

Polish forestry practices, the planting of 5.4 million trees coincided with a Polish interest in reforestation (226).

In general, two common problems recur throughout the volume: the authors use the term “Great Stalin Plan for the Transformation of Nature” to refer to Stalinist economic development as a whole, and they work from the assumption that the Great Stalin Plan was the work of Trofim Lysenko. In truth, the Great Stalin Plan was the result of a scientific struggle inside the Soviet government, initiated by those who worried about the dangers of Stalin’s industrial policies, and who resented Lysenko’s interference in their work. The plan was accompanied by a considerable amount of bombastic propaganda, but at its core was an intention to protect and improve Russian hydrology. The authors effectively point out that the plan, designed with specifically Russian conditions in mind, failed to transform nature in eastern Europe when exported there, but their true item of concern is Soviet economic and scientific imperialism. The Great Stalin Plan, with its emphasis on afforestation, was among the least harmful aspects of Soviet domination.

STEPHEN BRAIN
Mississippi State University

Phantomgrenzen und Regionale Autonomie im Postsozialistischen Südosteuropa: Die Vojvodina und das Banat im Vergleich. By Đorđe Tomić.

Phantomgrenzen im ostlichen Europa. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2016. 357 pp.

Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Tables. €32.90, paper.

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Despite its subtitle, which promises to offer a comparison between Vojvodina and the Banat, Đorđe Tomić’s monograph on “phantom borders” and regional autonomy in southeastern Europe is primarily a study of the recent history of Vojvodina and its autonomist movement. According to the author himself, the comparison between the two regions is “asymmetrical,” and the example of the Banat serves as a foil for the story of Vojvodina (53).

This, however, in no way diminishes the quality and import of this thorough work. Building on the German research project, “Phantom Borders in East Central Europe,” which has already produced several interdisciplinary theorizations of the concept of “phantom borders,” and positioning himself within the spatial turn in the social sciences, Tomić focuses on the political history of Vojvodina since the “yogurt revolution.” An outpouring of popular discontent in the provincial capital of Novi Sad in the fall of 1988, instrumentalized by the then-leader of the Serbian communists, Slobodan Milošević, was the watershed event (which Tomić identifies as the first act of the Yugoslav break-up) that resulted in ousting the Vojvodinian leadership and initiating the process of stripping the province of its autonomy. Understanding “phantom borders” as “earlier, mostly political borders or territorial divisions that, even after politically abolished, continue to structure space” (51), Tomić asks “how, by whom, and to what purposes were the respective conceptions of space constructed in Vojvodina and the Banat” (45).

The central part of the book is a lengthy, 160-page chapter on Vojvodina that follows the theoretical introduction of the concept of “phantom borders,” the review of current literature, and Tomić’s assessment of the field of study. The long chapter first traces the history of the idea of autonomy in Vojvodina and suggests that, contrary to the claims of its political advocates from the Milošević era who prefer to base it in the province’s Habsburg legacy or borderland status, it emerged politically during

the period of the Yugoslav socialist federation, especially after the 1974 constitutional changes, which carved a wide political, economic, and cultural space for autonomy. The author then chronicles the history and the aftermath of the “yogurt revolution” and situates it in the wider context of the crisis of late Yugoslavia, positing that the 1988 events in Novi Sad simultaneously marked the end of autonomy for Vojvodina and gave birth to the autonomist discourse (115). The latter was formulated and propagated by a number of Vojvodinian political parties, civil society NGOs, and some media outside the Milošević regime’s control. The author provides a detailed account of this critical nexus, followed by an assessment of the political and discursive impact of the idea of autonomy for Vojvodina: while the political impact, judged by the electoral success of the autonomist parties, left much to be desired, the idea of autonomy itself and the “phantom borders” that were abolished in the 1990s remained widely accepted among the population (204–5).

The much shorter chapter on the Banat tells a two-fold story about, on the one hand, the “myth of the Banat” within Vojvodina itself as a constitutive part of the province (together with Srem and Bačka) and, on the other, of the Romania-centered transnational discourse about the Banat as a formerly-central European region spanning three successor countries of the former Habsburg Empire (Serbia, Hungary, and Romania). As stated previously, this chapter mostly serves as a foil for the story of Vojvodina and its specific constellation of political and societal actors and their employment of the “phantom borders” discourse. The chapter nevertheless offers a rich account of the history and strategies of various civic initiatives, from environmental activism in the Serbian industrial city of Pančevo to the academic discipline of “Banat studies” in Romania, in defining the Banat as a specific cultural and political space.

In the end, Tomić suggests that “phantom borders,” and the “return of history” more generally, gain in political importance in times of radical change from one political model to another. In the case of Vojvodina, as he recounts in the book, this occurred during the violent transition from autonomy within the Yugoslav socialist federation to a subordinate position within a new, centralizing, greater Serbian entity. It is in times like these, Tomić asserts, amidst fundamental political disagreements about a society’s past and future, that prior historical paradigms become rallying points for political mobilization. This stimulating monograph offers important insights into the politics of reimagining and mobilizing the Habsburg heritage in Vojvodina and the Banat, and contributes to debates about history, memory, and politics more generally.

EMIL KERENJI

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Cleansing the Czechoslovak Borderlands: Migration, Environment, and Health in the Former Sudetenland. By Eagle Glassheim. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016, ix, 275 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Maps. \$28.95, paper.

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Eagle Glassheim’s study traces the recent history of Czech border regions. Until the end of the Second World War, these regions were inhabited predominantly by ethnic Germans. Following the war, Czechoslovakia’s Germans were “cleansed” and their land resettled by Czechs, Slovaks, and Roma. Although forced migrations in Czechoslovakia have previously received a lot of scholarly attention, here the author has offered a new and original approach, focusing his research on the social and environmental dimensions of the problem. Glassheim analyzes how the expulsion