

As we follow these movements and exchanges, for those of us who study Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country looks both familiar and novel, a bit uncanny. The familiar objects and relations are deepened and connected in numerous new ways. We learn about orientations and interpretations of the past, present and future that are often masked by rigid identity politics. We are also discombobulated, in a productive way, by the use of the “IC” acronym: in the majority of studies of postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina, “IC” stands for “International Community,” in charge of postwar reconstruction in the country. In David Henig’s book, however, “IC” stands for Islamic Community. This “slippage” makes the reading both “familiar” and “strange,” thus providing an opportunity for reflection and alternative lenses through which to approach actually existing lives in Bosnia. I am grateful to David Henig for this journey and opportunity to see that “which I know” differently, in a more complicated, richer way.

If there is anything I wish the author could explore further, it would be to reflect on his own positionality in “the field” and in his writing. I wonder, for example, if the author’s gender and age were critical to how he was folded into the spiritual and material lives of villagers. Was he praying with the men? What was that like? Was he sometimes asked about his own religious background? And if yes, what materialized from these encounters? Furthermore, in a context so overwhelmed with western foreign presence and academic explorers, I wonder how the author’s own unique religious, (post)socialist, and national subjectivities were perceived, commented on, and made sense of by the villagers. Did these differences and juxtapositions allow for moments of solidarity, inclusion, and exclusion, all at once? Understanding how the author, with his own assemblage of religious, secular, gender, generational, material, and other voluntary and/or imposed identifications, was “read” by the villagers could add yet another layer to this powerful and important book.

AZRA HROMADZIC
Syracuse University

The Anatomy of Post-Communist Regimes: A Conceptual Framework. By Bálint Magyar and Bálint Madlovics. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2020. xxv, 808 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$125.00 hard bound; \$49.99 paper.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2022.44

The authors offer an encyclopedic account, with powerful supplementary materials, of the internal logics of post-communist regimes, with comparisons to other ideal types of liberal democracies and communist dictatorships. They refine analysis further with comparisons to other patronal regimes. Their model-dependent realism moves extraordinary attention to conceptual refinement, refusing to allow past language to trap them into misrecognizing realities. For example, rather than treat informal ties as deviant, as they may be in liberal democracies, they treat them as constitutive of some postcommunist regimes.

For that reason it is most appropriate that arguably the leading scholar of informality, Alena Ledeneva, writes the volume’s introduction. She and the authors are all inclined to revise the language with which to articulate how postcommunisms function and change, but Magyar and Madlovics may be more beholden to western democratizing language than they acknowledge.

Central and east European studies has been working to figure what it means to decolonize. Although initially I was skeptical, as I was bothered by how so much

post-coloniality fails to recognize the conditions and consequences of contiguous empires, I have come to appreciate how analytical bifurcation and methodological nationalism, among other colonizing practices, are readily apparent in central and east European studies. How can we still, for example, speak of western liberal democracies in their own self-justifying terms without recognizing how empires and white supremacy are constitutive of their condition? Even invoking Max Weber so frequently, and centering ideal types as a methodology, conjures colonizing presumptions in this work.

I would not have been able to articulate such a challenge during those decades in which I was immersed in the region's study. When I wrote of Soviet-type societies after the end of communist rule in Europe, and of transition culture at the turn of the century, I was embedded in the very knowledge culture the authors critique. Returning to the field relatively fresh, I quite admire the progress of scholarship. It is almost as if post-communist studies became a normal science. Indeed, I would advise any scholar entering this field to begin by reading this book, and diving into any of the particular areas they illuminate so powerfully—stubborn structures, the state, actors, politics, economy, society, corruption, regimes, and others. At the same time, you can tell that, just as transition culture was, this is a textbook reflecting the hegemony of a certain kind of political science.

Legitimacy, not hegemony. Relational economics, but not relational historical sociology. Citizens, entrepreneurs, and NGOs rather than articulations of desires and fear in civil society. Patronalism, populism, and political families, but nary a word about patriarchy, gender, and feminism. That is why I think the volume deserves a symposium engaged by those well beyond a paradigmatic sense to see, for example, how kinship beyond the clan, and viewing Kosova as something beyond a case of ethnic conflict, matter.

In such an encyclopedic work as this, the bibliography illuminates. Janos Kornai is the model, but Claus Offe, Henry Hale, Karl Polanyi, Douglas North, Ivan Szelenyi, and Charles Tilly, among other men, figure prominently. Indeed, the next time I teach about (de)democratizations, this volume's diagrams of regime transformations for twelve postcommunist countries will supplement the diagrams Charles Tilly's *Democracy* (2007) offers. As the authors, I am grounded in liberal democracy's normative superiority to patronal and dictatorial regimes of any sort and intrigued by an anthropology of conspiracy theories and deep state powers. But then I just lived through Donald Trump's America, and I am still worried that Vladimir Putin and Viktor Orban might still inspire the Party of Trump.

Cultural sociologists, anthropologists and global historians might find room for productive critique—civilizational studies are not so prominent in those disciplines more agile in their cultural studies. But I think the authors ought move toward more cultural studies precisely because of their attention to language. It helps explain how cultural schema are powerful in shaping not only what we see and what we do not. It also shapes what we do as folks with various genders, sexualities, nationalities, and racializations, with various facilities in information technology and anxieties about climate crisis (the last two being how the authors conclude the volume).

If I headed a foundation I would assemble for six months those dedicated to figuring how power works in culture and society, within the postcommunist world and beyond it, to engage this volume and these scholars. And then we might not only appreciate how spheres of life are ideally differentiated, but also how our languages of power and oppression cut across them in ways beyond politics and economy, and the nations that we think are our imagined communities.

MICHAEL D. KENNEDY
Brown University