



BOOK REVIEWS

Neighbours of Passage: A Microhistory of Migrants in a Paris Tenement, 1882–1932. By Fabrice Langrognet. London–New York: Routledge, 2022. 216 pp.

Fabrice Langrognet is authority to reckon with. He who holds a PhD from Cambridge, serves as a research scholar at several renowned institutions, and has had a career in the French government. His focus even during his volunteer work at a French NGO was migration and asylum law. His research deals primarily with the everyday lives of working-class migrants in the Paris area, and his most recent book, *Neighbours of Passage*, published as a part of Routledge's Microhistories Series and edited by Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó, builds on this work. In this sociocultural microhistory of migrants living in a few buildings in the heart of Plaine-Saint-Denis, Langrognet offers glimpses of the struggles and identities of the inhabitants of this neighborhood as well as an overview of the world in which they live and interact with one another. Langrognet addresses the questions he raises at a level of complexity that is rarely achieved by historians of migration. While the subject of this book is very much French, the discussion goes beyond France. Langrognet's inquiry merits the attention of scholars of Central Europe as well, as he showcases fresh methodologies and shows the full potential of a microhistorical approach and also speaks about the current, often politicized topic of migration.

In his introduction, Langrognet lays down the fundamentals of this work. He uses a microhistorical approach in the hope of showing more intersectionality, nuance, and complexity than an average migration historian concentrating exclusively on the macro level. He also makes explicit his aspiration to correct grave errors found in the works by migration historians by righting such wrongs as presupposing the existence of bounded ethnic units, presuming national societies at both ends of the migration process, and lastly, concentrating on the macro levels of migration. Langrognet's methods are a mix of digital research drawing on judicial and police records, the press, records of municipal archives, and census records and the use of oral history. Based on this wide array of sources, he aims to answer at least two major questions of migration history: how and why did people migrate and how did the dynamics of sociocultural differences change over time as people moved? To summarize, as any good

microhistorical work aims to do so, Langrognet seeks to question hegemonic beliefs and mainstream narratives.

In the first chapter, titled “Setting the scene,” Langrognet acquaints his reader with the backdrop of his inquiry, calling attention to the different identification processes of the inhabitants. We get to know the surroundings and the specific tenements, down to the individual characteristics of the different buildings and the gradual decay of the tenement, which is due to many different factors. Using several different sources, Langrognet even offers metaphorical glimpses of the interiors of the tenement.

The second chapter concentrates on the social factors. In this chapter, Langrognet explains the major demographic features of the area, the change in health conditions in the timeframe under discussion, and the origins of the inhabitants of the area. He then offers some discussion of the most common occupations of the tenants and the average incomes. Thanks to diligent micro-research, he includes work performed by women, which is often missed or ignored by historians who rely too heavily on official censuses. Langrognet tries to reconstruct the division of labor between men and women based on photographs, though he presents his numerical findings as facts without mentioning the dubious reliability of such photographs as sources. He may have accounted for these methodological problems, but he offers no explanation of this for his reader.

Our individual protagonists return in the third chapter. Langrognet goes through the different motivations for migration. This is where microhistory absolutely shines. We see the individuals in this chapter, the methods they used to relocate, the length of their travels, and so on. Langrognet sometimes identifies the individuals by name and sometimes provides only their addresses, but he is careful not to deprive them of agency. They are portrayed as real actors and not used simply as illustrations. Langrognet uses this approach in the fourth chapter too, which shows the networks that brought new migrants into the community and explores different aspects of chain migration. Unfortunately, this subject is hijacked by a disproportionate focus on the role of child trafficking. As engaging and meticulous as these subchapters are, child trafficking is almost presented as the main form of chain migration at the expense of other important aspects, which brings an otherwise splendid first part of the book to a lackluster close.

The second section of the book opens with a lively image of a wedding, which provides an excellent introduction to an interesting experiment. Langrognet aims

to reconstruct the real scope of intergroup connections, especially marriages, without necessarily putting a distorted emphasis on ethnicity. In order to do this, he uses the distances between people's towns of birth as a metric. He points out that national identification was not the main factor for southern Italian migrants in marriage, for whom regional affinities were more important, whereas Spaniards preferred national ties. He neglects to mention that the very different national histories of the two source countries could easily explain this difference. He also examines aspects of people's cultural identities, such as jobs, beliefs, and spoken languages, which clearly reveal a great deal about the lives and social networks of the inhabitants of the tenement.

Life in the mixed world of the tenements was not free of conflict. The sixth chapter is dedicated to these confrontations. Drawing on police reports, judicial sources, and newspaper articles Langrognet shows that, at least to the extent that these sources reveal, interethnic conflicts were very rare in the tenement. Conflicts were much more common within closely-knit groups that were ethnically relatively homogenous. Langrognet also provides an in-depth analysis of an extraordinarily violent conflict that caught the attention of many journalists at the time. His approach is exceptional: he uses his sources to describe the motivations of the participants in the fights convincingly and to show that, while one might have assumed that ethnicity was the reason for the violence, this was not in fact the case.

Langrognet then showcases instances in which states and individuals negotiated problems of nationality. Though nationality was a clear-cut subject on paper, in practice, things were more complicated. When compiling census data in connection with military service or welfare benefits, state institutions did not rely on the simplistic images this kind of data tended to suggest. Langrognet again draws on accounts concerning the lives of people who lived in these communities, but this time, these figures serve as little more than illustrations. His conclusion is well supported, but this chapter remains underwhelming, as Langrognet makes no genuine effort to use the tools of microhistory to show intersectionality in all its complexity.

The last chapter is dedicated to the period of the Great War, which redrew the borders of people's understandings of nationality and put new limitations on their mobility. Langrognet examines the changing experiences of the residents of the tenements amidst a war, including changes in work opportunities and conditions, the transition from the front to the home country, and new waves of immigration from new sources. Though chronologically this is not the end of

the timeframe of this book, this editorial decision makes sense, as Langrognet can show this shift as the end of an era in this closing chapter.

The conclusion of the book begins with a glance towards the future of the tenement, up to the present day. The author then laments the methodological problems faced by the oral historian due to difficulties of recalling individual experiences and the unreliability of personal memory. Lastly, he confidently summarizes how he wishes, with this book, to inspire other scholars to mix microhistorical accounts and quantitative statistics-based research.

This monograph is not perfect. In some instances, it does not live up to its own expectations concerning the approach of microhistory, for instance when it fails to show the real agency of its actors. But this does not mean that *Neighbours of Passage* is not a great work. For the most part, Langrognet delivers what he promises in his introduction. He uses a wide array of sources very competently, and his arguments are always clear. As one would expect from a former speechwriter for the president of the French Republic, his style is eloquent. Langrognet has a way of painting vivid images, his reasoning is immersive, and the whole book is engaging. It will be intriguing and informative for anyone interested in microhistory, novel methods, and the always relevant questions surrounding migration.

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Words in Space and Time: Historical Atlas of Language Politics in Modern Central Europe. By Tomasz Kamusella. Budapest–Vienna–New York: Central European University, 2021. 250 pp.¹

Tomasz Kamusella is a scholar from Poland whose main fields of research have been language politics, nationalism, and ethnicity, topics he has studied from an interdisciplinary perspective. The idea of his recent book *Words in Space and Time: Historical Atlas of Language Politics in Modern Central Europe* (hereinafter referred to as *Historical Atlas*) came in the mid-2000s as he was finishing his seminal monograph *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe* (Palgrave, 2009). Hence, this interdisciplinary, encyclopedic atlas represents a synthesis of his previous work with the difference that cartography is now given a central place. Inspired by Paul Robert Magocsi's renowned *Historical Atlas of (East) Central Europe* (1992/2019), Kamusella, working in close cooperation with professional cartographer Robert Chmielewski, elaborated a series of annotated maps as spatial expressions “for the formation of political processes that would have been difficult to express in words alone” (p.ix).

The *Historical Atlas* contains 42 chapters, along with a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. Each chapter consists of map(s) and an explanatory text, which is reminiscent of historiographical narratives, as well as reflections on the theoretical concepts on which these texts are based. As he explains in the introduction, Kamusella was born and raised in a multi-ethnic and multilingual region of Upper Silesia (Poland), so he encountered many contradictions between his daily experiences and the narratives to which he was exposed in his formal schooling. This prompted him to re-examine the radical “demographic engineering” which took place in the region. Although *Historical Atlas* resonates with a historiographical approach, it is in a methodological sense based on concepts from sociolinguistics and nationalism studies, such as *Einzelssprache*, dialect continuum, and ethnolinguistic nationalism. The choice of a comparative approach, in Kamusella's view, distances Central Europe (hereinafter referred to as CE) from the self-celebratory monologues disguised as national language histories and reduces any national myopia. By comparing CE with different

1 This review results from the projects Probing the Boundaries of the (Trans)National: Imperial Legacies, Transnational Literary Networks and Multilingualism in East Central Europe financed by the Research Council of Norway (Grant number 275981), and was realized with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, according to the Agreement on the realization and financing of scientific research.

world regions, he aims to show that CE ethnolinguistic nationalism based on the myth of language as a natural (living) entity and the tripartite ideological concept of (one) “language = nation = state” is not necessarily present in other social and political systems.

The *Historical Atlas* moves chronologically, starting with CE’s dialect continua, speech communities, writing technology, and the emergence of states from the ninth century onwards. The maps show simultaneously the official and the unofficial borders of different political entities. With the intention of presenting the dynamics of ethno-linguistic communities and their literary languages, Kamusella chose the milestones in history, mainly those that changed the demographic structure of the region.

Maps 1–6 depict the distribution of dialect continua and writing systems from the ninth century until the establishment of Ottoman rule in the region. These maps distinguish dialect continua and writing systems, “as full literacy became the accepted norm actualized through (...) *Einzel Sprachen* in the meaning of ‘written languages’” (p.8; Maps 1–2). In the first half of the eleventh century, migration and socio-political changes altered the ethnolinguistic makeup of the region, i.e., expansion of Finno-Ugric and Turkic ethnic groups to the Danubian Basin and the gradual division of the original Slavic dialect continua into a north and a south Slavic part (Maps 3–4). Maps 5–6 illustrate the main political, social and ethnolinguistic change caused by the establishment of Ottoman rule across Anatolia and the Balkans, while the west of CE was under Habsburg rule.

Maps 7–10 represent the changes that began to take place in 1721, when many long wars finally came to an end, especially the religious ones, as well as the war between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans. As Kamusella explains, “At that time the logic of expulsions or exterminations was (ethno-)religious in its character, not (ethno-)linguistic” (p.34). Lav Šubarić collaborated on map 9, which shows the Latin-language geography of early modern Europe. Map 10 is devoted to the official languages and writing systems in 1721, when the “separation of a ‘holy tongue’ and a secular *Einzel Sprache* also marked the boundary between the politics of early modernity dominated by religion and the modern age of ethnolinguistic nationalisms” (p.49).

Maps 11–17 elaborate the social, political, and ethnolinguistic changes that took place from 1721 until World War I, changes which further invigorated ethno-linguistic nationalism. The atlas’ series depicting violent “demographic engineering,” including the most important incidences of ethnic cleansing, slavery, and genocide, begins with map 11. Map 12 shows that “neither the rise

and spread of ethnoreligious and ethnolinguistic nationalism across Central Europe during the nineteenth century, nor the founding of successive nation-states influenced in any substantial manner the pattern of the region's dialect continua as obtaining since the late Middle Ages" (p.58). Map 14 shows the isomorphism of language, nation, and state in CE by 1910, revealing that most people in the region lived in non-national polities, e.g., Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, etc. At the same time, ethnolinguistic nationalism was a growing force. Representations of CE topography in different sources in 1910 were elaborated by Michael Talbot (Ottoman Turkish, Map 15), Agata Reibach (Yiddish, Map 16), and Walter Żelazny (Esperanto, Map 17).

Maps 18–25 focus on the linguistic and socio-political processes from 1908 until the beginning of World War II. Map 18 offers an overview of the quasi- or short-lived polities of the period between 1908 and 1924 with a list of 74 state formations. The processes of ethnic cleansing in CE during the Balkan Wars, World War I, and in the aftermath of the Great War are depicted in map 19. World War I "destroyed or dramatically overhauled all Central Europe's polities" (p.91) and led to the dissolution of multinational empires, population exchanges, and increased isomorphism of language, nation, and state (Map 20). Map 21 is devoted to non-state minority, regional, and unrecognized languages and written dialects in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Maps 22 and 23 offer representations of linguistic areas (*Sprachbünde*) in CE. Map 25 shows the growing tendency towards isomorphism of language, nation, and state in CE, while Map 26 shows ethnic cleansing during the 1930s.

Maps 26–31 geographically illustrate and describe instances of ethnic cleansing from the rise of fascism in the 1930s to the end of the Cold War. Map 31 shows the outcome of these violent processes, which were characterized by strong inclinations towards isomorphism of language, nation, and state. Despite the fact that after World War II there was hardly any isomorphic nation-state in Europe and regardless of the political supranational endeavors of the Soviet Bloc and Yugoslavia, ethnolinguistic nationalism was "the sole fully accepted ideology of statehood construction, legitimation, and maintenance across the region" (p.131).

With Map 32 on the Moldavian language and the imposition of Cyrillic and Latin scripts on Moldavian speakers, Kamusella addresses the issue of deviation from the rule of "(one) language-nation-state" in CE. Maps 33–39 bear evidence of, among other things, management of difference in multiethnic regions and universities by the year 2009. Ethnolinguistic homogeneity has been very clearly

maintained as the norm of statehood, despite the fact that multiculturalism is allegedly a priority in the agenda of the European Union.

Map 40, which was coauthored by Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov, provides information on native languages and the religion of the Roma communities in CE. Map 41 depicts place names in CE as written in Silesian. It was made in collaboration with Andrzej (Andreas) Rocznio, one of the first codifiers of the Silesian language.

The last map (42) compares the isomorphism of language, nation, and state in CE on the one hand with the isomorphism of language, nation, and state in East and Southeast Asia on the other, which Kamusella reminds us are the “only two clusters of ethnolinguistic nation-states in the world” (p.176), with the difference that “the former coalesced after 1918, while the latter emerged in the wake of World War Two.”

The Glossary includes short explanations not only of the linguistic terms used in the monograph but also other theoretical, methodological, social, political, cultural, demographic, and legal terms. *Historical Atlas* is certainly a treasure trove of accumulated linguistic, socio-theoretical, historiographical, and geographical knowledge, and it is hard to believe that one man managed to unite all this knowledge in a synthetic overview with a common methodological and theoretical basis of critical sociolinguistic and nationalism studies. Some of the maps, however, can be faulted for a lack of precision or for showing a clear bias towards the argument that Kamusella is striving to present persuasively. Nevertheless, I regard this impressive academic endeavor as a call for dialogical memory and a thorough critical reexamination of European humanistic studies, which to this day remain largely based on national foundations. It should help scholars and curious readers from Central Europe deconstruct the myths that still shape the main ways of thinking and direct political action in the region. In addition, it offers in-depth insights into the emergence and construction of linguistic, national, and political identities from the ninth century to the present day, (re)interpreted through the unusual prism of ethnolinguistic nationalism.

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The Rise of National Socialism in the Bavarian Highlands:
A Microhistory of Murnau, 1919–1933. By Edith Raim. Routledge, 2022.
244 pp.

Acclaimed historian Edith Raim, a scholar of Nazi-era Germany and lecturer on contemporary history at the University of Augsburg, has undertaken a micro-historical approach which challenges prevailing understandings of the rise of the NSDAP in Weimar Germany. She calls into question the common perception that rural Catholics resented the rising tide of National Socialism and were less inclined to vote for Hitler and his party. To reveal other factors which may have influenced Germans apart from the urban-rural and Catholic-Protestant divides, she examines the interwar history of the small Bavarian town of Murnau (today Murnau am Staffelsee). This town is particularly interesting because, contrary to what the grand narrative would suggest, rural Catholic Murnau was aligned with the Nazi party from very early on, while neighboring towns were less so.

Raim divides her book into four chronological parts, each of which offers a detailed overview of political, economic, and cultural developments. As the discussion covers a period of more than 15 years, Raim's account differs from earlier microhistories, which are often centered around specific criminal cases. She is well aware of this detail, and she notes in the Introduction that twentieth-century microhistory is still something of a new genre with its own challenges. The extended timespan and microhistory approach, however, hardly efface the agency of individuals. In fact, this is a pivotal point that Raim makes throughout the book. She aims to put more instances of "everyman" agency into the histories of the twentieth century, which tend to be driven by an impetus towards grand narratives. Raim delivers on this aim, which is arguably the most important and innovative aspiration underlying her narrative. Individual forces, however, come together with those which mobilized a whole community for a cause or rather, in the case of Murnau, against a cause, specifically that of the Weimar Republic.

The first chapter offers an overview of Murnau before the war with a focus on the composition of the population and the power dynamics within the town. The second provides a summary of events from 1918 to 1923. The reader comes to know the entrepreneurial Bavarian town, in which individuals who belonged to the middle and upper classes held near absolute political and social power. World War I had a huge impact on the town's community, as many male citizens (more than the German average) died on the frontline and injured veterans returned to the town in 1918.

The collapse of the monarchy and the proclamation of the Bavarian Soviet Republic in 1919 exacerbated sentiments of despair and anger. The backlash against new ideas and the social upheaval in the fundamentally traditional highlands were immediate and long-lasting. The *völkisch* movement, which rested on the pillars of social traditionalism, antisemitism, anti-republicanism, and the *Dolchstoß* myth, emerged almost immediately, and the NSDAP fed on this sentiment from the outset.

It was crucial in these times that prominent individuals in Murnau, such as leaders of the social clubs and influential figures in the local press, became ardent Nazi supporters themselves. By 1923, when hyperinflation peaked and the Beer Hall Putsch was orchestrated, Murnau was lost to *völkisch* and specifically National Socialist beliefs. The existence of a decent number of alehouses in the town where people could gather and the inclination of retired or discharged officers to retreat to a conservative milieu gave this movement even more momentum.

The third chapter details how the relative stability in Germany in the mid-1920s did not change anything substantially in Murnau when it came to politics. There were two reasons for this. First, pro-NSDAP community leaders were already entrenched in Murnau, and though they faced a few setbacks, they were nonetheless able to maintain local party influence even after the failed coup attempt. Second, the 1920s did not really “roar” in the highlands. Because of the prevailing sense of economic insecurity, fear of falling incomes and falling social status was nigh universal among members of the Murnau middle class. This gave rise to a campaign against department store chains, for example, where antisemitism again was often used.

Finally, the fourth chapter examines how the NSDAP managed to achieve an absolute majority among the voters of the town. While their direct involvement in local council politics turned out to be a half-success at best, their grip was so strong that Murnau residents preferred antisemitic tropes to the facts they were perfectly able to see with their own eyes. During the Great Depression, a Jewish benefactor fully funded a hospital for the town, creating employment for many destitute workers. He was commemorated on a plaque for his gratuity (which was taken down when the Nazis took over the country), but the whole affair did not affect Murnau voter preferences. It did not help that a pivotal local bank went bankrupt, deepening the economic crisis in the region. Furthermore, the Nazi instigators of a local mass brawl were let go with near impunity by the courts. If

anyone in Murnau was still on the fence about the power of the NSDAP and the precariousness of the Republic, this also seemed to offer a clear answer.

I have two minor concerns about Raim's otherwise excellent book. The first concerns a phenomenon I personally would have liked to have read a bit more about. Based on the story Raim tells, Murnau citizens were fluidly alternating between two collective identities, loyal subjects to an all-German ("Prussian," nonetheless) ruler on the one hand and rebels against an unjust tyrant on the other, evoking heroes of local peasant rebellions. This switch depended on whether the ruling party in Berlin suited their ideological communal preferences. On the surface, this suggests a very utilitarian and opportunistic approach, which is not something one would expect from a small rural town, even putting pro-Nazi sentiments aside.

My second reservation, however, concerns the conclusion of the book. Raim contends that Murnau offers an example of how Weimar democracy gradually eroded and died, but I would argue that, based on her findings, this is not quite the case. Even if NSDAP candidates did not win an absolute majority in the town before November 1932, Murnau was already a lost cause. Apart from a few fledgling years in the early 1920s, local politics was dominated by the Nazi party or its stand-in formation, the *Völkischer Block*. Interwar Murnau clearly consistently resented and detested the Republic, and supporters of pro-Weimar parties were in the permanent minority once the local elites put their lot in with the far-right after 1923. Even if one argues that this had happened because the pro-Weimar parties had given up on Murnau, this does not necessarily prove Raim's point. Democracy was not slowly suffocated on the shores of the Staffelsee. It died in its infancy.

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The True Story of the Christmas Truce: British and German Eyewitness Accounts from the First World War. By Anthony Richards. Barnsley: Greenhill Books, 2021. 228. pp.

The recent monograph by Anthony Richards examines the famous Christmas truce of 1914 between the British and German soldiers on the Western Front. Richards is the head of the Documents and Sound Department at the Imperial War Museums and a best-selling author who has published several popular academic books about the military history of World War I and World War II. His recent monograph aims for a wide audience while also trying to contribute to more focused academic discussion.

Although historians have written a fair amount concerning several aspects of the temporary ceasefire, Anthony Richards' monograph is important in part simply because of his unique methods of researching and writing. First, he focuses on the voices of individuals by using oral history. Second, he seeks to debunk widespread misconceptions about the Christmas Truce familiar from television and musical adaptations. Third, unlike many earlier works, he uses German sources, including interviews and memoirs, to discuss the events of December 1914.

As Richards notes at the beginning of the book, the most important problem is that we have inherited a rather distorted notion of the story of the ceasefire, as most people focus only on the football match played between the enemy troops. This has served as the basis for other distorted or simply inaccurate notions, such as legends which were born in the autumn of 1914 related to the hopes for the end of the war.

The book has eight chapters in addition to the foreword, introduction, and conclusion, and it can be divided thematically into three main parts. The first part offers a general overview which deals with the current knowledge and most important preconceptions about the event. Richards contends that the temporary ceasefires that were held on the Western front on Christmas Eve or in the first days of the new year can be explained by the principle of "live and let live." As we know, there was an informal agreement between the enemies regarding ceasefires under extraordinary circumstances, such as poor weather conditions or the need to bury dead soldiers. This simply means that soldiers were reluctant to initiate aggression under these circumstances. As a ceasefire was actually held on Christmas of 1914 that was more extensive in space and time, one can understand why this ceasefire has been judged in a special way

in the historiography. Contemporary writers and later historians had difficulty fitting it into the narrative of the bloody war. Marxist historians even interpreted it as a proletarian uprising.

In the second section, Richards writes about the conditions and causes which led to the temporary ceasefires. He shows the pre-truces which evolved in November and December thanks to the closeness of the trenches. There is no doubt that the fact that soldiers could give something to the soldiers fighting for the other side also contributed to the ceasefire: as we know, there was a huge social action in the last months of 1914, when a large number of packages from the hinterland were given to soldiers. This created the set of circumstances in which the first steps came from the German troops. Richards notes that the sight of a Christmas tree was important, as were the sounds of Christmas carols, because these sights and sounds could awaken empathy in soldiers on both sides. Namely, the religious side of that time of year had considerable significance, as Christmas meant a sort of moment of relief in a soldier's life, even for soldiers who were not religious.

Richards also points out that the temporary treaties were scattered across the western front, which means that the event in question (the Christmas truce of 1914) was not part of a larger contiguous peace. Only two-thirds of the English line was affected by the temporary ceasefires, which can be explained by a few factors. At the same time, as truces were formed in an informal way between commanders, one would assume that soldiers themselves took little part in the process, apart from exchanging meals or cigarettes or telling each other jokes. But the fact is that an array of extraordinary events took place during the Christmas truce. For instance, some of the German soldiers had been hairdressers before the war, so they cut the English officers' hair. Soccer matches were also memorable moments of the ceasefires, though they were merely spontaneous events and not part of some organized choreography.

The third thematic section of the volume contains the last three chapters and deals with the afterlife of the Christmas truce. Richards writes about the reasons for the ceasefire, and he sums up its most significant characteristics. He emphasizes that ceasefires were not a result of spontaneous initiatives. Rather, they were a clear sign and symptom of the human desires which first found expression in the autumn of 1914. He notes that Christmas was significant not only for Christians and thus the Christmas season could touch everyone involved in the events. At the same time, the most important reason behind the ceasefires was the desire among soldiers to improve their living conditions, as they were

unable to repair the trenches and bury the dead when under constant artillery fire. As there was no precipitate at Christmas, it an ideal period to deal with these tasks. Some shared culture and shared traditions also facilitated communication: one advantage on the western front was that some German soldiers could speak English, as they had worked as hairdressers in Great Britain before. This enabled the two sides to communicate by shouting from the trenches or even showing notes to enemy soldiers when the opposed trenches were very close. The shared language also made propaganda less effective and, indeed, less common on the western front in 1914. However, as Richards adds, this was the last great ceasefire. In the later years of World War I and throughout World War II, fighting was more aggressive, as military techniques changed and resulted in more casualties.

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Citizens without Borders: Yugoslavia and Its Migrant Workers in Western Europe. By Brigitte Le Normand. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. 286 pp.

The most recent monograph by historian Brigitte Le Normand, *Citizens without Borders: Yugoslavia and Its Migrant Workers in Western Europe*, explores the relationship between the Yugoslav state and its migrant workers during the 1960s and 1970s. Like other parts of the European South in the post-World War II era, Yugoslavia witnessed mass migration to the economically booming states of Western Europe, first and foremost to the Federal Republic of Germany. Yugoslavia was unique in being the only state-socialist country that officially permitted migration to the capitalist side of the Iron Curtain, and Le Normand reconstructs key features of this migration with empathy for the protagonists which is matched by her scholarly rigor.

How migrants were perceived and constructed as subjects is the focus of the first two empirical chapters of the monograph. Le Normand then proceeds to unpack the ways in which the Yugoslav authorities at a range of levels, from the federal and republican right down to the municipal, sought to build and maintain relationships with Yugoslavs abroad and how migrants responded to these efforts. This represents the bulk of the study, seven of the ten chapters. The Yugoslav authorities intervened to shape migrants' understandings of home and to advocate on their behalf, in part to ensure that the understanding of these migrants as "our workers temporarily employed abroad" retained some of its plausibility and thus kept these individuals within the fold of the imagined community of Yugoslavia.

Le Normand draws on sources from historical archives in Croatia and Serbia as well as Yugoslav scholarly publications, print media, and films from the 1960s and 1970s. The exclusive focus on Yugoslav sources (as opposed to, say, historical archives in Germany and Austria) is a well-considered choice justified by her argument that the Yugoslav authorities had similar worries and hopes for Yugoslav migrants, regardless of which Western European state they were located in. Approaching a large phenomenon like Yugoslav migration to Western Europe, which involved millions of people by the 1980s, necessarily involves a degree of selectivity. Le Normand's approach has been to focus on the Serbo-Croatian speaking, Yugoslav-side of a broader transnational web of actors as she documents the Yugoslav state's cultural, informational, and educational programming across Western Europe during the 1960s and 1970s.

The introduction provides a succinct historiography of Yugoslav labor migration in Europe, noting that it was hardly a novel phenomenon, as patterns of seasonal and long-term migration had existed previously, often on a mass scale. Le Normand draws on Yugoslav social scientists who produced much research on migration as it was happening (e.g., Ivo Baučić), as well as outsiders who began to weigh in on the evolution of Yugoslav labor migration policy and the extent to which it would facilitate development or not (Carl Ulrich Schierup). Yugoslav disintegration and war shifted the attention of researchers to different kinds of migrants, namely refugees and people who were becoming part of a growing diaspora. Over the course of the past two decades, however, researchers have returned to the topic of labor migration with the critical distance that comes with hindsight. Le Normand sets the stage here for an exploration of elements of mass migration in postwar Yugoslavia, problematizing the ways in which knowledge about migrants was produced, measured, and (re)framed by the Yugoslav state and assessing how migrants were governed and administered transnationally. She very quickly deconstructs knowledge production achieved by drawing on the work of social scientists (i.e., experts with claims to objectivity), and cultural knowledge expressed through film (with film being informed by both expert knowledge and stereotypes, cultural tropes, anxieties, and the creative impetus of individual filmmakers) is presented as a productive way to gain insight into how labor migrants were perceived by Yugoslav society. Chapter Three provides a deeply insightful overview of migrants on film, with the common thread being that the phenomenon of migration and individual migrants are portrayed as problematic or somehow deviant. What remains to be addressed, however, is the reception of such films by their audiences. How were these film narratives interpreted by Yugoslavs at home and abroad?

Chapter Four examines the phenomenon of the Zagreb-based radio show “To Our Citizens of the World” and the creation of an affective community and central node connecting migrants and their families and friends, as well as state institutions. The agency of migrants comes to the fore here with the claim made by program director Cino Handl that migrants were a particularly challenging and sophisticated audience. Following this, Le Normand turns the focus to the Croatian periphery of Imotski, a major center for labor migration. This chapter (the fifth) provides a microstudy of the Croatian Spring, which politicized the issue of labor migration during what was probably the most serious crisis of Tito’s Yugoslavia until the 1980s. In Chapter Six, the focus

is expanded to Western Europe, as Le Normand examines how the Yugoslav state turned to associational life to address ideological contradictions in its labor migration policy and to counter the influence of émigré groups that were hostile to newly arrived migrants. Such associations can be considered “nodes in a transnational web of governance” (p.138), going beyond the notion of an imagined community (such as radio and print media) to offer concrete sites for an embodied experience of home and community making.

Voice is again given to migrants in Chapter Seven through an analysis of responses to surveys conducted by the Zagreb-based Institute for Migration and Nationality. The timeframe, 1970–1971, ensures that the socioeconomic and political issues of concern coalescing around the Croatian Spring remained prominent and migrants “talked back” about how to best “fix” Yugoslavia. The final two empirical chapters focus on education. Chapter Eight reconstructs the attempts to build a transnational education system for the second-generation Yugoslavs in Western Europe by drawing on the experience of other southern European countries and taking into account the need to cohere with the policies of host states. Chapter Nine then extends this discussion to include perspectives on the women and men who facilitated this education. Yugoslav teachers in Western European states demonstrated considerable agency despite being constrained by the states which were hosting them and the states which had sent them. It also considers the themes of importance for migrants, above all love for the homeland (with the homeland being quite often diffuse or not fully defined).

Homeland, in its “nested” form, i.e., extending outwards from the family and the local community all the way to the republic and the federation, is again invoked in the conclusion, in which Le Normand maps out suggestions for other fruitful avenues for future research, including perspectives from outside the Serbo-Croatian core which this study focuses on and a more thorough exploration of the dynamics of migration and return migration in the 1980s during the mounting tensions of the post-Tito era. Le Normand has provided an extremely comprehensive and readable account of the multifaceted phenomenon of Yugoslav labor migration. The study covers a lot of ground; in fact, each individual chapter could be extended into a much longer standalone study. The most innovative feature is the way in which the author deftly moves between the various levels of analysis to offer empirically varied perspectives of the Yugoslav state (from the municipal level to the federal level) *and* the individual migrants. The book is likely to be of interest not only to scholars of Yugoslavia but also

to readers with an interest in migration history more generally. It is surely one of the most authoritative accounts of Yugoslav labor migration, and it will feature prominently in further research and teaching on this subject.

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Victim of History: Cardinal Mindszenty, a biography. By Margit Balogh. Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2022. 934 pp.

Margit Balogh's biography of Cardinal Mindszenty is providing a balanced and detailed (934 pages) narrative of his life based on an extraordinarily wide scope of primary documents from numerous archives in various parts of the world. Her biography is a translation of parts of the two-volume Hungarian monograph (more than 1,300 pages) that was published in 2015 in Budapest (Research Centre for the Humanities).

This monograph tells in nine long chapters and numerous sub-chapters (about 100) the various stages of Mindszenty's life. Chapter One begins with his childhood in a small village, followed by Chapter Two, which covers the 25 years he spent working as a teacher and priest in Zalaegerszeg. Chapter Three covers his tenure as bishop of Veszprém during the last years of World War II, when he was imprisoned by the right-wing Arrow Cross Movement, allied to Nazi Germany. Chapters Four and five recount his appointment to serve as Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of the Catholic Church of Hungary and his first conflicts with the postwar government, the Communist Party, and the Soviet occupation army, when he became the leader of the anti-Communist opposition. Chapter Six deals in detail with his arrest, torture, and the staging of the show trial against him, followed by Chapter Seven, which covers the six years of imprisonment until he was liberated during the Revolution of 1956. The eighth tells of his 15-year stay as a "guest" of the US Legation (Embassy since 1967), where he had found refuge in 1956, and the complicated negotiations between the Vatican, the Hungarian Communist government, and the US concerning his departure. The final chapter narrates the last five years of Mindszenty's life in exile (Vienna) and his conflict with Pope Paul VI, which ended in his removal from the chair as archbishop in 1973. The book ends with brief conclusions.

The detailed narrative provided by this extraordinary biography of Mindszenty (born József Pehm) offers many fascinating insights into Hungarian history. For this review, I would like to select only a few of the less well-known parts of Mindszenty's life, since research has focused almost exclusively on the few years during which he served as primate of Hungary, between 1945 and his arrest in 1949, as well as his role in 1956.

In Balogh's account, we learn about Mindszenty's adventures in western Hungary, where he was prominent as a socially and politically active priest in the Horthy period, which spanned two and a half decades of his adult life.

Mindszenty is presented as an engaged parish pastor who organized Catholics for his cause, had a new church built, and opened schools and caritative institutions. He was a very skilled organizer who did not shy away from confrontation, almost reminiscent of the famous fictional Italian character Don Camillo, the antipode of the Communist mayor, Peppone. Mindszenty founded a press (Zrinyi Printing and Book-Selling Co.) and a newspaper in 1920–21 (*Zalamegyei Újság*) in order to spread the messages of his legitimist and irredentist tendencies and his criticisms of the Horthy regime (pp.39–40). In the mid-1920s, he actively supported a legitimist candidate of the opposition (p.70–75). In 1938, he celebrated the First Vienna Award and gave his open support to the Imrédy government before getting slowly alarmed about growing German influence in Hungary and the anti-clerical tendencies of Nazism (pp.86–89). During World War II, Pehm became Mindszenty, probably in protest against rising German influence (the name Pehm is etymologically rooted in the German word “Böhme” or bohemian), and he was appointed to serve as bishop of Veszprém. In this function, Mindszenty reacted to the beginning of the Holocaust in his dioceses. On June 7, 1944, the *Zalamegyei Újság* published a speech by Mindszenty in which he stated that the church has been “antisemitic,” but that she would defend all those who were baptized, because the church “cannot abandon natural law” and “without proven crime and legal judgement, the life of no-one can be taken away.” (p.118). But after almost all the Jews in the area had been deported to Auschwitz, Mindszenty admitted in a letter, “we could have done more and been more forceful” (p.120). A few months later, he was arrested by the Arrow Cross because he refused to take an oath and protested against the senseless prolongation of the war. This arrest was most probably one of the reasons why he was later selected to serve as archbishop of Esztergom and primate of Hungary, since it demonstrated to Pope Pius XII that Mindszenty would not shy away from personal sacrifice in a difficult time. Such was probably the “strong personality” the Pope was looking for in a country that had been occupied by a hostile, anti-Catholic army.

Other not so well-known episodes of Mindszenty’s life include the fifteen long years he spent in the legation (which only became an embassy in 1966) of the United States between his flight on November 4, 1956 and the day he left for Rome on September 28, 1971. Balogh reflects, as in other parts of the book, about the radically changed political, social, and cultural context in which the cardinal found himself and his ideas. Now, in a time of détente and negotiation between the United States, West Germany, and the Communist governments of the Soviet Union and its Central and Eastern European allies, his strict anti-

Communism seemed to be anachronistic. This was when Pope Paul VI, who had trouble understanding Mindszenty and his stubborn character, called him “a victim of history.”

This book is extremely significant not only for readers interested in twentieth-century Hungarian history, but also for those interested, more generally, in the history of the Cold War, as well as the diplomatic and church history of the twentieth century. No comparable biography of Cardinal Mindszenty exists in English. The scholarship and the analysis of his personality and the historical context are very sound, and the text is based on thorough, exemplary analysis. The documentation is comprehensive and of outstanding quality. This is now the standard biography of Cardinal Mindszenty. None of the numerous, mostly hagiographic or superficially critical books about his life can compare to the scholarly quality of this impressive study. Margit Balogh has written a profound and readable biography of one of the most fascinating figures of the twentieth century.

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The Women's International Democratic Federation, the Global South and the Cold War: Defending the Rights of Women of the Whole World? By Yulia Gradskova. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021. 212 pp.

In her article published in 2010, historian Francisca de Haan made an important historiographical intervention, arguing that the work of the “leftist feminist” organizations is left unknown in Western historiography due to still prevalent Cold War legacies.¹ To demonstrate her point, she referred to the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), an international leftist organization dedicated to peace, women's rights, anti-colonialism, and anti-racism. After this, scholarship on the work of the WIDF began to flourish, gradually providing the WIDF with its rightful place in the historiography of women's history. This position is now assertively confirmed through Yulia Gradskova's new book *The Women's International Democratic Federation, the Global South, and the Cold War*.

Yulia Gradskova explores the work and development of the Women's International Democratic Federation in the period between 1955- and 1985. She focuses on the work for, and with, women from the countries of the Global South-Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Working within the frameworks of transnational history and postcolonial feminist studies, Gradskova critically reviews the internal and external dynamics of the WIDF, exploring the discussions, conflicts, and broad network of collaboration that shaped this organization.

Relying on the interplay between micro and macro history, Gradskova examines both development of the WIDF, and personal accounts of this development. She draws her arguments from a variety of primary sources, most of which are held in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF). Following Chiara Bonfiglioli's classification, Gradskova describes sources as external—materials aimed at external readers, and internal, materials circulated among the members of the organization. To challenge the selective nature of the external sources—public speeches, periodical publications, and bulletins), Gradskova offers a close reading of the sources, often going against the grain. This is well illustrated through her analysis of the changing discourse of the organization amidst the changes emerging from the post-1945 political, economic, and social developments in the international order. The internal

1 De Haan, Francisca, “Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women's Organisations: The case of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF),” *Women's History Review*, 19, no. 4 (2010): 547–73. doi: 09612025.2010.502399

documents, such as protocols and minutes of congresses and meetings, and correspondence among the members, deepen her analysis, offering revealing insights into the inner life of the WIDF.

Divided into nine well-structured thematic chapters, this monograph navigates readers through the most dynamic period in the history of the WIDF. Chapter One serves a twofold purpose: it outlines the history of the WIDF, situating it in the historiography of the transnational women's movements. Building on de Haan's conclusion concerning the absence of the history of the WIDF in the historiography of women's movements, Gradskova further notes that, interestingly, the history of the WIDF was also neglected in the historiography of women's movements written in state-socialist countries. Nonetheless, she highlights a noticeable growth in scholarship related to the WIDF, with new perspectives offered by authors such as Katherine McGregor, Pieper Mooney, and Kristen Ghodsee—to name a few. Lastly, Gradskova argues that the roles of the women from the Global South are only just starting to be explored, and a special issue of the *International Review of Social History* dedicated to Women's Rights and Global Socialism (and including three articles on the work of the WIDF, one by Gradskova), proves her point.

In the second and third chapters, Gradskova takes her readers through the early development of the WIDF, its ideology, and its activities. She addresses two enduring assumptions (phrased as accusatory questions) concerning the WIDF: was WIDF a Soviet pawn used for foreign policy goals, and was WIDF a purely communist organization? Analyzing internal documents exchanged between the Committee of Soviet Women (CSW) and its representatives at the WIDF, Gradskova skillfully provides an answer to the first assumption, showing that even though the Soviet Center did try to influence the work and development of the WIDF, playing an important role for the organization, the WIDF still operated under its own steam. This was made possible through the work of individual members of the WIDF, who forthrightly challenged WIDF's methods and tactics. Gradskova also persuasively addresses the second assumption: using numerous examples, she shows that the WIDF was not a homogenous communist organization but an organization consisting of activists of different political affiliations, whose activism and ideas shaped the organization's trajectory.

While the book has a very clear structure, Chapters Three and five create a comprehensive whole, interrupted, unfortunately, by Chapter Four. While Chapter Four discusses the ideology of the WIDF, built on the idea of struggle for peace and protection of mothers and children, Chapter Five argues that

WIDF based its view on women's rights on the state-socialist and, especially, the Soviet model. As Gradskova demonstrates, the Soviet model of emancipation was most often propagated through the images of the representatives of the Soviet Central Asian Republic, which functioned as tools with which to legitimize the success of the state-socialist program for women and to attract women activists from the Global South. This goal was also achieved through organized visits of the representatives of the Global South to the Soviet Union. This led to the establishment of a broad, transnational network of contacts and friendships among the activists which, it could be argued, were among the most important achievements of the WIDF.

Chapters Four and Six are intrinsically connected. The former discusses how the problems of women from the Global South were discussed within the WIDF, and the latter focuses on the role women of the Global South played in the organization. Chapter Six deserves special consideration, as it stands out as one of the most exhilarating chapters of the book. First, it demonstrates how WIDF, as a transnational organization, reacted to the strikingly changing world during the years of independence struggles and decolonization. Second, it serves as proof of the importance of the agency of individual activists for the development of the organization. Using numerous examples, Gradskova describes how women from the Global South called for structural and organizational changes that would make the WIDF more inclusive, less white, and more prepared to struggle with the problems encountered by women from newly independent countries.

The agency of individual activists is a topic further explored in Chapter Seven, in which, through the lens of microhistory, Gradskova analyses biographies of prominent WIDF activists: Fanny Edelman, Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim, Salwa Zayadeen, and Funmilayo Ransome Kuti. By approaching the subject from this perspective, Gradskova allows her readers to see how individual activists experienced and contributed to the conversations on women's rights amidst political and social transformations of the postwar world. The following chapter extends this discussion to the human rights era of the 1970s and 1980s, showing how the rise of the radical feminist movement in the West influenced the expansion of the activities of the WIDF towards the Global South. The last chapter offers a summary of Gradskova's conclusions concerning the history and heritage of the WIDF.

Overall, what distinguishes Yulia Gradskova's book is her ability to tell a nuanced history of an organization, showing that WIDF was not a monolithic

organization existing in a vacuum but a transnational organization shaped by the changing political, economic, social, and even geographical landscapes of the postwar world, and the activist practices of its members. Although aimed at an audience with previous knowledge of the topic, this book represents a long-awaited examination of transnational left women's activism. It thus constitutes a substantial contribution to the historiography of women's history. Finally, given the wealth of information it contains, the variety of thought-provoking perspectives from which it approaches its subject, and its interdisciplinary character, this book will serve as an excellent resource in educational environments and will spark new discussions and debates on this important topic.

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