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*Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in
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Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (review)

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Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl, eds., *Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa—30 Kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2016. 261 pp.

Habsburg Neu Denken presents a collection of thirty short essays, contributed by thirty-four scholars broadly identified as *Kulturwissenschaftler*, each of which is conceived as a sort of *Denkanstoß* designed around a *Stichwort* relating to Habsburg Central Europe. They are organized alphabetically rather than by chronology or context, lending the entire volume a holistic character underscored by the manifold interconnections among its individual components. The volume generally revolves around themes of “Vielfalt und Ambivalenz” and, despite its *kulturwissenschaftliche* focus, the individual contributions draw on a broad range of developments in the humanities and social sciences of recent years, demonstrating the manifest inter- or multidisciplinary of the Habsburg field. This volume, which alongside a wealth of intellectual influences draws notably and explicitly on the work of Moritz Csáky, is not only eminently readable for specialists and laypersons alike, it moreover highlights the remarkably fecund character of Habsburg Central Europe “als heterogener, plurikultureller Raum” and as a “Laboratorium” of “soziale und kulturelle Prozesse” (9). Both the individual contributions and the volume taken as a whole open a myriad of new points of departure into this already much-traversed field of study, finally foregrounding its profound relevance for highly topical and contested political developments in present-day Europe. For brevity’s sake I will address only some of the contributions, especially those that I feel to be the most innovative and those exhibiting a high degree of synergy with each other.

The most intellectually novel contributions introduce concepts to the study of Central Europe on the basis of analytical developments from across the range of human and social sciences of recent years. Anil Bhatti, drawing on his own Indian cultural background, expounds “Plurikulturalität” vis-à-vis multiculturalism, the latter connoting simply the coexistence of diverse and separate groups, however defined, while the former speaks to the patchwork of interconnections and consequently the hybridity of diverse elements in complex societies. This is convincingly modeled as one of the most idiosyncratic facets of Central European cultures, informing moreover the significance of their study for present political society in Europe. In this context, Pieter Judson introduces “national indifference” as a new framework within the

well-established study of nationalist discourses as a means to “de-pathologize Central Europe,” to place identity discourses into their more nuanced contexts, and thereby to “return it [Central Europe] to a comparative European context” (148).

Numerous contributions address such analytical developments, which moreover profoundly inform the present-day political realities of the region. Wolfgang Göderle shows that while many studies have focused on “migration” as the central driving force of cultural, social, and political developments in Central Europe, few have paid attention to the methods by which knowledge of migration was produced in the first place, an issue of central importance considering that many of these methods are still in use today. Simon Hadler explores the function of “Feindschaften” in historic socio-cultural frameworks, offering finally an analysis of the development of the image of the “Türke” in Austria through modernity and into the present day. This trope resonates in numerous contributions to this volume. Of equal political significance, Reinhard Johler examines “Vielfalt” in the Habsburg Empire as a microcosm of Europe, both in contemporary propaganda as well as in historical fact, thereby demonstrating the lessons that the Habsburg context may hold for the future direction of the European Union.

Some contributions explore particular eras of Central European history for their enduring significance in the Central European political landscape. Werner Telesko expounds on the “Barock” as a curious “Projektionsfläche [. . .] des vermeintlich Österreichischen” through the nineteenth century (31), while Peter Stachel explores the divergent and highly politicized collective memories of the 1848 revolutions in a comparative perspective across various successor states to the Habsburg Empire. Waltraud Heindl demonstrates that “Josephinismus” as a form of governance not only describes the specificity of the Austrian Enlightenment but moreover survives in various forms in the political system of modern Austria. In the thematically (and alphabetically) final essay, Helmut Konrad examines “Zerfall” counterintuitively as the era in which most of what is today regarded as quintessentially “Habsburg” Central Europe first emerged.

The contributions I found especially relevant for European political society in 2016 offered discursive analyses of *topoi*, both historical and contemporary, with deep ramifications in the present. Franz Fillafer analyzes “Österreichislam” and the historical legal framework surrounding the treatment of Muslims in Austria, thereby offering, to my mind at least, an incentive to

further explore the parallelisms between this case and the legal history of Jews and other marginalized communities in Central Europe and their application to political society in the present. In a related essay, Johan Heiss examines the notion of the “Christliches Abendland” from the Crusades through to PEGIDA, with further related topics being explored in the contributions by Andrei Corbea-Hoisie (“Halb-Asien”), Andre Gingrich (“Orientalismus”), and Jan Surman (“Postkolonialismus”). Christian Peer, finally, reconceives the charged term integration as a process that is both all-encompassing in society and necessarily ever-evolving or incomplete, involving as it does the “Herstellung oder Erneuerung eines imaginierten Ganzen” (89).

It is hardly possible to do this work justice in such a short summary, though it speaks to the quality of this volume that it was itself able to address such a breadth of innovative scholarship and politically pertinent topoi succinctly but meaningfully in only 260 pages. It is one of those rare works that is enjoyable, thought-provoking, and opinion-shaping not only for scholars of Habsburg Central Europe but also for a broader readership interested in “pluriculturalism” and all the problems and promises it entails, whether past or present, in Europe or elsewhere. It has thus not only demonstrated the continuing fecundity of the field but even succeeded in opening entirely new avenues of inquiry in an already convoluted area of scholarly and popular interest.

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Matej Santi, *Zwischen drei Kulturen: Musik und Nationalitätsbildung in Triest*. Studien zur Kultur, Geschichte und Theorie der Musik. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Analyse, Theorie und Geschichte der Musik an der Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien 9. Vienna: Hollitzer, 2015. 230 pp.

This unique book covering the flourishing life of musical performance and its key nationalistic implications in Trieste throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and into the first two decades of the twentieth is singularly enriched by the author’s fluency in the three languages—Italian, Slovene, and German—of this, the largest sea harbor of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy. It also benefits from Santi’s deep musicological knowledge, which allows