is published under the auspices of the *Museum of the Occupation of Latvia* and the originating idea for the project is coming from the offices of associations such as *Rīgas Memoriāls* and *Latvijas Politiski represēto apvienība* (see reverse of the title page and the back cover). In this context, it is unsurprising that a large portion of memorial sites covered is dedicated to *the Nazi German occupation, 1941-1944* (91-138) and *the Soviet occupation, 1940-1941, 1944-1991* (139-292). As Valters Nollendorfs suggests, 'most memorials in Riga and vicinity are silent witnesses to a much less elevated past marked by brutal attempts by occupation powers to subjugate and annihilate the Latvian nation and state' (18). Yet, the above periods while being prominent do not remain isolated from the breadth of the twentieth century history. Thus, alongside the above periods of occupation, a reader can find material pertaining to the *creation and defense of the state, 1918-1919* (23-90) as well as to the *Third Awakening, 1987-1991* (293-344).

Almost every entry within these sections is structured around five points of information: *address, description of the site, history, bibliography, and photos*. Address information is supplemented with maps throughout the book, cemetery schemes at the back and a larger folded map attached to the inner back cover. This makes it a handy research tool. Beyond brief remarks on the history or biographies and the description of collected memorial sites in each thematic section, the later are further introduced by a one-page long overview of the period. Regrettably, albeit understandably, these outlines do not provide references that otherwise remain a useful feature throughout the guide. Visually, these larger sections are introduced with a well-crafted collage of images that represent periods about to be covered (20, 88, 136, 290, 342). Intriguingly, the collage style is reminiscent of the artworks by the Latvian representative of Russian Avant-garde and one of the victims of the Great Terror, Gustavs Klucis, who was subject to a fairly recent retrospective *Anatomy of an Experiment* held at the Latvian National Museum of Art in 2014.

To the extent that Kristīne Čakstiņa and Rihards Pētersons reference earlier works, such as Ojārs Spārītis' *Riga's Monuments and Decorative Sculptures* (2001, 2007) or Meijers Melers' *Latvijas ebreju kopienas vēsture un holokausta piemiņas vietas* (2013), the volume represents a two-fold contribution. It is an addition to the current canon of comparable literature and its synthesis, as a brief look through the shelves of the National Library of Latvia will attest. Having said that, the bibliographic information is not provided for every entry in the guide. This can partially be explained by the limits of the existing literature on one hand, and may in parts be the product of the approach to and scope of the memorial sites covered. Beyond that, the volume offers a commendable mixture of photographic material, originating from a wide-range of sources (for example, see reverse of the title page). Unfortunately, the small format and arrangement of this material results in the visually unbalanced, albeit functionally illustrated, entries in the otherwise well-designed guide.

In the guide as a whole, three compact subsections caught my attention. While similar to others in that they go through the list of memorial sites, they are assembled in a more distinctive manner. The subsections worth highlighting are the *symbols of national self-awareness and presidents of Latvia* (67-90) and *memorial sites linked to national identity* (263-292). They offer a more prescriptive record of the memorial sites and focus largely on the role of the interwar memorial sites in the struggle for independence during the Soviet period and the subsequent sites such as associated with prominent dissidents of the era (67, 263). More unexpectedly, the section on the *Third Awakening, 1987-1991* contains a compact segment dedicated to the *Official memorials of the Soviet occupation regime* (329-344). It accommodates references to the non-military cemeteries and a small number of enduring Red Army monuments. The inclusion of the later in particular is shaped by their seeming

ability to 'provide a perspective on the occupying regime's policy of propaganda' (329). Regardless, the subsection is a valuable addition in the guide.

The book closes with entries dedicated to *the Baltic Way and the Occupation history museums in Riga, Vilnius and Tallinn* (345-349). Already in the introduction, Valters Nollendorfs highlights what is perceived as a perplexing situation of the Baltic Way commemoration in the city (18). Despite the existence of a foundation stone and a puzzling design competition in 2016, the main commemorative reminder of one of the focal events of the 1980s remains the 2013 unveiled plaque in the shape of footprints (347). The enduring interest in commemoration, such as the Latvian Institute's initiative the *Baltic Centenary Way* (2017) or the inclusion of the approaching thirtieth anniversary within the official centenary of independence programme, makes one wonder if the situation is likely to change in the near future. It would be a reasonable expectation. After all we have already seen, at times turbulent, centenary expansion effect, from the Latgale Congress Monument in Rēzekne to the discussions around the 'Gate of Honor' and the 'Centenary Alley' in the centre of the capital. Thus, while future revisions might be necessary, the guide will remain a welcome addition to the literature and offers an encompassing reference point for academics and the interested public.

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