

discursive “economies” of parody at the *Vorstadttheater*. At its most essential, Mansky’s study presents these dramas as a kind of circulating social currency that offered public speech acts a degree of freedom absent from more serious discursive formats, “economizing” on the parodied originals and the satiric impulse to create a sort of alternative marketplace of ideas. This volume is a substantial achievement on Mansky’s part and may help to stimulate further research on this critical and critically understudied place and period in German-language letters.

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Barbora Pásztorová, *Metternich, the German Question and the Pursuit of Peace, 1840–1848*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022. 184 pp.

Prince Metternich, as the opening sentence of Barbora Pásztorová’s brief monograph *Metternich, the German Question and the Pursuit of Peace, 1840–1848* states, was “without question one of the greatest figures of the first half of the 19th century” (3). A key player in the 1814/15 Vienna Congress that redrew the political map of Europe and attempted to restore the old order of dynastic states, Metternich is remembered domestically in Austria as a draconian reactionary whose suppression of civil liberties and democratic reform ultimately failed to stem the rising tide of liberalism and emancipation in Central Europe. Although deposed during the 1848 revolutions, Metternich would later nevertheless come to be admired for his diplomatic achievements in maintaining the “Concert of Europe” from 1815 to 1848.

It is to this latter aspect of Metternich’s legacy that Pásztorová’s new monograph is dedicated. It represents a revised English-language translation of her Czech-language PhD dissertation defended in 2019 at the University of West Bohemia in Plzeň. Readers will notice immediately the conspicuous brevity of this work: At only 180 pages (including the bibliography), it is considerably shorter than a standard historiographical dissertation. The primary materials consist predominantly of contemporary correspondence found in various Central European archives, augmented by a range of German-, English-, and Czech-language secondary literature.

The book is divided into seven chapters plus an introduction and con-

clusion. The first chapter opens with an overview of Metternich's role in international politics in the period between the Vienna Congress and the late 1830s, during which he promoted the German Confederation as a "counter-revolutionary" bloc and "a defensive bulwark of dynastic legitimacy" (27). The subsequent chapters focus on successive crises that challenged the peace in Europe during the 1840s and—so the author's claim—played a seminal role in what she calls the "German question," beginning with the Rhine Crisis of 1840 (Chapter 2) and the Schleswig-Holstein "question" (Chapter 3).

Chapter 4, comprising only seven pages, briefly examines the economic relations between the nebulous entities here anachronistically called "Austria and Germany." This is essentially a prelude to Chapter 5, which covers the annexation of Cracow by the Habsburg Empire in 1846 and its negative economic impact on Prussian Silesia. Chapter 6 addresses the Sonderbund War in Switzerland in 1847, while Chapter 7 explores the "national and constitutional question in Germany," by which the author means the lands of the German Confederation, in the *Vormärz*.

The title of this monograph is somewhat misleading. Metternich is not the central focus of this work, which essentially offers an overview of international relations and diplomatic history in Central Europe during this period, but is rather a recurring character who at crucial moments plays a key role in the above-listed contexts. The "German question," meanwhile, is never defined by the author, who appears to predicate unquestioningly the existence of a "German nation" before the establishment of a German state in 1870/71. This lack of clarity in focus is compounded by a lack of clear argumentation throughout the work, which—though lucidly written and offering a concise review of the secondary literature—often consists more of descriptive narrative than critical analysis.

A two-and-a-half-page discussion of the concept "nationalism" in the introduction, in conjunction with the titular focus on a purported "German question," suggests that this book was intended as a contribution to the early stages of nascent German nationalism. While this topic is indeed addressed repeatedly throughout the work, this aspect remains particularly poorly developed. The author opens by somewhat naively dividing all theories of nationalism into "negative" and "neutral" approaches, by which she clearly means critical approaches (as indicated through her reference to "constructivist authors," 10) as opposed to what in sociological theory is called "primordialist" identity theory. The author implicitly propagates the latter,

conservative understanding of “national identity,” which she problematically claims is a “morally neutral” stance (11).

It hardly bears elaborating that notions of “neutrality” and “objectivity” in the humanities are outmoded, to put it mildly. It is a striking shortcoming of this work that it gives such short shrift to this vast theoretical field, instead relying on a small number of to some extent crassly outdated works from the anglophone world. The subsequent engagements with the question of nationalism in early nineteenth-century Central Europe are consequently superficial and misleading, including not only the above-mentioned predication of some nebulous “German nation” *avant la lettre* but also repeated references to the supranational Habsburg Empire as a “German Great Power” (e.g., 42). It is striking that a Czech author would repeatedly claim the Habsburg Empire could be neatly divided into “German and non-German parts” (e.g., 18), when Bohemia, where the author is based, was a prime example of national indifference and supranational entanglements before the violent calamities of the twentieth century.

This problem could have been alleviated by engaging with more recent, critical, and specifically Austrianist literature. That Pieter Judson’s 2016 magnum opus on the empire is not mentioned in this work seems a conspicuous oversight for a recent dissertation dealing with Metternich’s system and the question of nationalism in this region. Similarly, repeated discussions of the role of the press, student fraternities, and other elite milieus in cultivating popular nationalism would have benefited from an engagement with Tara Zahra’s oeuvre, which is also missing from the bibliography.

In fact, readers will search in vain for any Austrianist historiography in this work, which relies almost exclusively on (older) *bundesdeutsch* literature, a fact that presumably explains the German nationalist bias of its framing, which is certainly not “neutral.” Given also the conspicuous brevity of the work, this begs the question of why the dissertation was not substantially expanded and revised before publication with such a prestigious press.

Framing is the key word, however, because in my view this book is not actually about the origins and early variants of German nationalism. It can also be read as a succinct and insightful overview of European power politics as they played out in the realm of the German Confederation during this period. It is particularly interesting how the convoluted transnational entanglements of various liminal spaces investigated here—the Rhineland, Schleswig-Holstein, Silesia, Switzerland, and of course Austria—complicated

contemporary developments in nationalist thought while setting the scene for some of the major European conflicts that were to follow in subsequent decades.

Lucidly written and deftly navigating the fields of diplomatic and political historiography on which it draws, this monograph offers an interesting insight for a general readership into Europe's conflicted passage from the old regime of dynastic states—the system that Metternich tried, and ultimately failed, to preserve—through to the modern conception of “nation states” that still predominates on the continent today.

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Megan Brandow-Faller and Laura Morowitz, eds., *Erasures and Eradications in Modern Viennese Art, Architecture, and Design*. New York: Routledge, 2023. 278 pp.

Why are some artists included in the Vienna 1900 canon and others forgotten? How has the intense focus on Vienna 1900 led to the erasure of artists and artistic movements? These are some of the questions addressed in Megan Brandow-Faller and Laura Morowitz's *Erasures and Eradications in Modern Viennese Art, Architecture and Design*. While Viennese artists who sympathized with the Nazis looked down on the turn-of-the-century period as “Jewish” and degenerate, the reckoning with history in the 1980s focusing on Vienna 1900 sought to reclaim links to Jewish culture without acknowledging its destruction. The romanticizing of Vienna 1900 and the project to deflect attention from the Nazi period has led some scholars to dismiss interwar developments, obscure continuities, and erase many important artists and their work. Intersectionality also plays a role in the erasure of many artists as their overlapping identities “rendered them especially vulnerable to marginalization or later eradication” (12).

The book includes sections on Jewish erasures, gendered erasures, erasures of understudied artists and movements, and an epilogue connecting past erasures to the present-day aims of the VBKÖ (Association of Austrian Wom*n Artists). Contributors rethink themes such as the Jews' relationship to visual arts, women's contributions to interwar decorative arts, modernists'