

Moment des Todes bzw. das Erlebnis des Todes künstlerisch vorstellbar zu machen.

Theaterwissenschaftler\*innen, Germanist\*innen und Kulturwissenschaftler\*innen werden die Untersuchungen von Jelineks ästhetischem Profil außerordentlich aufschlussreich finden, denn die Herausgeberinnen Degner und Gürtler haben in diesem Band sehr wichtige und interessante Lektüren zusammengestellt, die die Forschungsarbeit an Elfriede Jelineks Texten und ihren künstlerischen sowie politischen Einfluss- und Stellungnahmen vertieft und weiterführt.

Britta Kallin

*Georgia Institute of Technology*

Sieglinde Klettenhammer and Kurt Scharr, eds., *Was heißt Österreich? Überlegungen zum Feld der Austrian Studies im 21. Jahrhundert*. Klagenfurt: Wieser, 2021. 182 pp.

The cover image on this slender volume is striking, at least for those who know what they are looking at: It depicts the Mostar Bridge in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Blown up during the Yugoslav Wars before being reconstructed a decade later, the bridge has become a symbol for the cultural diversity that both unites and divides this region of Europe. So why was this image chosen to illustrate a volume on Austrian studies, a volume dedicated to the simple question: *Was heißt Österreich?* An answer can readily be found on the jacket, which explains that the doctoral program at Innsbruck University from which this volume emerged is dedicated to an understanding of “Austria” as “ein von unterschiedlichen Gesellschaften produzierter ‘Kulturraum’ entlang der Zeitachse ausgehend vom Heiligen Römischen Reich, über die Habsburgermonarchie bis in die unmittelbare Gegenwart der Zweiten Republik.”

Diversity takes center stage in this stimulating volume, both in the cultural diversity of the region under investigation and in the disciplinary diversity of the field dedicated to its study. This is reflected in essays dealing with history, literature, art, music, and politics by authors based in Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Italy, Ukraine, and the United States. Although the volume emerged from a doctoral program, it features the

work of more established scholars, most prominently Pieter Judson, as well as two non-academics (in the narrower sense), namely the essayists Dževad Karahasan and Jurko Prochasko.

The volume's fluid understanding of "Austria," which the editors elaborate in their introduction, reflects the postcolonial and transnational turn that has become so characteristic of Austrian studies recently. The interconnectedness of South/East/Central Europe, both historical and contemporary, is then explored by specific reference to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ukraine in the thought-provoking contributions by the above-mentioned essayists, who demonstrate not just the rich multicultural heritage of the former empires (Habsburg and Ottoman) enduring today—evident in forms both tangible, like architecture, and intangible, like post-migratory experiences—but also the lingering potential for conflict, as all too evident in growing tensions in Bosnia and the outright war that is currently ongoing in Ukraine.

Pieter Judson goes on to rebuke the enduring hegemony of antagonistic nationalist historiographies in the Habsburg successor states, calling for greater attention to be paid to the considerable continuities evident in all these states with the Habsburg administration of yesteryear and the supranational cultures it once engendered in the region. As such, this essay offers a summary of the closing arguments of Judson's recent magnum opus on the Habsburg Empire.

Dagmar Lorenz's contribution will be of particular interest to readers of this journal, as it offers an overview of the origins of the field of Austrian studies, locating these in the transnational space carved out by German-speaking exiles in North America from the mid-twentieth century onwards. Thus, she concludes, the field—for which notably no precise German-language equivalent exists (*Österreichstudien?*)—can only properly be understood by adopting a position straddling Central Europe and the Anglophone world, its genesis amongst formerly marginalized exiles moreover explaining the field's marked sensitivity to alterity and diversity. Lorenz's overview is notably heavy on literary studies, though this also owes to the original orientation of the field as she explores it here, which today encompasses many other areas of enquiry.

Yasir Yilmaz's contribution offers a compelling reversal of the imperial gaze, exploring the nomenclature applied to Habsburg Austria over the centuries by its archenemy, the Ottoman Empire. While the orientalism of western empires has been thoroughly explored, Yilmaz here shows

how Austria was once contemptuously dismissed in Turkey as *Nemçe*, a loanword from the Slavic languages actually signifying Germany and thus denying Austria any validity as a political entity. While the key points of this contribution could probably have been summarized in fewer pages, Yılmaz's reversal of the imperial gaze is refreshing.

Matthew Rampley follows with a revisionist approach to the concept of modern art in Austria. Focusing particularly on the interwar period, he argues that the periodization of art history in accordance with political history—1918 being the key moment—along with nationalist historiographies on the one hand and an overly “orthodox” understanding of “modern art” on the other have tended to distort the manifest continuities and cultural fecundity that actually characterized the interbellum.

The volume closes with two musicological essays by Philip Bohlman and Ursula Hemetek, who each explore music as an expression of cultural diversity in Austria, both historically (as in Jewish folk music around 1900) or in the contemporary context (as in Romani folk music today).

While the postulation that Austria has always been a heterogeneous, transformative space best grasped through a postcolonial or transnational lens is hardly new, the various essays collected here offer an introduction as succinct as it is complex into the enormous geographic, cultural, and disciplinary variety that makes up Austrian studies today. One potential problem with this volume is that its general focus on identity discourses runs the risk of perpetuating rather than critically deconstructing these, as is evident particularly in the musicological contributions and their problematic claims about “ethnicity.” The focus on the positive legacies of empires, especially Prochasko's essay, might at times seem like a tacit endorsement of imperialism, though perhaps this can also be read as a refreshing nuance on our understanding of the historical phenomenon of empire.

In any case, this volume will make enjoyable and insightful reading for any student of Austrian studies, finally underlining the dire necessity of destabilizing the narcissism of small differences that still proves so divisive in Europe today.

Tim Corbett  
*Independent Scholar*