Lemberg. Die vergessene Mitte Europas by Lutz Kleveman (review)

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Bloomsbury Group. In both cases, Gusejnova presents German-speaking intellectual elites as either sounding boards for or conduits of ideas of empire and Europe. Alfred Rosenberg's affinity for a chivalric past—which Gusejnova links to his attraction, as a Baltic German, to the Teutonic Knights, and to his encounters with intellectual and political circles in 1920s Munich—translated into an emphasis on pedigree in Nazi ideology and in an imagined future empire. With a different political result, a "post-imperial melancholy" brought together German and Austrian elites (in particular Kessler) and the Bloomsbury Group, though the translation of these connections into ideas of Europe is less clear (225).

Through her copious examples and wide-ranging research, Gusejnova gives the reader a sense of the world of these aristocratic elites as well as the world they had lost. Gusejnova follows three chronologies (historical events, "situations in which the past is remembered," and "intellectual production") in order to map a genealogy (literal and intellectual) as well as a transnational network (245). This volume of detail as well as the expansive range of topics included, however, at times obscures the central thread of the chapters.

In *European Elites and Ideas of Empire, 1917–1957*, Gusejnova brings to light a dense transnational network of German-speaking intellectual elites. While links between these individuals, their ideas, and later European integration are less clear, Gusejnova demonstrates that these German-speaking aristocratic elites established new internationalist roles and influence for themselves in nationalist, postimperial Central and Eastern Europe.

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Lemberg. Die vergessene Mitte Europas. By Lutz Kleveman. Berlin: Aufbau, 2017. Pp. 315. Cloth €24.00. ISBN 978-3351036683.

The dismantling of multiethnic Central Europe, begun after World War I and completed after the next one, is a subject of considerable historical importance, the narration of which shapes much of the discourse about contemporary European society and politics. Setting aside the attempted destruction of European Jewry, which is universally understood as a moral outrage, there is much room for debate about how one discusses the fates of the other peoples of Europe after 1945. Writing a history of the respective dislocations, forced migrations, and territorial rearrangements among the various postwar peoples—Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Latvians, Ukrainians, Romanians, and Germans—is not a benign project. Narratives and experiences are contradictory; opposing claims are equally legitimate; timelines that recall a century can be undermined by those that recall four. Even the most careful historian must write from a particular vantage point, draw a boundary, and choose a frame.

In his new book, *Lemberg: Die vergessene Mitte Europas*, Lutz Kleveman joins an important and growing body of research aimed at chronicling the experience and demise of multiethnic prewar East Central Europe. Taking as his focus the city of Lviv, Kleveman tells the story of how a place that once embodied cosmopolitan urbanism was gradually transformed, often by violent means, into an almost entirely monoethnic city. He writes: "Lemberg könnte hier als *pars pro toto* stehen, als eine Stadt, deren Geschichte vergleichbar ist mit der anderer mitteleuropäischer Städte von Vilnius bis Czernowitz, von Danzig bis Reichenberg" (19). His title, which retains the German name of the city, alludes to this prenationalist past, and is clearly meant to conjure up images of Lviv's historic multiethnicity, rather than imply a politics of Habsburg neorevanchism.

Kleveman's narrative moves backward, beginning with the city today and interweaving a contemporary ethnography of the twenty-first–century urban landscape together with documentary accounts of the people and ideas that once made it a center of Polish and Jewish culture. Kleveman's style is taken, in part, from that of travel literature, with the author as scholar-guide, leading the reader in and out of libraries, archives, cafés, market places, and private homes, in search of a language that is at once evocative and analytic. One of his greatest intellectual debts is to the Italian novelist and academic Claudio Magris, whose *Danube* (1986) evoked the complex interwoven cultures of pre-1939 Central Europe.

Lemberg is divided into eleven chapters, almost exclusively focused on the years after the outbreak of World War I. Kleveman has an easy, flowing style, and the capacity to take the reader into the library and then out onto the street again. One of the strengths of the book is how much emphasis he places on compelling stories and intriguing anecdotes. For example, in chapter 5, Kleveman reconstructs that most archetypical of Central European urban spaces: the café. In this case, it is Lviv's Schottisches Café, the meeting place of a group of preeminent mathematicians, who sit at their tables, perform calculations, and converse while the politics of Europe roil at ever higher temperatures around them. And, in that same chapter, we meet one of Kleveman's most fascinating contemporary interlocutors, Larissa Kruschelnitzka (Krushelnytska), a historian and former director of the Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library. In her Viennese-accented German, the eighty-six-year-old recounts for a rapt reader the once seamless cultural byways that allowed privileged Central Europeans to see themselves in the middle, rather than at the margins of the continent.

It is impossible, in a book like this, for the murder of East European Jewry ever to be far from the surface. Kleveman investigates what remains of the built heritage of the Jews of Lviv—strikingly little, considering the size of the community before World War I. Only a single synagogue still stands, as well as an overgrown cemetery and the faded paint of Hebrew lettering on the exterior walls of prewar shops. It is a

stark absence, but not an unusual one. Yet what Kleveman seeks to do—and often does well—is to find the balance between the unique atrocity of the Holocaust and the other innumerable and immeasurable horrors endured by all the occupied and displaced peoples of twentieth-century Europe. There is no longer a meaningful Polish presence in Lviv, something that required immense violence to achieve. And, in an important chapter, Kleveman writes about Stalag 328, the German concentration camp for Soviet soldiers at the Lviv Citadel, where more than 140,000 prisoners perished. (Major research on this site is only available in Ukrainian, which makes Kleveman's chapter that much more important.)

I have only a minor quibble with the overall structure of *Lemberg*. Kleveman's subtitle, *Die vergessene Mitte Europas*, implies (at least to this reader) that he will spend some good part of the book on the way Lviv was and felt when it embodied the cultural melting pot that was Habsburg Europe. Yet that period in the city's history occupies only his first chapter. Instead, *Lemberg* is really about the dismantling of *Mitteleuropa*—of the murder and forced migrations and political decisions that, in less than half a century, transformed Lviv from a Polish and Jewish city into a Ukrainian one. Still, this is a relatively minor objection with what is otherwise an insightful and evocative portrait of a city that for centuries embodied—and in many ways still does—the diversity, creativity, and abundance of East Central European culture.

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Projektionen der Moral. Filmskandale in der Weimarer Republik. By Kai Nowak. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015. Pp. 528. Paper €44.00. ISBN 978-3835317031.

While political historians have time and again studied the functions and effects of political scandals in the increasingly mediated public spheres of Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany, film scholarship has often treated the topic rather anecdotally and taken the logic of "scandalous" communication as a given. Child prodigy and avant-garde filmmaker Kenneth Anger chronicled sordid episodes in the lives of various Hollywood stars of the classic era in his notorious *Hollywood Babylon* (1959), often relying on no other evidence than sheer gossip. In *Film as a Subversive Art* (1974), Amos Vogel, the Austrian-born founder of the New York film club Cinema 16, attempted to identify the formal, content-related, and thematic transgressions that gave his selection of films (mainly international art house cinema from the 1960s and 1970s) what he deemed a "subversive" quality. Based on his 2012 doctoral dissertation, Kai Nowak's *Projektionen der Moral: Filmskandale in der Weimarer Republik* can lay claim to being the first systematic, empirically exhaustive, and methodologically reflected study of public scandals triggered by motion pictures in the tumultuous period between World War I and the Nazi seizure of power. Taking his cues from