The Franco-Prussian War in French History Textbooks, 1875–1895

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Abstract

In French history textbooks published after France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to 1871, the presentation of the war and its outcome frequently include the myth of France's revanche and depictions of the Prussian enemy as barbarians. Other textbooks presented a narrative of progress in which the French Third Republic is shown as the endpoint of a process of advancing civilization. While the idea of a French revanche can be regarded as a founding myth of the Third Republic, the narrative of progress can be seen as an echo of this myth, cleansed of the concept of the enemy as barbarian, which constitutes a national master narrative.
Civilization versus Barbarism: The Franco-Prussian War in French History Textbooks, 1875–1895. Jörg Lehmann. Article Type: Research Article. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3167/jemms.2015.070103. Pages Issue 1 (Mar 2017): Textbooks in Periods of Political Transition after the Second World War. Guest Editors: Kira Mahamud Angulo and Anna Ascenzi, pp. 1-117. Close section. Volume 8 (2016). Restricted access. Issue 2 (Sep 2016): pp. 1-159. Restricted access. The Franco-Prussian War has 204 ratings and 12 reviews. Jane said: This was the war which, though short, shaped twentieth century Europe, and whose influ... Sort of the classic, standard history of the war in English. I have no quibble with his conclusions. (The Germans were better organized, The French bit off more than they could chew). flag 1 like · Like · see review. Oct 30, 2012 Enrico added it. the foolishness of this war, and the french arrogance and lack of preparedness is explained. an astounding story. flag 1 like · Like · see review. Mar 12, 2018 Matthew rated it really liked it. The [Franco-Prussian] War and the defeat of the Paris Commune had shifted the center of gravity for the European workers' movement to Germany. As France was the classic site of the first phase of proletarian class struggle and Paris the beating, bleeding heart of the European laboring classes of those times, so the German workers became the vanguard of the second phase. French workers' organizations declare themselves to be ready to oppose any declaration of war with all the means at their disposal. Every represented nation undertakes the obligation, according to the resolutions of national and international congresses, to act against all. This world war is a regression into barbarism. The triumph of imperialism leads to the annihilation of civilization.