

Fogg's generalizations hold true for the rest of Vichy France—she concedes that the three departments of the Limousin comprise a particularly anti-clerical and left-leaning enclave—will be decided by the further research of other scholars.

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Cadaverland: Inventing a Pathology of Catastrophe for Holocaust Survival. The Limits of Medical Knowledge and Historical Memory in France, Michael Dorland (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England for Brandeis University Press, 2009), xi + 275 pp., cloth \$45.00.

The publication of a new volume by the Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry is an occasion of scholarly anticipation. The latest book in the series is no exception. *Cadaverland: Inventing a Pathology of Catastrophe for Holocaust Survival* focuses on the nature, scope, and implications of the treatment of Holocaust survivors in post-World War II France. Professor Michael Dorland of the School of Journalism and Communication at Carleton University in Ottawa is neither a historian nor a clinician, but is rather a journalist, film critic, and novelist. Yet, through his diverse experience he has acquired an exceptional depth of knowledge and insight. Professor Dorland's book, while not an easy read, is an engaging and unique exploration of how French doctors analyzed the impact of the concentration camps on Holocaust survivors. The author devoted ten years to writing this work, and the result is a nuanced combination of historical, cultural, political, sociological, and psychological approaches to the study of the Holocaust.

As a practicing psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, I view Professor Dorland's work as a sophisticated psychoanalytic inquiry that crosses multiple dimensions. Psychoanalysis grapples with unconscious conflicts and recognizes the need to work through them, yielding new insights and awareness. All individuals experience a constant need to control emotional as well as intellectual inner conflicts. The analytic framework identifies and addresses defense mechanisms that may inhibit the resurfacing of repressed memories. Such defenses may take the form of displacement, condensation, inversion, or rationalization. All of these protective apparatuses may be used to shield the conscious mind from realities too difficult to accept. Nonetheless, such realities shape the past and affect the present and future.

Dorland's book, then, can be seen as a form of psychoanalytic free association connecting streams of discourse and dialogue. As such, the text is at times difficult to follow. *Cadaverland* explores how regression into the mind causes psychological censorship and internal editing, and engages with the process of

moving from the unconscious to the conscience mind. As I see it, the work is an analysis of Dorland himself. That is, *Cadaverland* is a means for the author to come to terms with his own complex Jewish identity. He notes in the introduction, entitled “My French ‘Jewish Question,’” that he is “the son of a Jewish mother, or as she puts it, ‘une française d’origine Israélite [Frenchwoman of Jewish origin],’ who had to wear the yellow star at the age of eighteen.” Dorland is a member of the political left and an assimilated Jew, calling himself “both a citizen of France and a Jew of the Diaspora.” Another layer of the analytic nature of this book is Dorland’s discussion of the postwar French public response to Holocaust survivors. In grappling with this issue, Dorland recognizes the problem of memory and defense against. He understands how denial and repression can distort memory. The reader must “listen” to the complex threads of arguments and justifications in an attempt to work through this analysis.

In *Cadaverland*, Dorland explores the limits of medical knowledge and human historical memory. His focus is on the past sixty years of the field of medicine—especially psychiatry, neuropsychology, and psychoanalysis—and on attempts to describe and explain the effects of the concentration camp on Holocaust survivors. French researchers were among the first to attempt systematic research on this topic. The story of this research must be embedded within the social, political, and cultural history of France—particularly in regard to the period immediately following the fall of the Vichy government, when there was virtually no public acknowledgment of widespread French collaboration with the Nazis. Of the approximately 80,000 Jews who were deported from France to concentration camps during the Holocaust, only 3,500 (less than 5%) returned; yet, French society greeted the survivors largely with silence. Dorland uses the metaphor of the corpse to describe postwar French attempts to face up to the antisemitism of the Vichy period, arguing that, although some sixty years have passed since the end of the Holocaust, the “corpse” is still warm; it is not yet ready for the pathologist to begin the autopsy and expose the disease.

The narrative begins with the liberation of the concentration camp survivors. The author rightly notes that liberation was only a beginning, and that physical and psychological trauma had yet to be addressed. The story continues into the Displaced Persons camps and proceeds as survivors return to France. The author argues that the French appeared to be more interested in caring for French former resisters and political prisoners than in caring for Jewish survivors. He goes on to explore medicine’s varied attempts to address the symptomology of the survivor as it moved from conceptualization and categorization through psychiatry and neuropsychiatry to psychoanalysis and the phenomenology of a so-called “survivor syndrome.”

Dorland describes French doctors’ use of a variety of approaches, including somatic and psychological, in caring for Holocaust survivors. The text then

discusses Jewish physicians who attempt to grapple with the historical and clinical implications of caring for the Jewish survivor. The final section of the book moves beyond France and addresses the treatment of Holocaust survivors in Scandinavia, Poland, the United States, and Israel.

“Working through” is a key component of psychoanalysis. The medical community focused on the body, rather than the mind, only later recognizing the signs of what we now call post-traumatic stress disorder and major depressive disorder. Practitioners lacked sufficient understanding to respond to survivors who displayed incomplete mourning secondary to loss of family, loss of home, and great uncertainty about the future. The French medical community dehistoricized the events of the Holocaust, failing to recognize the unprecedented and uniquely Jewish aspects of French Holocaust survivors’ experience. Instead, after the war many French physicians focused on political deportees, emphasizing universal suffering and victimology

In reading and rereading this text, I am reminded of my own psychoanalytic practice and the many hours I have spent attempting to analyze my patients. My analysis of *Cadaverland* is that the work is itself a therapy in process. To use Freud’s term, the book is the beginning of an “interminable” analytic process. In his text, Dorland only has begun to “work through” the trauma and analyze responses to it. He has done us a service by having the courage to come forward and open himself and the reader to this exploration of the limits of medical knowledge and historical memory.

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***The Fragility of Law: Constitutional Patriotism and the Jews of Belgium, 1940–1945*, David Fraser (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2009), ix + 290 pp., cloth \$140.00.**

In the 1980s, the fate of the Jews in Belgium during the Holocaust was extensively chronicled and analyzed in Maxime Steinberg’s multi-volume work *L’Étoile et le fusil*. Many of the questions raised by that work were revisited in the collection *Belgium and the Holocaust: Jews, Belgians, Germans*, edited by Dan Michman and published in 1998. In *The Fragility of Law*, historian David Fraser charts new territory by delving into the behavior of the Belgian legal profession during the German occupation of 1940–1944 and immediately after. The result is a detailed examination of the Belgian legal system and its complicity in the introduction and execution of antisemitic legislation. The targets of Fraser’s criticism are clear from the outset: the Secretaries-General and their lack of opposition to anti-Jewish