

BOOK REVIEWS

Osteuropa kartiert—Mapping Eastern Europe. Ed. Jörn Happel and Christophe von Werdt, with assistance from Mira Jovanović. *Osteuropa*, no. 3. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010. xvi, 394 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Illustrations. Plates. Maps. €43.90, paper.

The political, cultural, and linguistic importance of maps of eastern Europe is hard to overstate. This thoughtfully arranged multidisciplinary volume is a major contribution to the growing body of literature on the history of cartography in Germany, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine. A good number of the essays aim to decenter one country or another as it has claimed its historic space, making the book's centerpiece not any single country but the maps themselves. The sixteen contributors (fourteen writing in German, two in English) are united by their common effort not only to undertake source criticism, adding to standard narratives of nation, state, and empire building, but to treat maps in a broader international scholarly context and as a cognitive means by which state planners, pedagogues, tourist organizations, and others debate, measure, structure, and fantasize about spatial borders and territorial domains.

The five parts of *Osteuropa kartiert* are divided into sections on scholarship pertaining to map plans, map borders, maps and ethnic borders, maps in politics and policy, and maps in poetry. The articles stretch in time and space from an investigation by Annina Cavelti of the first maps of Muscovy by Sigismund Herberstein and Anthony Jenkinson in the sixteenth century, to the stimulating work by Tomasz Kamusella on treatments of territory, language, and ethnonationalism in a global context, with attention to the history of school atlases in eastern Europe, to imaginaries of the “German East” as economic, colonial, racial, or civilizational “Raum” in the modern period and into the first decade of the twenty-first century, to recent Polish poetry using the map as metaphor—in the literary analysis by Daniel Henseler—on the symbolic referencing and reapportionment of Kraków, down to the very street corner, by the exiled Polish poet Adam Zagajewski upon his return to the city in 2002. Thematically rendered, the book's framework ranges widely. There is some unevenness in length among contributions—for instance, a three-page set of casual remarks in section 4 on maps as “constructions” in geospacial information studies and in the wider world. Overall, however, the presentation is effective, and the book is not as sprawling as it perhaps could have been.

For original applications of theoretical reflections on the “spatial turn” using space as a category of analysis, the fine research by Frithjof Benjamin Schenk focuses on how policy planners structured Russian cultural norms in debating the merits and dangers of a railway network in imperial Russia from 1830 to 1860. Arguing for a communicative model that accounts for the construction of spatial imaginaries based on strategies and competing interests, Schenk challenges binary debates on modernization, showing how ministers both responded to and structured cultural norms. Concentrating on ethnonationalism, Franz Sz. Horváth and Róbert Keményfi take a critical look at the “scientific” geopolitical rhetoric and institutional grounding of mapmaking in post-Trianon Hungary, similar to the uses and abuses of *Ostforschung* in Germany. Horváth examines an atlas of central Europe prepared in 1945 by the cartographer András Rónai, a student of the former Prime Minister Pál Teleki. Keményfi effectively shows how the praxis of Hungarian ethnonational mapmaking elevated cartography itself to a “Hungarian mythological scholarship of space” (206).

Research on the role of maps in cross-border relations is also done well. In examining German-Polish relations, Tobias Weger shows the persistence of German colonial fantasies and revisionist geopolitics vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia and Poland. Antje Kempe looks carefully at the economic and political context of Polish imaginaries of “reclaimed lands” (*ziemie odzyskane*) in Polish maps after 1945. Christian Lotz looks at maps on an international stage by taking into account tourism and the representation of Germany's eastern border between 1956 and 1972.

While back matter can be overlooked, the editors are to be commended for the inclusion of thirty cartographic visuals (many in color) and, above all, for their 44-page bibliography of German, Polish, and Russian archival sources. The editors separately note

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various single maps and atlases in Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian, Latin, and Romanian, with additional reference to recent cartography-related monographs, articles, and secondary literature. Although the bibliography is by no means comprehensive, it will enable future researchers to pursue research in cartography from multiple angles in the humanities and social sciences.

Osteuropa kartiert is a stimulating collection of scholarly essays that showcases new directions in the history of cartography in eastern Europe. The book is essential reading for those interested in recent scholarship on space and for interdisciplinary historians who wish to contribute to research in political and cultural geography pertaining to Germany, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia.

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Creating the Nation: Identity and Aesthetics in Early Nineteenth-Century Russia and Bohemia. By David L. Cooper. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010. viii, 347 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. \$42.00, hard bound.

The idea of comparing the emergence and development of the concept of national identity in Russian and Czech literatures may seem at first to owe more to the traditional institutional structure of Slavic studies than to the inner logic of the problem. The growing sense of national identity expressed by Czech and Slovak writers in the early nineteenth century often served as a classical case for nationalism studies—the Bohemian intellectuals of that period were, according to Miroslav Hroch, representing the first cultural stage of national revival that finally evolved into political nationalism and the quest for national liberation. Meanwhile Russia was itself a multiethnic empire where Great Russians enjoyed cultural and political predominance. Yet David L. Cooper has managed not only to trace remarkable similarities between the literary developments in Russia and Bohemia but also to offer an original interpretation.

Many scholars have traditionally tended to seek in literature a powerful tool for the expression and legitimization of national aspirations, but Cooper asks not so much why the nation needed literature—a question that has been answered before with a reasonable degree of success—but “why did literature need nation in order to develop a modern notion of literary value” (251). Moreover he finds in this reorientation of literary aesthetics one of the “motivating” factors in “the development of nations and nationalisms” (257). In order to acquire this role, literature had to undergo an identity crisis of its own and find a new source of legitimacy that the traditional prescriptions of imitating the example of the ancients or even imitating nature were unable to provide. In the quest for originality and authenticity, literature was bound to construct the nation as its own main *raison d’être*.

Cooper focuses on the problems that usually escape the attention of historians of nationalism: the role of translation, the debates about the poetic prosody and meter, the attitude to classical heritage, the beauty of poetic idiom defined in Czech as *libozvučnost*. He shows how the revival of classical ancient verse in Bohemia or the inventive usage of hexameter in Russian verse became integral parts of the Romantic movement and how the legacy of the Greeks was appropriated by nationally oriented writers such as Aleksei Merzliakov, Nikolai Gnedich, František Palacký, and Paul Joseph Šafařík in order to define their own poetic paradigm. To be promoted as different and superior, a national literary tradition needed to have a noble, preferably ancient genealogy. It is worth noting that the Germans and the German infatuation with the Greeks served in these debates as an example of the successful struggle to nationalize literature and to purify it from a slavish imitation of the French. Russian and Czech languages and literatures were to be liberated from the foreign (in the Czech case German) yoke in the same way as the Germans had earlier managed to liberate themselves.

Cooper aptly begins his narrative with the story of the Friendly Literary Society in Moscow, a group of young Russian enthusiasts that developed a whole set of categories and approaches that later became instrumental for Russian literary Romanticism. As early