

Közép-Európa a hosszú 13. században: Magyarország, Csehország és Ausztria hatalmi és dinasztikus kapcsolatai 1196 és 1310 között [Central Europe in the long thirteenth century: Power and dynastic relations among Hungary, Bohemia, and Austria between 1196 and 1310]. By Veronika Rudolf. Budapest: HUN-REN Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2023. 904 pp.

The book under review is a revised version of Veronika Rudolf's doctoral dissertation "A Magyar Királyság cseh és osztrák kapcsolatai 1196 és 1310 között" [The Bohemian and Austrian relations of the Kingdom of Hungary between 1196 and 1310], which she submitted to Eötvös Loránd University in 2023 and successfully defended. Rudolf enjoyed the support of several grants while pursuing her research on this topic, but she had already been working on various narrower subjects related to the topic when she began her doctoral studies. The change of title seems fortuitous, since the new subtitle (*Power and Dynastic Relations among Hungary, Bohemia, and Austria between 1196 and 1310*) covers the subject of her book much more accurately than the previous title of her dissertation.

As the book is more than 900 pages, including the appendices, I refrain here from offering a detailed presentation of each chapter (Rudolf's own summary is 31 pages long) and focus instead on the primary merits of the monograph. The central power in the Holy Roman Empire weakened at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and thus almost all the princes of the empire were able to pursue independent foreign policies, including King Ottokar I of Bohemia and Duke of Austria Leo VI. Given the concentration of territorial power in the region, this formed the seed of a number of relationships and conflicts that might not have been possible before, and the history of these processes can be traced leading up to the dynastic changes of 1310. Rudolf is hardly the first in the Hungarian and international secondary literature to study this subject. Gyula Pauler and Jenő Szűcs examined the thirteenth-century history of the Árpád era, and Enikő Csukovits has researched the reign of Charles I and the Árpád-era antecedents to the dynasty. There has been no single thorough work, however, dealing with the foreign policy of the Kingdom of Hungary as a whole. Somewhat surprisingly, even in the international secondary literature one does not find a monograph on Austrian-Bohemian relations as a whole.

Rudolf made a boldly ambitious decision in her choice of subject matter, given the monumental scale of the topic, and she has also offered a systematic

treatment of the related secondary literature. She made a similarly bold decision in the selection of the source base. In addition to narrative sources, she has drawn on charters and correspondence books that are relevant from the perspective of political history and also on the surviving formulary books from the period. Furthermore, she has not limited her sources to a single country or even to the three countries under study. Rather, in addition to the Hungarian, Bohemian, and Austrian sources, she has also examined narrative sources from the Polish duchies, Halych, the Bavarian Duchy (or Duchies), Thuringia, and Carinthia, as well as imperial and papal documents and sources from Bavaria, Passau, Saxon, Brandenburg, and Meissen. These sources add a great deal of important contributions to our knowledge of the period. From a methodological point of view, it is also worth noting that Rudolf not only juxtaposes the narrative sources with one another, but also, where possible, checks the claims found in these sources against documentary data. Furthermore, she always works with texts as a whole, thus going beyond the catalogue offered by Ferenc Albin Gombos, and she has done this in relation to the three countries of the region.

In the main text (pp.20–603), which does not contain any summary or recapitulation, each chapter is structured around a central issue which is then explained in full. The events are put in a wider context, which often extends to the European, imperial, or even papal political arena. This is perhaps most fully illustrated in the chapter on the fall of Ottokar II (pp.285–374). The three previous chapters, titled “A Babenberg örökség [1246–1261]” (The Babenberg succession, 1246–1261), “Cseh–magyar szövetség [1261–1270]” (The Bohemian-Hungarian alliance, 1261–1270), and “V. István és II. Ottokár [1270–1272]” (Stephen V and Ottokar II, 1270–1272), trace the “rise” of Ottokar. This chapter begins with insights into the sudden change in the relationship between Ottokar and the Kingdom of Hungary following the accession of the child king László IV to the throne, while the second subchapter deals with imperial affairs. Rudolf offers a detailed explanation of how the imperial princes were burdened by the situation without an emperor, how diplomatic games led to Rudolf Habsburg’s accession to the imperial throne, and how Ottokar II gradually came into conflict with the Austrian and Styrian nobility, a conflict which Rudolf Habsburg used to confiscate Ottokar’s earlier holdings and acquire a share of them. With her nuanced presentation of the campaigns against Ottokar II and their background, she demonstrates that in warfare, good diplomacy and situational awareness are as dangerous, as weapons, as talent. These processes, furthermore, culminated in the Battle on the Marchfeld in 1278, which is hardly insignificant

from the point of view of Hungarian history. Rudolf's ability to reconstruct the events in greater detail than ever before offers eloquent testimony to her extensive study of the sources. Her thorough method thus not only provides a new picture of the situation in the region in the thirteenth-century from the perspectives of politics, diplomacy, and dynastic relations but also offers a detailed mapping of the European networks of relations of the period which includes not only the rulers but also the nobility and the ministerial bodies of the countries under study. One finds clear examples of this, for instance, in the lengthy sections devoted to the Austrian and Styrian ministerial bodies, the Vítkovcis of Bohemia, and the Kőszegi family (which is given a whole chapter). By choosing to cover a long period (1196–1310), Rudolf also shows how the death of a single person can cause a series of dynastic relationships to fall like a house of cards. Another advantage of her discussion of a wide web of relationships is that, in the context of the events of the period, even a marriage previously considered meaningless or misinterpreted can take on a new meaning that fits better into the whole, as Rudolf clearly shows, for instance, in the case of the marriage of Charles I. In addition to her presentation of the networks of relationships from a broad perspective, Rudolf has made many other significant achievements. She has offered, for instance, the most detailed description to date of Hungarian rule in Styria and the role played by the relationship between Béla IV and Ottokár II in the fact that, after the Mongol invasion, the results of Béla's fortress-building policy were seen not on the eastern but on the western border of the country, and how the 1271 peace treaty between István V and Ottokar II, along with the establishment of committees to address border disputes, continued to have an impact during the Angevin era.

With regards to the appendices (pp.635–903), in addition to a thorough treatment of a monumental subject, the reader is provided with databases containing as much information as one might expect to find in several handbooks. The first appendix offers lists of those involved in the main military events, with the Hungarian, Czech, and Austrian participants listed in separate tables, thus making this resource particularly user-friendly. In each case, the sources or literature attesting to the presence of the person in question are indicated, and in the commentary, the given person's achievements and losses are also given, as well as information concerning his ties to his closest confidantes. Thus, readers with an interest in military history will undoubtedly be avid users of Rudolf's lists, as will those studying the society of the time. The next appendix is a list of the main narrative sources, which essentially amounts to a catalogue of relevant

sources for the period under discussion, which, in addition to brief descriptions of the sources, lists the most important pieces of philological literature that provide critical editions and further information. Given the length of the main text and the inevitable jumps in time and place, the chronology that Rudolf provides is also useful and interesting, and it often makes her overviews of her findings easier to follow and retrace in order to date certain events. The genealogical tables present the order of descent and the kinship ties of the ruling families of the period, again going beyond the dynasties of the three countries presented. The tables are made comparatively transparent and approachable by the fact, while the tables of the Árpád, Přemyslid, and Babenberg dynasties are exhaustive, the other ruling families are essentially limited to those individuals who are mentioned in the main text. As for the maps at the end of the volume, they provide immensely useful illustrations of the routes of the campaigns discussed in the main text. With regard to the usefulness of the appendices, it worth noting Rudolf's thoroughness in indicating throughout the main text which charts, tables, or maps are helpful in tracing a particular event, campaign, or dynastic relationship.

Given the importance of this book, it should definitely be published in good translation, and I would also add two subjective critical remarks. First, from time to time, I felt that some discussion of Hungarian internal political processes before the Tatar invasion might have been useful. The absence of any such discussion from the book is not a dire problem, given the rich footnotes and the general knowledge of the Hungarian readership, but in a foreign language edition, it might be important to offer a more detailed description of the processes in Hungary. My other critical remark is simply that, in order to make it easier for an international readership to identify the individuals in question, it would be worthwhile to standardize their names. Rudolf is inconsistent from time to time. For example, in the case of Gergely, the elected Archbishop of Esztergom (1298–1303), we find “Botond fia Gergely” (or Gergely, son of Botond) and also “Bicskei Gergely” (or Gergely of Bicske).

These few critical remarks notwithstanding, Veronika Rudolf's book is a significant contribution to the secondary literature which will prove indispensable to historians of the period. It offers a thorough presentation the historical processes of the region in a well-chosen European context.

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Die Karriere des deutschen Renegaten Hans Caspar in Ofen (1627–1660) im politischen und kulturellen Kontext. By János Szabados. Vienna: Publishing House of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2023. 408 pp.

The monograph under review is a revised German edition of the doctoral dissertation by János Szabados, defended at the University of Szeged in 2019. The volume offers a discussion of the career of Hans Caspar, a renegade who lived and worked in Buda in the first half of the seventeenth century. Szabados examines Caspar's career within the framework of new diplomatic history, an approach which has been gaining ground in recent years. In contrast to "classical" diplomatic history, research shaped by this approach is not limited to the individuals who determined policy (rulers and leading diplomats) but rather opens up to other potential lines of inquiry, such as social, cultural, and linguistic history, but also the history of communication and espionage. There is also some focus on the study of lower-ranking individuals or figures who were outside the official diplomatic sphere but still played significant roles in it, particularly those active in Eastern diplomacy.

In the early modern era, converts from Christianity to Islam were referred to as renegades. These individuals had different motivations for leaving the fold. Most of them, however, were able to move more easily in the intercultural space once they had settled into their new environment specifically because of their Christian background, which made them suitable as translators, interpreters, and, in some cases, people involved in intelligence work. Several such figures are known from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but Hans Caspar, who is the protagonist of this volume, stands out among them. Through Caspar's life and career, who was known in the contemporary sources by several names (such as Alexander Fischer and Hüseyin çavuş), Szabados introduces his reader to the activities of the so-called "secret correspondents" who were active in the far reaches of the Ottoman Empire during this period. This is important in part because it is difficult to define the members of this group precisely. Some of them merely passed on the messages that had been entrusted to them, while others were themselves intelligence gatherers or, in some cases, engaged solely in the latter practice. They received regular payments from Vienna in return for their work.

The introduction offers a clear overview of the book (including a discussion of the sources, themes, structure, and methodologies) and a summary of the history of the scholarship on the subject in and outside of Hungary, as well as a review of the most important recent secondary literature on the topic with

particular focus on diplomatic relations between the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. The half century between 1606 and 1663 was a more peaceful period in the border region between the two empires compared to earlier centuries, a period of relative tranquility guaranteed, among other things, by the Treaty of Zsitvatorok, which brought the Long Turkish War (1591/93–1606) to an end, and by the repeated renewals of the treaty. In addition, the Habsburg embassy in Constantinople, which had been closed because of the war, was reopened after 1606, and a channel of communication between the capitals of the two empires was needed to ensure the transmission of messages.

The second part of the monograph presents the activities of the “secret correspondents” of the first half of the seventeenth century and then specifically the career of Hans Caspar between 1627 and 1660. After initial attempts, the system of “secret correspondents” was effectively established in the latter half of the 1620s. The idea was to have reliable people who had been recruited for service in the larger settlements along the route between Vienna and Constantinople to help forward letters.

Hans Caspar was born Alexander Fischer in Vienna, but there are no reliable records concerning his early life, so we do not know exactly when or how he converted to Islam. He is first mentioned in the sources in connection with the Treaty of Szőny (1627), when he was already being referred to as Hüseyin çavuş. In 1629, he accompanied the diplomat Johann Rudolf Schmid to his new post in Constantinople, and in the following years he made several journeys between Buda and Constantinople. In addition, he was in contact with certain imperial commanders on the border during this period and also with some members of the Hungarian nobility, such as Palatine Miklós Esterházy, to whom he regularly sent reports.

Caspar rose to prominence in the mid-1640s. In the first half of the decade, which was dominated by war, the system of “secret correspondents” broke down and needed to be reorganized. This task was entrusted to Johann Rudolf Schmid, who was thoroughly versed in Eastern diplomacy and who recruited Caspar, among others. In 1646, Caspar served as a “secret correspondent,” and he was paid for this work. It is thus hardly surprising that most of the surviving reports that he issued are from the period after 1647, since these reports were not only sent to the border commanders and some members of the Hungarian nobility but were also sent onward by them to Vienna.

The heyday of Caspar’s activities can clearly be dated to the early 1650s, when Kara Murad served as pasha of Buda. The pasha often turned a blind eye

to Caspar's activities, so again it is not surprising that about half the surviving reports he wrote were from this period. His other duties included forwarding reports from the permanent resident in Constantinople (Simon Reniger) to Vienna and letters from Vienna to Constantinople. He was also appointed interpreter in Buda at this time, which can clearly be seen as the apex of his career. Vienna, however, could hardly afford to overlook Caspar's close relationship with the pasha of Buda, or the security risks this relationship involved. The transfer of Murad pasha from Buda in 1654, however, put an end to this "golden age," as the new pasha, Sari Kenan, unlike his predecessor, was less tolerant of Caspar's activities. Furthermore, the increasingly frequent incursions along the frontier caused disruptions in communication between Vienna and Constantinople and in the activities of the "secret correspondents." This period (1654–55) was clearly the low point of Caspar's career, when he wrote and was able to send comparatively few reports to Vienna. It is worth noting, furthermore, that in the late 1640s and the first half of the 1650s, in addition to writing reports for the Habsburgs, Caspar was also passing on information to the Principality of Transylvania.

Hans Caspar continued to work as a spy for the Habsburgs and Transylvania in the second half of the 1650s, but with less intensity than in the first half of the decade. Given the wartime circumstances, however, which particularly affected Transylvania, his potential as a renegade spy became increasingly important to Vienna. In 1658, however, he was transferred to Temesvár (Timișoara, today in Romania), and there are fewer records of him in the following years, but he presumably remained there. After 1660, he disappeared from the sources altogether, and Szabados suggests that this was probably when Caspar, who by then was no longer a young man, passed away.

The third part of the monograph offers a close look at the details of the world in which Caspar worked. It describes the important role Buda played in the seventeenth-century in the maintenance of the relationship between the two empires and also looks at the careers of other renegades who worked alongside Caspar (such as Habib ağa, and Ali çavuş). We also learn, with regards to Hans Caspar's private life, that he had a wife and children, as well as his own house. The sources reveal that he spoke three languages (German, Hungarian, and Turkish), but no Latin, which can probably be explained by his lower level of education. This may well suggest something about his background as a member of the Christian fold, or more precisely, it would indicate that he probably came under Ottoman rule at an early age. Nevertheless, in his reports to Vienna, Hans Caspar repeatedly noted his German-speaking and Christian roots, which he probably found easier

to maintain because of the proximity of the imperial capital. In general, however, the Viennese leadership had constant doubts about the reliability of the renegades, including Hans Caspar.

In the fourth part of the volume, Szabados points out that the “secret correspondents” were one of the cornerstones of Habsburg-Ottoman diplomacy. One of the tasks of the network was to facilitate communications between Vienna and Constantinople, while the other was to gather information and spy. Caspar proved well suited to these tasks, as he was in regular contact with the Viennese leadership and had substantial information about the Ottoman elite in Buda. Although he was in continuous contact with both sides, Szabados does not consider him a “transimperial subject,” since in Vienna he was no longer considered a Christian but simply a Turk or a renegade. Caspar’s work can be regarded as outstanding in the period, as he had a successful career in intelligence spanning several decades on the border between the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire.

Finally, it is worth saying a few words about the collection of sources at the end of the volume, which contains a critical edition of 79 reports written by Caspar between 1647 and 1659. With a few exceptions, almost all the sources are in German, and most of them are dated from Buda. The transcriptions of the sources are accompanied by short German-language summaries and detailed annotations. The recipients of the reports included leaders of eastern diplomacy in Vienna, the commanders of border posts, and some members of the Hungarian nobility.

This monograph, which is based on diligent research, close study of archival sources, and a thorough survey of the secondary literature, clearly fills a lacuna in the scholarship. It offers a detailed examination of the career of Hans Caspar, who worked between the courts of the two great empires of Central Europe in the first half of the seventeenth century, placing it against the backdrop of the roles of the “secret correspondents” of the period. Of particular importance is the fact that Szabados has rather generously provided not just a thorough discussion of his subject but also the written sources on which his research is based. The volume constitutes a significant contribution to the scholarship on the period.

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Nations, privilèges et ethnicité: Le Banat habsbourgeois; Un laboratoire politique aux confins de l'Europe éclairée. By Benjamin Landais. Strasbourg: Association Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2023. 577 pp.<sup>1</sup>

Benjamin Landais's book is a brilliant, panoramic tour de force on ethnic relations in the eighteenth-century Banat, grounded in extensive research in the Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, the Central Archives of the Hungarian National Archives, and archives in Timișoara and Novi Sad, along with a good knowledge of the secondary literature in all the relevant languages. What gives particular interest to the subject is that the Banat was under direct civil, military, and economic governance by the Habsburg administration for most of the century, without feudal landlords or an estate-based political system; hence the laboratory metaphor in the title.

At the time of the Reconquista, the province's sparse population of cattle herders, collectively called the *Nationalisten*, consisted largely of Orthodox "Wallachen" and "Raitzen," with a much smaller segment of (similarly South Slavic and Romanian-speaking) Catholics. As new settlers repopulated the land, a famously variegated ethnic landscape began to take shape. Landais explores the nuanced interplay of legal, linguistic, and confessional distinctions, which in some reckonings also resulted in intermediary population categories, from the Romanian-speaking Roman Catholics in Slatina-Timiș to the solitary Greek Catholic community of Zăbrani. He tries to quantify the often-overlooked immigration of Orthodox settlers from the Ottoman provinces, Transylvania, and Hungary, which nevertheless seem to have surpassed Catholic settlement from West. Separate chapters examine the "Greek" petty traders, the urban Orthodox and Jewish diaspora, and the Catholic Bulgarian and Paulician refugees, who still appeared as two distinct groups.

Readers will welcome the commitment of French (and German) academic publishers to keep up the noble tradition of such comprehensive and expansive studies that branch out in many directions within a well-defined region and time period. While centered around collective identifications and governance, the book also addresses a wide array of topics, from brigandage to translation,

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changing land use patterns, and state-sponsored schooling for the *Nationalisten* to Joseph II's travels and acceptance of grievance petitions. In place of a single, streamlined argument, as is more typical in Anglo-Saxon historical writing, the stated aim here is to document a previous "regime of ethnicity," with emphasis on what has faded away or been forgotten. To underscore the distance of contemporary ethnonyms from present-day ones, Landais places them in quotation marks, though inconsistently, as the terms "Jews," "Šokci," and "Armenians" appear without them.

One should not expect either much coherence from this old "regime of ethnicity" or such a sharp contrast with the later period as Landais seems to announce in the introduction. Ethnic designations were perhaps more abundant, as some of them linked to collective privileges later petered out and others were subsumed under broader, national categories. A couple of them look quite idiosyncratic. The term "Illyrian," for example, denoted a political reality even though commentators agreed that it stood for several peoples rather than one. One could also mention the distinction between urban "Greeks" and "Arnauts," which seems to have been based on different geographical origins, with the latter group having family ties to Moscopole and Macedonia.

However, even the non-specialist reader will often find the criteria for classification very familiar. For instance, the regional chronicler Johan Jakob Ehrler (1774) understood "national" affiliation as based on an overlap of language, material culture, domestic economy, and customs. Similarly, the Orthodox synod of Sremski Karlovci argued that no distinction should be made between the South-Slavic refugees of 1691 and the later arrivals, due to their shared language, religion, and manners. Such reasoning was commonplace among administrators. Indeed, the home languages of the population were surveyed three times between 1743 and 1780. While these surveys served practical purposes, they also fixed ascribed identities in governmental reports, chorographies, and statistical tables.

The Habsburg government territorialized ethno-confessional differences by enforcing segregation, giving rise to settlements split into two or even three neighborhoods, with some form of ethnic power sharing between them or each with its own communal structures. This policy partly addressed conflicts between new colonists and long-established residents, although the most violent conflicts typically arose within the same groups. It typically reinforced confessional divides, yet it could also cut across confessional lines; between Orthodox "Wallachen" and "Raitzen" in Ciacova, for instance, or Roman Catholic Šokci and Germans

in Rekasch. In one documented case (in the “German” part of Caransebeș), a failed attempt at spatial and administrative segregation unintentionally drew a boundary where none had existed before. Local “Wallachen” resisted their “German” neighbors’ land grab and dismantled their freshly piled up boundary cairns. Landais then reveals that the peasants labeled “Germans” were actually Romanian-speaking Orthodox under “German” jurisdiction, who far outnumbered the 20 or so “real German” families, mostly artisans, in the neighborhood.

Governmental taxonomies and administrative preconceptions inevitably fed back into social realities. The influx of Ottoman immigrants seldom created new ethnic divisions because Habsburg border officials considered these newcomers to be of the same stock as the native “Wallachen” or “Raitzen” and usually scattered them among the existing Orthodox communities or resettled them in deserted flatland villages earmarked for Orthodox settlers. Conversely, the new milieu and the fact that families from various German lands were usually intermingled must have reshaped “German” settlers’ collective self-perception and solidarities. The extent to which ethnic segmentation as seen by the foreign-born Catholic administrators also reflected popular views remains difficult to determine given the scarcity of sources. Orthodox ecclesiastical records did differentiate between Serbs and Romanians (although rarely with political overtones), but Landais acknowledges the limits posed by pervasive illiteracy. Admittedly, *Wallach* and *Raitz* were exonyms, which may partly explain why “German” appears more often in Landais’s corpus of petitions written on behalf of village communities. Their mediation by literate scribes diminishes the evidentiary value of such sources, but it also cannot justify Landais’s aprioristic dismissal of ethnic terminology in them as mere appropriation of an elite discourse. In the context of the book, this and a few other weakly substantiated assertions sprinkled in the closing sections can be read as a conciliatory apology in the face of the narrowly conceived modernist perspective on ethnicity popular in Habsburg Studies.

Despite some reservations about certain conclusions, I highly recommend this richly layered history of governance and local politics in a multiethnic Habsburg province, and not only for historians of the era. Viewed from the perspective of the historiography on nineteenth-century and twentieth-century ethno-national loyalties, books like this could offer a way out of the bind between a self-centered, narrow modernism, which blinds itself intentionally to their complex antecedents, and an ethno-symbolism that seeks to link modern

loyalties to early modern patriotic discourses even where such connections are tenuous. Neither of these two schools has spoiled us with archival-based works of this scope. The volume is beautifully illustrated, featuring original color maps and diagrams.

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Anti-Axis Resistance in Southeastern Europe, 1940–1944: Forms and Varieties. Edited by John Paul Newman, Ljubinka Škodrić, and Rade Ristanović. Leiden: Brill–Schöningh, 2023. 377 pp.

After World War II, anti-fascism became a widely accepted core concept in the political arena and was used by scholars as an interpretative framework for any kind of resistance that had taken place during the war. In Western Europe, instances of resistance were magnified and instances of collaboration were veiled, while on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain a narrative of communist or Soviet salvation dominated for decades. This latter master narrative was about the anti-fascist struggle allegedly led by the communist party. After 1989, this ideological interpretation was sidelined. Since then, scholars have tended to use the terms “anti-Nazi” or “anti-German.”

The editors of *Anti-Axis Resistance in Southeastern Europe, 1940–1944. Forms and Varieties*, published by Brill in 2023, have introduced an even more sophisticated concept to which they refer as “anti-Axis.” Unfortunately, they have not offered an explanation of this conceptual novelty. Therefore, the reader is compelled to assume that “anti-Axis,” a term which may come from military history and the history of international relations, refers to all instances of resistance against the Axis powers.

Editors John Paul Newman, Ljubinka Škodrić, and Rade Ristanović organized the book into three sections and eighteen chapters. In line with current trends, they claim to provide the missing “comparative and transnational reflection” (p.3) on resistance in Southeastern Europe during World War II. Most of the chapters of the volume, however, focus on one country or territory in particular and for the most part analyze the events in a national framework rather than from a genuinely comparative perspective, which would have focused, for instance, on issues such as partisan war, political protests, life savings, etc. and thus would have made it possible and necessary to cover and compare the whole region. With one exception, the chapters also do not focus on the transnational character of their subject. They would have done better, perhaps, to have considered the model offered by the 2020 volume *Fighters across frontiers. Transnational resistance in Europe, 1936–48*, edited by Robert Gildea and Ismee Tames and published by Manchester University Press. Admittedly, considering the power of nationalism in the multiethnic region of Southeastern Europe, the authors cannot be blamed for having chosen a traditional method of analysis.

According to Olivier Wieviorka, a prominent scholar in the field and the author of the first part of the introduction, resistance is a conscious, risky, and altruistic act which involves transgressions of the law, and it does “not belong to the register of opinion” (p.9). Unfortunately, it is not clear that writing (or publishing), for example, could be considered part of this definition of resistance, and thus it remains unclear how the contributors to this volume would approach the wide field of intellectual resistance.

Wieviorka lists a few factors that played an important role in resistance, both in Western Europe and Eastern Europe. These factors included the individual dimension (which puts the concept of historical agency on the stage), historical experiences with invaders and the culture of protest, international connections of internal resistance forces, and the moral dilemmas concerning reprisals. With regard to the Balkans, Wieviorka emphasizes that this region was never important enough for the Allies to intervene. Thus, “the Anglo-Americans hoped above all that their resistance would pin the Axis forces—no more” (p.17).

In the second part of the introduction the editors draw the reader’s attention to Southeastern Europe. They mark the place of the often mythologized, centuries-long local anti-imperial, revolutionary struggles and emphasize the heritage of the “anti-occupational resistance of the First World War” (p.22). Newman, Škodrić, and Ristanović also underline that the process of decolonization in the Balkans was not fully complete in 1918. Thus, independent struggles and the violent traditions of guerilla combat were successfully intertwined with modern political ideologies, such as fascism and communism in the interwar period. This was partly why, in July 1941, only three months after the occupation of Yugoslavia by the German army, there was a wide-ranging armed uprising against the invaders. The authors give a brief overview of the main resistance forces in the region between 1941 and 1945, noting that while the Yugoslav Partisan Army was one of the strongest resistance organizations in occupied Europe, none of the “resistance movements had the strength to overcome the occupier and liberate their country independently” (p.31) had it not been for the military assistance of the Allies.

The first section of the book bears the title “Conditions and circumstances of the armed resistance.” This chapter deals exclusively with Yugoslavia. First, contributor Aleksandar Životić examines relations between the USSR and the Yugoslav resistance movements in 1941–1942. He points out the confusion that the German invasion caused in Moscow. Životić underlines that, “despite repeated requests until the end of 1943, there was no direct Soviet military support for

the partisan movements” (p.62). In the next chapter, Blaž Torkar summarizes US policy toward the Yugoslav resistance in 1941–1945. Torkar explains how and why the Allies reevaluated the royalist movement in 1942–1943 and started to support Tito’s partisans instead of the chetniks. An important consideration in making this decision was that Mihailović occasionally collaborated with the Germans and the Nedić administration. Nevertheless, the next chapter illustrates brilliantly that collaboration, cooperation, and resistance cannot always be sharply differentiated. While the Serbian State Guard was rightly considered a committed collaborator auxiliary force of the Nedić regime, Nebojša Stambolija, another contributor to the volume, demonstrates the manners of cooperation between the Guard and the chetniks. The latter legalized themselves by joining the detachments of Nedić, “but they were still secretly under Mihailović’s command” (p.92). However, after the Allies turned away from Mihailović, the Guard and the chetniks formed a common “anti-communist front” (p.97) against “the only true enemy” (p.99), the partisans. The next chapter deals with the national components of the losses suffered by Yugoslav partisans at the hands of the Ustaša state, followed by a study examining relations between Russian émigrés and the resistance in Yugoslavia. According to the author, Milana Živanović, some émigrés considered Hitler’s military successes an opportunity to destroy communism, which was an argument for them to collaborate after 1941, while others thought that the Third Reich posed a threat for their homeland, thus they decided to resist. Overall, “a few hundred Russian emigrants fought in the People’s Liberation Army of Yugoslavia from 1941 until 1945” (p.138).

The second section provides a detailed picture of the Yugoslav, Greek, Albanian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, and Slovenian resistance movements. Contributor Gaj Trifković begins this section by offering a clear overview of the strategies used by the partisans and the German strategies in Yugoslavia. The German forces reacted to the partisan revolt with harsh reprisals. After they were unable to annihilate partisan corps in a crucial battle, they started to adopt key elements of partisan warfare and cooperated with the chetniks against the communists. As was the case in Yugoslavia, the Greek resistance had a nationalist and a (more powerful) communist organization, and both organizations were aided by the British. Contributor Stratos N. Dordanas explains the issue from the perspective of the ways in which the invaders collected information from the locals. Here too, the Germans turned to the ancient policy of divide and conquer, and they fanned “the conflict between the rival Greek resistance forces” (p.176), causing regional chaos and planting the seeds of civil war.

As a special case, Albania was occupied (first) not by the Third Reich but by fascist Italy almost half a year before the outbreak of World War II. Contributor Marenglen Kasmi therefore applies the old concept of “anti-Fascism” (p.188). Albania was another example of the rivalry between the communist and nationalist resistance forces. The non-communist Albanian Balli Kombëtar organization (the National Front), which was set up by the children of wealthy bey families, sought to restore “free and ethnic Albania” (p.194), mostly without fighting for freedom but rather simply waiting for the defeat of the Axis powers. After the German occupation of Albania in 1943, rather than taking part in the liberation of the country, Balli Kombëtar chose to collaborate. Credit went to the communists, as Albania was one of the few countries that “were liberated by its own forces” (p.208), Kasmi notes, thus contradicting the editors, at least on this point.

Unlike Albania, Macedonia (which was part of Yugoslavia) suffered a double invasion at the same time and was partitioned between Bulgaria and Italy in April 1941. The Macedonian and Slovenian case studies illustrate how resistance could be intertwined with nation building. Moreover, the latter (Slovenian) chapter focuses on the representation of violence by exploring the propaganda used by the resisters and the invaders in the doubly-occupied Slovenian territory, thus offering a contribution which is relevant to the history of violence and media studies. The Bulgarian resistance is explained in the book from the perspective of power using the contemporary sources made by the pro-Axis Bulgarian Army. It is worth mentioning here that the Bulgarian case was unique in the sense that locals fought each other, without foreign forces actually having invaded the country.

The third section of the book, which is on unarmed resistance, is the shortest. Barnabas Balint begins the discussion with an excellent study on “Tiyul,” which was a method of rescuing Jews across the Hungarian-Romanian border in 1944. Balint convincingly argues that this illegal network, ran by Zionists, organized in nationalist countries, and supported by paid local smugglers, was “simultaneously local, national, and transnational” (p.281). Nonviolent resistance was present among the Serbian middle class as well, although in contrast with the heroic partisan struggles, it “remained unnoticed and forgotten” (p.305), as Nataša Milićević writes in her chapter. Unarmed resistance here could take the form of evading mandatory labor services, protecting persecuted individuals, listening to banned radio stations, refusing to speak German, or forms of “escapism” (p.302). In the Independent State of Croatia, the forms of everyday resistance

were found in urban centers. Nevertheless, some of the examples listed by contributor Rory Yeomans are problematic and do not meet Olivier Wiewiorka's aforementioned definition. For instance, it is not entirely clear how complaints written to the city authorities or an "unsigned letter from a group of housewives to the editorial board of *Hrvatski list*" (p.319) could be interpreted as acts of resistance. The examples set by the rule breakers, the "nightwalkers" (p.320), which seem reminiscent of the counterculture of Swingjugend in Nazi Germany, are more convincing. "Young, sexually independent women, prostitutes, the inebriated, and vagrants" (p.322) did not want to change their lifestyles in the Ustaša state either.

The last chapter of the volume discusses the illegal (Baptist, Adventist, Nazarenes, etc.) religious activity in the Nazi-allied state of Romania, where the Orthodox Church held sway. The alleged "sectarians" held clandestine meetings, distributed secret literature, and tried to gain legal status. Here, the argument that "petitions" (p.342) constituted a form of resistance also does not seem convincing. As potential communists, the members of these small religious communities were persecuted by the state, but this kind of persecution was not "unique" (p.347) from an international perspective.

The volume ends with a short postface which draws attention to the complexity of the subject. The editors' task certainly was not easy. They worked together with seventeen authors and several institutes from different countries on a topic which plays a role in memory politics in Southeastern Europe. It is therefore understandable that some inconsistencies and minor errors can be found in the text. One regrettable example of this is the misspelling of Olivier Wiewiorka's last name, which is given as "Wiewiorka" (p.V; p.7). The chapter by Stratos N. Dordanas begins a long citation but without giving the source (p.164). Similarly problematic is the case of Endre Ságvári, who is identified as a "leader of the youth section of the anti-Fascist People's Front" (p.269), though there was no such organization in Hungary. In some cases, obvious biases and mistakes have not been weeded out of the texts. For example, the contention that Macedonia "from the beginning until the end of the war, was at the center of attention on both warring sides" (p.209) is hardly convincing, much as one would hardly find persuasive the assertion that "the second phase of [sic] Second World War on the European battlefield began in the second half of 1944" (p.221).

However, in sum, despite the problems and mistakes noted above, the volume is a significant contribution to the history of resistance in World War II.

The chapters are based on the relevant national and international secondary literature and also on a vast array of primary sources. It contains a useful index, and a list of abbreviations helps the reader navigate between the organizations and names, which is essential for such a data-rich book. The authors and editors guide the reader through a particularly complex milieu, showing the many faces of resistance in Southeastern Europe.

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Queer Encounters with Communist Power: Non-Heterosexual Lives and the State in Czechoslovakia, 1948–1989. By Věra Sokolová. Prague: Karolinum Press, 2021. 242 pp.

Queer history, whether in a regional, national, or transnational context, has often focused more on the experiences of cisgender men. When discussing the communist era in Europe, queer history has typically either concentrated on the repressive mechanisms of the Eastern Bloc regimes or been analyzed through a lens that either demonizes or romanticizes the experiences of queer individuals living beyond the Iron Curtain in comparison to the Western Bloc. Sokolová's latest book diverges from this historiography by offering a narrative that recenters the experiences of cisgender lesbians and trans\* individuals living in Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1989, while also highlighting the ambiguous nature of queer experiences of state socialism, marked by both isolation and agency. As Sokolová demonstrates, this dual focus is deeply intertwined. Adopting the by now well-established use of gender as a useful category of analysis, Sokolová challenges and complements Czech queer scholarship, which has often glossed over the communist era, either due to the challenges with regards to access to sources or a lack of interest in women's experiences.

By focusing on trans\* and lesbian narratives, Sokolová successfully uncovers untold stories of agency during the period, while also emphasizing the population's active participation in day-to-day state socialism. She begins by revisiting institutional and scientific approaches to what she terms “non-heterosexuality” throughout the book. This section extensively discusses the work and conversations at the Sexological Institute in Prague, highlighting what Sokolová presents as “not a simple one-way street between the power of the medical experts and their helpless, passive patients but rather quite a complex and mutually beneficial relationship” (p.106). While she does not shy away from addressing the gender stereotypes ingrained in the sexological treatises of the time or the horrors of aversion therapies, she also emphasizes the voices of the patients, which can be discerned between the lines of the reports.

In the second part of the book, Sokolová goes beyond a reinterpretation of institutional and scientific records. As she convincingly argues, even a reading against the grain of the archive cannot fully capture the extent of queer experiences beyond the usual cisgender male narratives. For example, in her discussion of experiments in Prague, she notes that most patients subjected to aversion therapy in the 1950s were chosen based on their belief in their

own deviance. Since queer women appeared more likely to accept their sexual preferences than men, they were largely absent from this part of the archive (p.73). To recover their experiences, Sokolová had to seek out alternative sources.

Building on the oral history compiled and archived by the Society for Queer Memory (StQM) in Prague, “which focuses on conducting and collecting biographical interviews with queer people who spent most of their lives in Socialist Czechoslovakia before 1989” (p.42), Sokolová conducted her own oral history interviews, primarily and voluntarily focusing on queer cisgender female and trans\* narrators. Her analysis of these interviews forms the core of the second part of the book and represents its most significant contribution. Through her examination of these narrators’ subjectivities, strategies, and experiences during state socialism, Sokolová effectively highlights the diversity of voices and experiences from this period. She persuasively demonstrates how exploring sexualities provides a new perspective on the history of authoritarian regimes, an approach that emphasizes agency without overestimating the possibilities available. The narrators’ captivating stories not only enrich her study of the ambiguities of state socialism but also support her argument that a focus on gender can reshape historiography. For example, her discussion of lesbian personal ads (p.154) corrects earlier claims in the literature which, by focusing primarily on queer cisgender male voices, had suggested that much of this content had fallen prey to censorship. Sokolová concludes that oral history allows scholars to reveal “how complex the social context of the ‘Communist era’ was. They [queer narratives] show that within mainstream heterosexual society it was possible to live diverse sexual lives” (p.220). This conclusion echoes the first part of the book, where she underscores the diversity of opinion among sexologists in the twentieth century, showing how the medical gaze, despite being normative and regressive, also paved the way for decriminalization and resistance.

Sokolová’s multifaceted interpretation of her source material makes the book an engaging read, though not without flaws, particularly in the first two chapters. While her discussion of queer scholarship in the Czech context is compelling and thorough, her references to queer history from other contexts can sometimes appear oversimplified or outdated. For instance, recent studies on the GDR would likely complicate some of her statements about German state socialism, highlighting the same ambiguity in what is often perceived as a success story of institutional and judicial interests. Her treatment of the international literature on gender and queer studies also sometimes feels outdated or incomplete, focusing on work from a decade ago and inadvertently perpetuating

the misconception that recent scholarship has not contributed anything new. This issue is exacerbated by minor irritations, such as her repeated use of J. Halberstam's published name when discussing his 2012 work. While Halberstam plays with gender identity ambiguity in his work, which could eventually justify Sokolová's choice, a clearer mention would have been expected in a monograph on queer history that addresses trans\* voices.

This brings us to the book's most significant flaw: the terminology used to refer to both the narrators and archival voices. Without falling into the trap of requiring queer history scholars to justify their terms, Sokolová's conceptual use of queerness and the term "transsexual," as well as her reference to "non-heterosexuality," is unconvincing (pp.19–24). She notes that the idea of "non-heterosexuality" is intended not to emphasize the normative claim of heterosexuality but to reflect empathetic engagement with her narrators. As her narrators reject labels and resist the historical gaze that assigns identities to them, Sokolová refrains from assigning them a queer identity. The result is a somewhat confusing balancing act between a desire to employ actor-based concepts and the historiographical necessity of using analytical concepts such as queerness. Consequently, queer encounters are reinterpreted throughout the book through the lens of identity, paradoxically reinforcing siloed identities and categories while perpetuating asymmetrical historical concepts such as heterosexuality and homosexuality. As a result, the book ultimately reflects methodologies from gay and lesbian history rather than truly presenting a queer Czech history. This is unfortunate, as Sokolová excels at discussing ambiguity in other aspects of her work. A more thorough engagement with recent queer theory and queer history might have enhanced the book's overall conceptualization.

Nonetheless, as an immense contribution to queer Czech history, this book is a must-read for scholars interested in queer history. Beyond some scarce mentions of other socialist states in the first parts of the book, Sokolová did not aim to write a queer history of the 'Eastern Block.' However, by demonstrating how a history of sexualities can help scholars reevaluate lives under state socialism, this book could still inspire many and should be essential reading for any historian interested in the history of the 'Eastern Bloc' and the communist era.

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