

Ruthner, Clemens, and Tamara Scheer, eds. *Bosnien-Herzegowina und Österreich-Ungarn, 1878–1918: Annäherungen an eine Kolonie.*

Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 2018. Pp. 560.

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This volume of eighteen essays is a postcolonial analysis of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a type of Habsburg colony. Its contributions are both informative and timely; the volume belongs in the library of anyone interested in late imperial Habsburg affairs.

The coeditors, Clemens Ruthner and Tamara Scheer, are distinguished scholars who have gathered together most of the regional experts available. Their undertaking demonstrates just how much postcolonial theory has opened new vistas into the give and take between the Habsburg core and an Orientalized periphery in the decades before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and the outbreak of war.

The introduction to the volume contains the coeditors' essays. Here, both Ruthner and Scheer address the many nuances of (and objections to) their approach. Ruthner's extensive review of literature asks the rhetorical questions, "Was Bosnia a colony? If so, how and in what form?" With an extensive review of theory and the many interpretations of the word "colony" over time, Ruthner casts the discussion in terms of scale, economic domination, and legal systems that confirm Bosnia's status as a colony at the beginning of the twentieth century. Scheer, in contrast, uses contemporary references to the region between 1878 and 1918 to show the highly nuanced and varied names given to Bosnia in the popular press and among politicians at the time. Terms such as "new Austria" (*neu-Österreich*), "imperial land" (*Reichsland*), and so on indicate that there was little doubt as to Bosnia's "colonial" status during the period of Austrian administration. Both of these essays are must-reads.

The volume has four main sections, excluding the introduction and epilogue. The first section, "Vorgeschichte," presents essays devoted to the depth of Habsburg interactions and concerns about the provinces well before 1878. In particular, Martin Gabriel provides a lively account of the deep history of Habsburg monarchy and its relations with Bosnia. As far back as the eighteenth century, discussions about the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina occupied diplomats—the decision to occupy in 1878 was not the product of recent political developments or upheavals, rather it was the outcome of several decades of preoccupation with the territories.

The second section, "Übernahme," presents essays devoted to the organization of Habsburg rule in Bosnia. Robert J. Donia's benchmark contribution to this discussion, "Bosnia as a Proximate Colony," which first appeared in Ruthner's coedited volume *Wechselwirkungen* (New York, 2015), has already gained considerable traction in the English-speaking world; now appearing in the German language, it provides an excellent overview of the Austrian administration from one of the region's leading English language experts.

Several additional case studies in this section provide insights into lesser-known features of Habsburg rule. Maximilian Hartmuth examines the use of the neo-Moorish architectural style, normally considered to be the style of the Administration's "official" public buildings, the most famous of which was Sarajevo's city hall, the Vijećnica. But his case study turns to the private, examining the meaning of the architectural style for the home of a prominent Bosnian Muslim family. This architectural style is but one of the many aspects of give and take between the occupied and the occupiers. Public health and protection from infectious disease is the topic of Valeria Heuberger's remarkable case study on pilgrimage to Mecca. Heuberger chronicles the Austrian administrators' efforts to observe, control and contain disease among pilgrims as they returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The third section, “Abbilder,” concentrates on the literary and scholarly reception of “Bosnia” among writers and scholars in the Habsburg core. František Šístek outlines the reception of Bosnian Muslims among Czechs; Johannes Feichtinger applies Said’s Orientalism to several significant textual discussions, and both Anna Babka and Riccardo Concetti discuss the literary work of Robert Michel and the creation of an Orientalized other. The fourth section, “Nachwirkungen,” discusses the ambivalent legacies of Habsburg rule into the twenty-first century.

In a massive volume such as this, there are inevitably some overlaps. Most authors feel compelled to retell the story of the occupation of 1878, the annexation of 1908, or both to frame their own research. This makes for some repetition of content across the volume; a stronger editorial hand might have shorn a substantial number of pages from this tome. Nevertheless, the extensive “Literatur” section starting on page 539 provides the interested scholar with a valuable compilation of all the relevant literature. This volume approaches an encyclopedic compendium of essays and is a must-read for any scholar interested in this period, Bosnia’s special path into modernity, or in postcolonial studies. It should be a useful reference for many years to come.

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Prokopovych, Markian, Carl Bethke, and Tamara Scheer, eds. Language Diversity in the Late Habsburg Empire

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This volume is an attempt to connect the study of language and nationalism with Habsburg studies and to situate linguistic practices of the late imperial period within the changing understanding of the meaning of Austria-Hungary’s imperial nature. Its aim is critical as far as it relates language and language use to a complex set of social factors (urban-rural divide, social status and language, profession, etc.) and not just to nation and nationalism, and it stresses the commonalities of the Habsburg case with similar phenomena across space and time, up to the present. Thus, it consciously departs from, as the editors and the author of the first chapter, Pieter Judson, make clear, analyses based on statistical evaluation and instead looks for the social practices of language use. Most of the chapters make good on this promise, with the exception of that of Csilla Fedinecz and István Csenricskó on the areas of Northeastern Hungary inhabited by Rusyns/Ruthenians, which is a rather traditional macro-overview—admittedly the first of this kind—that stresses group characteristics and statistics of the mostly illiterate Greek Catholic and Slavic-speaking population. However, even this text emphasizes the indistinct, blurry nature of how people saw themselves as opposed to the neat delineation that nationalists would draw around their supposed people.

But this book is not just another attempt at pinpointing national indifference. The case studies, especially because of their narrow focus and occasional comparative angle, offer leverage on many other features of linguistic practices. Power—either local or national/imperial—and adjustment to it is one such feature. Martha Verginella demonstrates how Slovene was only used as a language of testaments in and around Trieste when and where Slovenes were in power. If this was not the case, Slovene speakers opted for Italian or occasionally German, even those whose support of Slovene cultural or political activism was public. In contrast, in dualist Hungary, cities in which elites (or groups within the elites) spoke languages other than Hungarian could keep bi- or trilingual administrative records—as well as non-Hungarian language minutes—as long as they pretended to adhere to the