Memory and Power in Post-War Europe

How has memory – collective and individual – influenced European politics after the Second World War and after 1989 in particular? How has the past been used in domestic struggles for power, and how have ‘historical lessons’ been applied in foreign policy? While there is now a burgeoning field of social and cultural memory studies, mostly focused on commemorations and monuments, this volume is the first to examine the connection between memory and politics directly. It investigates how memory is officially recast, personally reworked and often violently re-instilled after wars, and above all, the ways in which memory shapes present power constellations.

The chapters combine theoretical innovation in their approach to the study of memory with deeply historical, empirically based case studies of major European countries. The point of stressing memory is not to deny that interests shape policy, but, with Max Weber, to analyse the historically and ideologically conditioned formation and legitimation of these interests. The volume concludes with reflections on the ethics of memory, and the politics of truth, justice and forgetting after 1945 and 1989.

This ground-breaking book should be of interest to historians of contemporary Europe, political scientists, sociologists and anyone interested in how the political uses of the past have shaped – and continue to shape – the Europe in which we live now.

JAN-WERNER MÜLLER is a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. He is the author of Another Country: German Intellectuals, Unification and National Identity (2000).
Memory and Power in Post-War Europe

*Studies in the Presence of the Past*

Edited by

Jan-Werner Müller

*All Souls College, Oxford*
For as at a great distance of place, that which wee look at, appears dimme, and without distinction of the smaller parts; and as Voyces grow weak, and inarticulate: so also after great distance of time, our imagination of the Past is weak; and wee lose (for example) of Cities we have seen, many particular Streets; and of Actions, many particular Circumstances. This *decaying sense*, when wee would express the thing itself, (I mean *fancy itselfe,*), wee call *Imagination*, as I said before: But when we would express the *decay*, and signify that the Sense is fading, old, and past, it is called *Memory*. So that *Imagination* and *Memory*, are but one thing . . .

Hobbes, *Leviathan*
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Post-war Europe was a very different place to the Europe that gave rise to war in 1914. Contents. 1 Drastic changes. The map of post-
war Europe was radically redrawn. Borders were redefined and new countries formed, carved from the Russian and Austro-Hungarian
empires. Some ethnic and nationalist groups, which had long dreamed of nationhood and self-government, were finally given the
opportunity. The reconstruction of post-war Europe did not satisfy everyone or eradicate old prejudices or presumptions about who
should rule. None of the Central Powers received invitations for membership of the League, though they did not have wait long.
Austria and Bulgaria both joined in December 1920, Hungary in September 1922 and Germany in September 1926. How has memory
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