

Peer Review

Review of: "Who Owns the Past? Symbolic Authority and Heritage Revitalization in Czech Borderlands"

Maciej Falski¹

1. University of Warsaw, Poland

This is an article on the extremely interesting and important subject. The former 'Sudetenland' within Czechia has for a long time remained a vague territory without a clear identity. The area has a broken history, or more precisely, a narrative characterised by discontinuity. In such a context, the question of heritage and the past seems a challenge, both for inhabitants and for researchers. The value of the paper is higher as its scope corresponds with the experience of multiple regions in Central Europe, for instance, with regions formerly German but ceded to Poland after 1945. There, as well as in the regions commented on by the author, that problem of continuity, re-appropriation of the past, and identity anchoring seems crucial and uneven.

I like the notion of 'memory nodes', as well as the focus on material heritage, or material objects which condense the past, or are able to produce representations of the past and focalise narratives.

But there is a main problem for me with the paper in question. It is promising, very interesting in terms of the topic and theoretical frame. But there is very little said on the results of the research. The reader doesn't get any information about the research, nor about the findings. There is almost no example of topics in question—objects, places, monuments, and so on. The general ideas and theoretical considerations dominate, to the detriment of the local experience. We are not given any proof, nor illustrations of those general theses. I'd recommend giving more details deriving from interviews, some examples, and places in question. Too much theory! Otherwise, the paper is well-written and instructive.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.