



## BOOK REVIEWS

Klasszikus és modern republikanizmusok: Eszmetörténeti tanulmányok [Classical and modern republicanisms: Studies in intellectual history]. By Ágoston Nagy and Milán Pap. Budapest: Ráció Kiadó, 2021. 275 pp.

It may sound like a bit of a cliché to begin a review with the contention that the work in question fills a lacuna in the relevant literature, but in the case of the collection of essays in *Klasszikus és modern republikanizmusok: Eszmetörténeti tanulmányok* [Classical and modern republicanisms: Studies in the intellectual history], one cannot really avoid this admittedly trite phrase. With a few refreshing exceptions, Hungarian scholarship has tended to treat the various aspects of republicanism rather narrowly, both in Hungary and on the international political stage. A single collection of studies cannot resolve this problem entirely, of course, but the volume edited by Ágoston Nagy and Milán Pap, which contains the papers presented at the conference “Res publica – pro patria – virtus: Conference on the History of Classical and Modern Republicanism and Patriotism,” which was held in Budapest in 2015, points out the by its very existence shortcomings of the literature on republicanism in Hungary. It strives to address these shortcomings with the means at its disposal and to the extent possible for a single volume, and it does a very impressive job and meets high academic standards.

The volume is divided into a preface (“From the grand narratives to the multifariousness of republicanism”) and three major groups of essays (“Hungarian republicanisms,” “Euro-Atlantic perspectives,” “Republicanism and political theory”). In the preface, the editors offer a summary of the international historiography of republicanism. They concentrate particularly on the conceptions of “classical republicanism” and “civic humanism” (*Bürgerhumanismus*) developed by Zera Fink and Hans Baron respectively and their later adaptations. They then turn to the contributions of Anglophone “intellectual history” to the reinterpretation of the republican tradition, discussing the significance of the work of figures such as John G. A. Pocock and Quentin Skinner. Finally, they note that in the image of republicanism as tradition and discursive mode that has emerged in the scholarship published in recent decades one finds differentiations in several dimensions, which have led to the disintegration of the early grand narratives. This process has been accompanied by a spatial expansion of the interpretative framework of

republicanism, including the discovery of the republicanism of Central and Eastern Europe, and by increased and deepening attention to the history of these republicanism. The volume itself is to a large extent the fruit of this. The foreword makes references to the developments in the research in Hungary so far, and it then concludes with a brief introduction to the essays included in the volume.

The relative proportions of the three major sections of the volume give a good impression of the thematic, temporal, and geographical points of emphasis in the collection. The first section, which consists of six studies, is the largest. It offers a look at some of the layers of the history of early modern and modern republicanism in Hungary and Transylvania. This is followed by a unit consisting of four essays on certain aspects of French and American republicanism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The volume concludes with two studies reflecting on republicanism primarily from the perspective of political theory.

In the first section, the chronological framework of which is the period from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth, we find discussions of how certain problems related to the republican tradition appeared (or sometimes did not appear) in Hungarian political thought, understood broadly. An essay by Gábor Petneházi (“Philosophers at the Wheel: The Prospects of Republicanism in Transylvania in the Báthory Era”) examines the degree and depth to which the idea of republicanism was present at the end of the sixteenth century, whether with positive or negative connotations, in the political discourses in Transylvania, which had existed as a separate political entity since the late Middle Ages. Petneházi concludes that there can be little talk of any serious enthusiasm for republicanism in Transylvania at the time or for that matter of any deep reflection on its theoretical foundations. References to republicanism remained predominantly at the surface level of political rhetoric, and they functioned primarily as a stigmatizing slogan for the opposing party. Even when positive statements were made, they were always carefully hidden or “coded” in the discourse.

Zsófia Köllő offers an essay which adopts a strictly text-centered approach. Her discussion, “Republicanism and Patriotism in the Nádasdy Mausoleum,” focuses on a highly influential work, the so-called Nádasdy Mausoleum (a series of engravings of prominent Hungarian leaders followed by elogia in Latin and German translation), first published in 1664. Köllő demonstrates the prevalence of republican-patriotic conceptual frameworks and values in seventeenth-century Hungarian political discourse on the basis of the use of the terms and

concepts of *patria*, *rex-regnum*, and *res publica* in the Nádasdy Mausoleum, showing their complex semantic interrelations. The contribution by Ágoston Nagy (“The Experience of the Festival Culture of the ‘Thermidorian Republic’ in the Diary of Sándor Kisfaludy”) focuses on elements of the republican ethos as expressed in the French festival culture of the late eighteenth century and in children’s martial games and public contests in the period. Nagy offers an exemplary mix of methods from intellectual and cultural history more broadly in his discussion of how the “cultural adaptation” and “productive reception” (p.109) of these elements are found in the diary of Sándor Kisfaludy, a renowned writer of the first half of the nineteenth century who was taken prisoner of war in France as a young military officer in 1796. Nagy analyzes and contextualizes the narratives Kisfaludy wrote on his experiences upon his return home, which he later reinterpreted and applied to the political framework in Hungary. On the basis of this discussion, details emerge concerning the cultural transfer processes of republican values of the time, which have hardly been discussed so far in the secondary literature.

Three studies in the volume deal with the manifestations of republicanism in Hungary in the nineteenth century. The essay by György Miru (“Republican Freedom and Democratic Self-Government: The Example of Kossuth”) focuses on the political thought of Lajos Kossuth, one of the most prominent and influential politicians of the first decisive period of Hungarian nation-building, the so-called Reform Era, and the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence. Miru persuasively argues that Kossuth ultimately expressed and espoused views which were progressively democratic by the standards of his time by bringing to the foreground and venturing distinctive (re)interpretations of motifs linked usually to the republican tradition, such as the concept of freedom as a matter of political participation, the crucial, anti-tyrannical role of local self-government (in the case of Hungary, primarily the counties), the strengths of the republic as a political system, and the importance of community morality. In “Republican Norm and Verse Novel,” which offers a discussion of *Rombányi*, a long narrative written in verse by nineteenth-century literary historian and author Pál Gyulai, József Takáts argues that Gyulai’s poem presents the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence as “a unique moment of the republican ideal” (p.142), in the course of which two core values of the republican ethos, soldierly virtues and the “passion for equality,” were increasingly asserted.

The first larger unit of the volume on the history of republicanism in Hungary concludes with Attila M. Demeter’s study. Demeter focuses on József Eötvös,

one of the most important politicians and political thinkers of the nineteenth century in Hungary, and particularly on his most important work of political theory, "The Influence of the Ruling Ideas of the Nineteenth Century on the State." As Demeter persuasively shows, Eötvös recognized the importance of ethnolinguistic nationalism(s), which he saw as particularly dangerous for the future of the political unity of multi-ethnic Hungary. Drawing on Tocqueville, Eötvös proposes a certain degree of "administrative decentralization" as a solution that would not compromise the prerogatives of the strong central government in issues that were essential to the integrity of the state. The strengthening of local self-government, Eötvös contended, would offer citizens a genuine experience of political freedom. It would also foster a stronger sense of patriotism by increasing the number of circles in which "the individual can move freely" and to which he thus can become emotionally attached (p.157). According to Eötvös, the adoption in political practice of these basic elements of the classical republican ethos would help hinder (stronger) nations in their attempts to usurp state sovereignty and crush other national communities.

In an essay titled "Hereditary Monarchy and Patriotic Civic Virtue: The Figure of the Minister of State in the Seventeenth Century" in the second section of the collection (the section on "Euro-Atlantic perspectives"), Gábor Fölköli offers an array of engaging examples of how, in the era of French absolutism, the minister of state was often portrayed as a guardian of old republican, classical civic values which had been corrupted in the intricate milieu of court life and the custodian of an alternative role in the political elite to that of the courtier. The two other contributions in the second part take the reader back to the early period of US history with discussions of the debates over the maintenance of patriotic civic virtue. In "The Differentiation of the Concept of Republican Virtue in a New World Context: The Case of the Anti-Federalists and the American Constitution of 1787," Zoltán Vajda analyses the debates on the Constitution of 1787. He begins with an examination of the anti-federalist arguments, pausing to note that the concept of virtue at the time was hardly a matter of clear consensus. It consisted of several layers, reflecting and also shaped by the social and regional heterogeneity of the United States. Vajda also calls attention to the doubts expressed by the anti-federalist authors about the "natural aristocracy." The anti-federalist authors considered it necessary to maintain the virtue of this "aristocracy" with certain institutional guarantees (frequent elections, the recall of representatives). Csaba Lévai, in his essay "How to Ensure the Survival of a Virtuous Republic? The Intertwining of Classical

Republicanism, the Scottish Enlightenment, and Physiocracy in the Economic and Foreign Policy thought of Thomas Jefferson,” also focuses on debates at the time concerning the question of how to prevent the erosion of republican virtues in a state as large as the United States. By separating the different strata of Thomas Jefferson’s views on this subject, Vajda shows the fundamental heterogeneity of this system of views, reconstructing the main influences (classical republicanism, stadial history, physiocracy) and their interrelationships.

In the first essay in the section of the volume on political theory (“The Republic of Actors: On Hannah Arendt’s Republicanism), László Levente Balogh outlines the role of the concepts of power, (political) action, violence, and the masses in Hannah Arendt’s thought and their complex interrelationships. Balogh also touches on their theoretical relationship to the structures of totalitarianism, democracy, and the republic as postulated by Arendt. In the final essay in the collection (“Post-Communist Republicanism? A Program for the Rectification of Liberalism in Post-Communist Hungary), Milán Pap presents the republican argument and alternative political-community model that emerged in opposition to liberalism, which gradually gained ground after the regime change and came to dominate Hungary in the 1990s.

As I suggested at the beginning of this review, this collection of essays really does fill a lacuna in the secondary literature. I would hazard only one critical remark. One could argue that the essays are too thematically divergent. However, this is largely offset by the fact that the authors discuss issues and problems related to the history of republicanism with a level of detail and depth that can serve as a reference point for further scholarship on republicanism in Hungary.

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Die Protokolle des Cisleithanischen Ministerrates 1867–1918. Vol. 1, 1867. February 19, 1867–December 15, 1867. Edited by Stefan Malfèr. With an introduction by Thomas Kletečka, Stefan Malfèr, and Anatol Schmied-Kowarzik. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2018; Die Protokolle des Cisleithanischen Ministerrates 1867–1918. Vol. II, 1868–1871. January 1–November 21, 1871. Edited by Thomas Kletečka and Reichard Lein. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2022; Die Protokolle des Cisleithanischen Ministerrates 1867–1918. Vol. III, 1871–1879. Part 1, November 25, 1871–April 23, 1872. Edited by Klaus Koch. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2022.

A few years ago, a project involving the publication of the minutes of the Austrian Council of Ministers between 1848 and 1867 wound to a close. This was a major undertaking which spanned several decades and gave considerable impetus to research on the history of the Habsburg Monarchy in the two decades after 1848, both inside and outside the borders of Austria. Stefan Malfèr, who has been organizing the series for the last few years, and Thomas Kletečka and Anatol Schmied-Kowarzik, the editors of the concluding volumes, have now embarked with several new colleagues on a new venture which will give them a good opportunity to draw on their experience in publishing and their knowledge of sources. They have undertaken the publication of the Austrian or, more precisely, the Cisleithanian Council of Ministers' minutes from 1867 to 1918, which will come, according to the original plans, to eleven volumes.

The leaders of the project have adopted the structure of the previous series. The precise texts of the minutes are supplemented by concise, informative notes concerning antecedents to any given issue and the ways in which the issue later played out. Each volume opens with a useful introduction touching on the main items on the Council of Ministers' agenda and providing background information concerning the various issues. This is followed by a bibliography, an index of abbreviations, an explanatory list of archaic terms and expressions, and a list of the people who took part in the deliberations of the Council of Ministers as permanent members or invited deputies or experts. The appendix contains a list of agendas for the meetings of the Council of Ministers and a combined index of subjects and persons.

This series poses an unusual challenge to the editors, despite the knowledge they have garnered over the decades and their experience in the world of source publications. The minutes are both incomplete and damaged as a consequence of the July Revolt of 1927, in the course of which the Vienna Palace of Justice was set aflame. There are other sources on the deliberations of the Council of Ministers, but for the most part they contain only the agenda items and the decisions made by the monarch. It is therefore important that these sources be properly annotated, supplemented with the necessary indexes, and published as soon as possible. Digital versions are being published as well, which will make it possible to attach additional documents and do searches for specific items of content, while the printed versions of the texts will make them more easily accessible and will ensure their long-term survival.

Three volumes in the series have been published so far. The 1867 minutes were completely destroyed, so all texts in the first volume have been published on the basis of copies made before 1927 by Josef Redlich. The second volume contains, for the most part, only the agenda items and the imperial decisions, as only 73 of the 618 minutes have survived, but fortunately, the minutes of meetings held under the chairmanship of Franz Joseph I at which important political questions were addressed could be partially replaced with other sources. With a few exceptions, the minutes from the period between April and August 1869 have survived, as have the minutes of meetings held in the autumn months of 1871. The latter are particularly important from the perspective of the government deliberations led by the conservative Count Karl Sigmund Hohenwart. The third volume, in contrast, for the most part contains minutes that have survived in their entirety, even if in a badly damaged state and thus with some missing passages. In only one case is the proceedings of a sitting missing entirely.

The first volume provides important information first and foremost on the background events in Austria of the Compromise of 1867. The record also shed light on how the politicians of the Austro-German liberal Constitutional Party were able to use their otherwise limited room for maneuver to push through some of their political demands for the further development of a constitutional state, which in the preceding years had been effectively hindered by the stubborn resistance of the ruler and his narrow circle of advisers.

The second volume shows how, within the legal framework created by the so-called December Constitution of 1867, the liberal state institutions of the new dual state were created by the so-called “Bürgerministerium”, the only

government in the history of the Monarchy that could call itself the government of the parliamentary majority. We also see how the opposing political parties tried to make the framework of the constitution more precise and also to expand it. The Austro-German liberal “constitutionalist” group pushed for more centralization, while the federalist camp, which in the center of the empire was largely conservative-aristocratic but had a much more diverse political profile in the provinces, sought to broaden provincial autonomy. The December Constitution contained both centralist and federalist elements, which gave both camps hope for further development. One can see very clearly how this led to fluctuations in the positions adopted by the imperial government. The minutes also make it possible to trace the history of the efforts to achieve a Bohemian compromise in the summer and autumn of 1871, which were initiated by and had the support of Emperor Franz Joseph, but which ultimately foundered. The arguments made by Austrian politicians, financiers, the Imperial Chancellor Count Beust, and Hungarian politicians both for and against the Bohemian Compromise are discussed in detail.

The third volume marks a return to a policy of centralization after the failure of this last great experiment in constitutional law. This move to achieve stabilization proved successful in the short term, but the fundamental political fault lines remained unchanged beneath the surface of daily political practice.

In addition to the discussions of the major political breaking points of the time, the royal statements found in the minutes are also very important, since they are virtually the only contemporary sources from which we can learn about Emperor Franz Joseph’s personal political positions. We see, for example, how he interpreted his role as a constitutional monarch and how he continued to play a decisive role in crucial political issues. He treated the legislature and the executive as centers of power that were independent of each other and had different responsibilities and prerogatives. He also consistently rejected the notion that the government was a political body subordinate to the will of parliament. On the contrary, he saw the relationship between the two as quite the reverse. For instance, when, in early 1872, at the start of the new session of the Cisleithanian parliament, the Reichsrat, the pro-government majority in the lower house of parliament included questions in its submissions that were not part of the announced government program, Franz Joseph declared that the Reichsrat majority, if it wanted to dictate the direction the government would take, misunderstood entirely what it meant to be a “government party.” The emperor also expected his ministers to ensure that, on an important political issue (such



as the Galician compromise), members of the government could guarantee in advance the adoption of a government bill in both houses of the Reichsrat. During the period of the “Bürgerministerium”, however, he saw himself as being held in the crosshairs by parliament and a government that consisted for the most part of politicians who relied on the parliamentary majority, whereas in his assessment, the government, as the executive power, should have regarded him as its primary point of orientation. He was thus compelled to sanction bills with which he did not agree, first and foremost legislation concerning the relationship between the Catholic Church and the state. As he stated in January 1872, he was determined to prevent a repetition of this, and beginning in April 1870, he consistently appointed a government of bureaucrats and experts who were far removed from parliamentary party politics. Francis Joseph’s conception of the constitutional role of the monarch would in the long term be a determining factor in domestic political processes in Cisleithania.

Franz Joseph also considered the rigid centralism of the Austro-German liberal camp an obstacle. As the minutes clearly show, in the case of Hungary, the Compromise of 1867 consolidated political relations for a time, if perhaps with minor changes, but in the other half of the empire, it took years to achieve comparable consolidation. Before the summer of 1867, the political forces in Austria had had no opportunity to exert any real influence on the transformation of public law in the empire, so the discussion of political conflicts, now within the framework of the constitutional compromise reached by the emperor and the Hungarian political elite, took part in parallel with the enactment of the December Constitution. It was a personal matter for Franz Joseph to force the Austro-German liberal camp to compromise, even at the cost of “reconciliation” (*Versöhnung*) with the Polish nationalist movement in Galicia and the Czech nationalist movement in Bohemia, which meant extending provincial autonomy. But he was not willing to repeat the way he had forced the agreement he had reached with the Hungarian political elite on Austrian politicians. Presumably, he saw the limits that had been placed on his power as too high a price to pay. The Czech politicians clearly would have expected this of him, as they overestimated their political weight, unlike the Polish leaders in Galicia, who, by limiting their demands, eventually won significant concessions on state rights and language use and thus contributed significantly to political consolidation that lasted for nearly a decade.

The new series thus makes available indispensable sources on the political conditions of the early years of the Dualist Era and, indeed, the entire history

of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Hopefully, it will give a similar boost to research on the history of the Habsburg Monarchy in the last half century of its existence as the publication of documents from 1849 to 1867 did for research on the post-1848 decades a few years ago.

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Nationalism and Populism: Expressions of Fear or Political Strategies.  
Edited by Carsten Schapkow and Frank Jacob. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022. 301 pp.

Although I was overwhelmed by obligations, I was pleased in the end to have accepted the offer to write a review of *Nationalism and Populism*, which I found to be an extraordinary volume. Not so much because of the topic itself, which is very current and highly important, but also because of the ways in which the authors have addressed it. The editors have not only chosen the appropriate dramaturgy of thematizations to structure the contributions by the invited authors into meaningful thematic clusters but have also ensured an intergenerational and geographical multi-perspective approach to the discussion of nationalism and populism.

Laudably, the editors included one of the currently best-known authors of discussions on populism, Jan-Werner Müller, whose chapter (“The Politics of Fear Revisited”) is a compelling deliberation on the current situation, offering several important highlights. The editors’ bold sequencing of the sections and the arrangement of the chapters within them is also worth mentioning. For example, they have placed the thematic focus on the situation in Russia and the Republic of South Africa in the first section. Thus, at the point where Western-oriented readers expect a discussion of Trumpism, the Front National, or the AfD, we encounter a description and analysis of “sovereign democracy,” electoral authoritarianism, and the conservatism of “disparate post-Soviet elites” (p.65) in Russia and the “politicization of immigration by the ruling ANC” in South Africa. If you are not an expert on Russia and are not familiar with the specifics of post-Soviet social development, you may find it difficult to understand the consequences of the lack of a “public language that was emotionally neutral and moderately abstract capable of attaining generalizable qualities” (p.56). Those of us who point to the importance of catachresis in terms of “sociosemantic misuse of conventional concepts as well as a practice in which political identifications blur the distinctions defining established political activity” (p.57) are well aware of this problem.

It is important to highlight the language of consumerism, which has replaced political language in the division of various institutions into “good” and “bad.” Like most former communist and socialist countries, Russia is confronted with “culturalized disagreements” which have developed into a kind of “culture war between ‘cosmopolitan liberals’ on the one hand and uniform, authentic, and

homogeneous people whose identity is sharply juxtaposed to that of outsiders on the other.” Linked to this is the labeling of opposition of all kinds as Western and liberal. The result, according to Kashirskikh and Tsetsura, is an authoritarian election campaign “that reduces the electoral process solely to a plebiscite-voting without discussion” (p.65).

This account is followed by the best-structured chapter, which could also be considered a textbook example of how to write a short scientific text; it has a clear structure and offers balanced and sufficient context. My only point of contention with the author is his assertion that Bernie Sanders’ political campaigns have a “populist appeal,” so it is safe to claim that “populism can exist on both the left and right wings of the political spectrum” (p.78). This is certainly true, but I would not choose Sanders as the primary example of this. On the other hand, let me reiterate that the chapter “Populism in the ANC and the 2019 Xenophobic Violence in South Africa” (pp.71–95) is anything but a “modest contribution” to this volume, as it offers important insights into the South African political landscape, including an introduction to the incubation stage of xenophobic tensions. And unsurprisingly, we find that here too the responsibility lies with the traditional parties and their leaders, who tapped into “populist rhetoric” (p.82).

I am glad that Maximilian Kreter decided to start his chapter on White Power Music in Germany (pp.99–134) with a list of festivals with concerts and accompanying (e.g., militant) events, followed by a useful definition of right-wing extremism (p.103). This is the best way to start the text, even though he has borrowed it (Decker et. Al. ed., *Die Mitte in der Krise*, 2010). I also appreciate the two tables provided: Functions of White Power Music (p. 106) and Development of White Power Music in Germany from 1977 until 2017 (p.123). The second in particular one helps us understand what has been taking place on the White Power Music scene over the last forty years: the rapid increase in the number of active bands.

The seventh chapter, by Vladimír Naxera, “The Germans as a Threat to ‘Us’? The Use of History and Othering of Germans in the Speeches of the Czech President Miloš Zeman” (pp.135–156), begins with a very useful warning against labeling something as populist without “providing empirical evidence and argumentation.” Naxera also cautions against ignoring the previous comparative research and above all against the insufficient effort to link the study of populism with the study of other subjects and similar processes in other parts of Europe. Admittedly, authors from Europe’s periphery tend to reflect, quote, and consult

the established Western authorities (from Müller to Marcus Morgan) while overlooking colleagues from their neighborhood. On the other hand, I have to praise Naxera's interest in how "historical references play a role in the process of populist othering" (p.136), the division between populism and nativism, and the excessive use of empty signifiers like "the pure people" and "the corrupt elite."

The next chapter, "Dog-Whistle Politics as a Strategy of American Nationalists and Populists: George Soros, The Rothschilds, and Other Conspiracy Theories," (pp.157–187) by Armin Langer, touches on similar questions. Here, the empty signifiers take on an antisemitic tone. Langer begins with the image of the "laughing Jew" from the fourteenth century, then moves on to the notion of the Jew as a Christ killer and the "Judeo-Bolshevik Jews" and their alleged "Jewish-communist takeover of the Western World" (pp.171–73). The only thing that changes is the manner of disqualifying the selected Jewish "traffickers in evil" and their "whores," both signifiers usually attributed to George Soros and his plan for "mass migration to Europe" (p.179). Soros was also a favorite of the Charlottesville branch of the white supremacist movement in Virginia in 2017. I particularly like the section in which Langer shows that dog-whistle politics can actually motivate maniacs to kill people (p.179) and discusses accusations brought against people like Trump supporter Cesar Sayoc, for instance, according to which Sayoc sent pipe bombs to the homes of George Soros, Barack Obama, and Bill and Hillary Clinton (accusations to which Sayoc pleaded guilty). Langer also points out the role of mass and social media in spreading antisemitic canards and radicalizing far-right adherents and terrorists (p.182).

From here, I would encourage the reader to proceed directly to "Henry Luce's Nationalist-Populist Crusade." I only propose this sequence because it is much easier to understand "Dog-Whistle Politics" if one reads Henry Luce's story immediately afterward. By personalizing the entire process in his chapter, "For the Sake of His Country: Henry Luce's Nationalist-Populist Crusade to Forge 'The American Century,'" Murat İplikçi has managed to present us with the rise of Americanism as a result of liberal democratic internationalism. What started as Wilsonianism grew with the help of people like Henry Luce into a systematic promotion of "American virtues to the world." After this idealistic approach was "crushed by cunning [...] isolationists in Congress" and following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the U.S. was forced to withdraw from its isolationism and began to embrace the idea of promoting its foreign policy in an "American way" (p.211).

As the cofounder of *Time* magazine and the founder of *Fortune*, Henry Luce was in more of a position than any other “internationalist” to promote Americanism on a daily basis and within popular culture. The final push in that direction was the launch of the weekly image-based *Life* magazine, which aimed to “bring the world to its readers” (p.213). İplikçi also provides interesting details from Luce’s life, including his project “Keep Yale together,” based on which “one-third of the students at Yale had left to be drafted for WWI” (p.215). Luce was in a position not only to “sell American business culture and capitalism” to entrepreneurs around the world and train them with American standards but also repeatedly to put the smiling faces of Al Capone, Stalin, Mussolini, and even Adolf Hitler on the front page of *Time*.

Compared to the chapter on Henry Luce’s aggressive Americanization of the world, “Nationalism and Populism in Norwegian Historiography” by Steinar Aas feels like a pastoral. It is an extremely interesting one at that, especially for readers like me, who know little about methodological nationalism used among Norwegian historians. Starting with an intriguing introduction to the “poetics of Norwegian historiography,” where “the nation was a foundation for the greater national narratives” (p.192), Aas moves on to discuss the distinctive “‘social democratic order’ cementing the social, political, and cultural structure of Norway” (p.193). He presents the narrative of the nineteenth-century struggle for independence, as well as the social and political development after industrialization, up to the discussion on “What do people consider as Norwegian?.” It’s fascinating to see how Aas balances the interpretation of the revitalization of Sami identity, coupled with the discovery of local and women’s history, and the rising narrative of “democracy, people and populism, and populism and history writing.” It’s also interesting to see how historians help create the national master narrative about the Norwegian “pure people” and the Swedish “corrupt elite,” which would later be adopted in the postmodern populist approach to the narrative of “the people as a cornerstone of the nation-state” (p.209).

Readers from Central European University will be particularly interested in and challenged by Jonah Robertson’s “Catholicism, Polish Victimhood, and Nationalist Histories in Partitioned and Contemporary Poland,” although it is clear from the outset that the chapter is not only about Catholic nationalists tying Catholicism to the very origins of the nation. It starts with a brief introduction to the partitions of the country. After two major uprisings (1830 and 1836), a de-Polonization campaign (with the closing of the University of Warsaw) culminated

in a harsh Russian “attack on Polish culture,” where many towns and places were Russified and Russia ceased to use the name “The Kingdom of Poland” (pp.239–240). In addition to providing chronological and factual details, Robertson writes about the Poles’ introverted nationalism, which serves as the foundation for a “somewhat idealized version of Polish history.” Here, introverted nationalism—the definition is borrowed from Mayer Resnede’s *Catholicism and Nationalism*—is also defined by framing the nation as superior to others and by seeing others as enemies (p.246). Finally, Robertson also successfully shows that “[t]he very ideas that allowed for the creation and preservation of a Polish national identity during the partitioned years continue to serve as key elements of contemporary Polish national identity.” And even more importantly, he demonstrates how the ideas that were once used as methods of resistance and to prevent erasure are now employed to “erase diverse identities in favor of a homogenous national image” (p.251).

The analysis in Bjørn P. Müller-Bohn’s “Populist Politics and the Rise of the AfD in Germany” of the AfD’s descriptions of itself is particularly insightful: “We are neither left nor right [...] We only need healthy common sense [...] to regain national sovereignty” (pp.255–256). Müller-Bohn reconstructs the party’s priorities and main accusations. He touches on the notion of “broken promises,” a mix of aggressive anti-intellectualism, victimhood, and a claim for Lebensraum. In attempting to explain the rise of the AfD, Müller-Bohn turns to “neoliberalism turning market economy into market society” and the consequences of business-friendly labor market reform (Hartz IV) in 2003–2006. The prognosis is ominous. “By depicting themselves as victims of persecution [by the Altparteien], the New Right has adopted a defensive posture. By introducing a conservative-revolutionary habitus through platforms like Junge Freiheit and Sezession, the New Right has intellectualized right-wing extremism.” And crucially, “By introducing their vocabulary in public, which then translates into a significant presence on the streets, given the right circumstances, the New Right has gained cultural ground” (p.261). Müller-Bohn is hardly mistaken in predicting that the AfD is well-positioned to capture even more votes than in the 2021 election. The recent regional election (Landtagswahlen, 2023) in Hessen, where the AfD (almost reaching the 20 percent mark) emerged as the second-strongest party, unfortunately, proves him right.

A similar trend is apparent in India, where Prime Minister Modi is systematically dismantling and destroying the emancipatory legacy of Jawaharlal Nehru. This legacy, articulated in Nehru’s book *The Discovery of India*, is the starting

point for Britt Leake's last chapter in this volume, "The Positive Role of Islam in Indian History and Nehru's *The Discovery of India*." After reading this chapter, many (myself included) will be compelled at least to skim Nehru's book. It is crucial to any subtle understanding of today's India, which Nehru characterized as marked by a syncretic culture of tolerance and openness, embracing diverse influences—peoples, cultures, languages, and faiths—that seem vastly different on the surface" (p.276). Nehru underscored the critical role Muslims have played in an inclusive Indian nationalism, a particularly poignant message at a time "when populist Hindu nationalist forces seek to undo Indian secularism and reduce Indian Muslims to second-class citizens in their own country" (p.277).

Like any edited volume, *Nationalism and Populism* is an eclectic collection of texts. However, in this instance, it is a fortuitous mix of contributions and a well-conceived combination of works by authors of different generations using interdisciplinary approaches. Readers will learn a great deal, especially about Norway, India, Russia, and South Africa, areas about which many readers in Europe and the U.S. know very little. One only wishes that the editors had invited experts on Latin America or other parts of Asia and Africa, or on Southeastern Europe, with their variants of populist and nationalist narratives and rhetoric. Figures like Janez Janša, Viktor Orbán, and Aleksandar Vučić could serve as excellent case studies of small-scale, high-impact populism, particularly the latter, in the wake of contemporary Russian imperialism.

One should also mention Giorgia Meloni, who, according to David Broder, has "already [made it] clear [...] that post-fascism is not just a matter of 'returning to the past'" (p.176), but about writing a new (regional) history. Perhaps this volume will inspire someone to follow Schapkow's and Jacob's project and fill this gap.

In the meantime, I plan to use some of the chapters in my classes. I will also add it to my literature package. The contributing authors have provided basic knowledge about the current situations in various countries, and many of their findings are applicable to geographical contexts that are not explicitly covered in the volume.

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Experimental Cinemas in State Socialist Eastern Europe. Edited by Ksenya Gurshtein and Sonja Simonyi. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022. 334 pp.

Two things stood out for me in the process of working on this review. First, I was pleased to note that the secondary literature on Eastern European experimental cinema was not limited to what I was finding in the book. Interest in the topic can be traced back to a large exhibition and film series at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. which was held in 2013–2014 and was curated by the two editors, Ksenya Gurshtein and Sonja Simonyi, who at the time were junior entrants to the field of film studies. There had been a seminar, and some of the scholarship it generated had appeared in a special issue of *Studies in Eastern European Cinema* in 2016.<sup>1</sup> Also, the list of researchers actively working on experimental cinema today includes an array of names beyond the authors who belong to this circle. It includes Pavle Levi (*Cinema by Other Means*, Oxford UP, 2012), Alice Lovejoy (*Army Film and the Avant Garde: Cinema and Experiment in the Czechoslovak Military*, Indiana UP, 2014), Lukas Brasiskis, Eva Năripea, Mina Radovic, and others. In short, three decades after the scholarship on Eastern European film started taking shape, there is a new generation of scholars whose research tackles new ground, offering comprehensiveness and depth.

Second, alongside my reading, I was able to watch several of the films discussed in the book. Again, times have changed dramatically in this respect. When I started researching Eastern European film back in the 1990s, we were limited to what we could acquire through personal networks on VHS. Today, most of the films that the authors write about are available on DVD, can be found in online vaults, or are accessible on YouTube. It is possible not only to read about them but also to see them. And I was delighted to do so, filling gaps in my knowledge of Józef Robakowski, Vukica Đilas, and *kinema-ikon*. Previously, we only had access to scholarship on Czech artist and filmmaker Jan

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1 This issue includes also the lands of the former Soviet Union and opens with Gurshtein and Simonyi's introduction, "Experimenta cinema in State Socialist Eastern Europe." A further five articles include: Mark Allen Svede's "Selfie, sex tape, "snuff" film: Andris Grinberg's *Passporters*," (on Soviet Latvia), Cristian Nae's "Reality Unbound: The Politics of Fragmentation in the Experimental Productions of *kinema-ikon*," (on the Timisoara group), Maria Vinogradova's "Scientists, Punks, Engineers and Gurus: Soviet Experimental Film Culture in the 1960s-1990s," (on Soviet Russia), Aida Vidan's "Irresistible Irreverence: Dusan Makavejev's Amateur Films and the Yugoslav Cine-club Scene," and Sonia Simonyi "Second Looks: Archival Aesthetics and Historical Representation in American Postcard (1975)," p. 68–82 (on Hungary's Gábor Bódy). All in *Studies in Eastern European Cinema*, Vol. 7, Issue 1–3, November 2016.

Svankmajer and Polish filmmaker, director, screenwriter, and multimedia artist Zbig Rybczyński. They were also the only figures in this field of the arts on whom any scholarship had been published in English.<sup>2</sup>

Turning to the book, I would say two things about the context. One thing to keep in mind is that, when it comes to experimental film, the region of state socialist Eastern Europe offers an uneven and disparate picture which varies from country to country. What we find in Czechoslovakia, with filmmakers whose work can easily be qualified as experimental (I am thinking of figures such as Jan Němec, Juraj Jakubisko, Ester Krumbachová, etc.), is profoundly different from what one finds in Albania, for example. The other thing is that, unlike the officially sanctioned cinematic output which was a subject of intense exchanges between the countries under state socialist regimes, experimental film had only a low-key presence, and for the most part there were no meaningful creative exchanges among the cineastes working in the different countries. This lack of interaction among them means there were very few cases of mutual influence. It is thus no surprise that most of the influences that have been identified in secondary literature are from well-known figures of Western film and not from colleagues nearby.

If we keep these specifics in mind, the volume's effort to cover as many of the countries in the region as possible is particularly impressive. It does this mainly through case studies. I admire this approach, as it is both politically correct and equitable. Clearly, the context of filmmaking in some countries has been more conducive to experimental cinema, and Poland,<sup>3</sup> Hungary, and Yugoslavia undoubtedly have the most to show for it. Czechoslovakia was so advanced that much of what would qualify as experimental was, in fact, part of the mainstream, at least before 1968.

Against this backdrop, it was nice to see a chapter related to Bulgaria, one of the less active or less well-known countries in terms of film experimentation. The text resurrects the legacy of Russe-based filmmaker Vladimir Iliev, who passed away while the book was in preparation for publication. The notes written by scholar Katherina Lambrinova offer a nice complement to his memoir. In this instance, however, the desire to be comprehensive may have prompted the

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2 I ought to mention Peter Hames' pioneering collection, *Dark Alchemy: The Films of Jan Svankmajer* (Praeger, 1995), which was a leading light at the time.

3 I cannot help thinking of some scenes in Krzysztof Kieślowski's feature *Camera Buff* (1979) which includes semi-documentary moments, revealing that even the national television in Poland at the time had departments charged with encouraging amateur and experimental filmmaking. A situation that is light years away from other places in the Eastern bloc.

editors to be a bit loose with their criteria or perhaps to confuse their concepts. While the work of Iliev and his collaborators is of an amateur nature, it would be too much of a stretch to qualify it as “experimental.”

Structurally, the collection is divided into four parts. It follows an unconventional approach, with a focus which ranges from individual directors to more general topics. The first part contains essays dedicated to high profile figures of the experimental scene, such as Hungarian Gábor Bódy (by Gábor Gelencsér), Croat/Yugoslav Tomislav Gotovac (by Greg de Cuir Jr.), and the Polish Workshop of the Film Form, represented by Pawel Kwiek and Józef Robakowski (by Łukasz Mojsak). These three case studies may well have seemed more substantial to the editors than the essays that explore context, and this consideration may lie behind the decision to place them first. I do not think this worked well, however, as this creates from the outset the feeling of a piecemeal approach where interesting works are discussed but not adequately contextualized.

I understand the difficulties behind this decision, however, and I sympathize. Due to the lack of interaction among the filmmakers, most of the secondary literature is limited to the case study format. It takes courage to make connections and venture generalizations, and I can see how scholars in the earlier stages of their careers are hesitant to do this, as they may fall victim to rebuke from some critical peer reviewer.

This is perhaps why the three subsequent parts continue, safely, in the same vein. The texts in the second section examine the production and distribution conditions. The essays deal with Bulgaria, Poland, and Yugoslavia, and they each explore a different corner of the experimental cinema map. Masha Shpolberg’s contribution centers on the activities of the Łódź film school and specifically on the work of Wojciech Wiszniewski (1946–1981) and his Educational Film Studio. Petra Belc’s essay casts the spotlight on the forgotten female filmmakers Vukica Đilas<sup>4</sup> and Tatjana Ivančić. All three essays in this section highlight, in part, the conditions of production and circulation of such material, and yet they are also case studies of sorts, not hugely different in structure and approach from what we saw in the first section.

Part three aims to integrate the contexts, theories, and reception. I particularly liked Aleksandar Bošković’s text on an early experimental strip produced by

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4 In my opinion, it would have been better to use the Westernised and phonetically true spelling of ‘Djilas’. This is how her name is referenced at the IMDB. The Serbian language is now mainly using Cyrillic alphabet, and the rules of transliteration would have this appear as Djilas.

director Slobodan Šijan, who, even if operating more into the mainstream, was and remains a key inspiration and driving force behind experimental film in the lands of former Yugoslavia. The essay on the Timisoara-based group *kinema icon* by Ileana L. Selejan introduces this little-known but still active group, which is now gaining traction. There is also an essay on East German experimental film by Sean Howes, though at this point I question the wisdom of continuing to include East Germany, as so much of it has been appropriated by Germanists and so much has been written about it anyhow. The volume would have gained more from an essay on the status of experimental filmmaking in the Ukraine than from yet another piece on East Germany.

The last section, “Intersection of the Arts,” brings together several disparate but highly satisfactory essays that finally broaden the horizon. Though they too take the form of the case study, they look at matters transnationally. There are texts on the Wrocław Art Scene (Marika Kuzmic), the Béla Balázs studio (Ksenya Gurshtein), and Czech experimentalist Čaroděj (Tomáš Glanc). Of these, I found the text by Sonja Simonyi on the 1979 exhibition of state socialist experimental film in Amsterdam the most interesting. A project pulled up by Franck Gribbling, an Indonesian-born American experimental filmmaker based in Amsterdam,<sup>5</sup> is linked to similar efforts by some of the big European film festivals and often involving struggles that were just short of heroic to consolidate and present work from behind the Iron Curtain in a shared and convivial setting.

In conclusion, this is a highly relevant book that broadens and deepens the secondary literature on East European film. It also shifts the generational landscape by introducing a new generation of scholars. I am truly pleased to see it all grow and evolve into a new community, one that is not only more populous but also has a significantly wider geographical spread. Given the fact that many of the experimental films discussed can now be found on the internet, educators could consider including this material in their syllabi and could plan screenings accompanied by one of the essays in the book. This would be a fitting strategy for those teaching in area studies programs, as well as cultural history, film, or languages.

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5 His work is catalogued at the Amsterdam’s Eye Filmmuseum today.