

take others to the Citadel, a rescue operation famed, Wetzstein marveled, as far as the Caucasus, where he was lauded by a fellow freedom fighter, the Imam Shamil. Indeed, “hundreds of Muslim families had also taken in the fugitives.” Thanks to their “big-heartedness” (153) most of the city’s 25,000 Christians survived.

Huhn’s book is fascinating but frustrating. It is pockmarked with often unexplained and sometimes inconsistently romanized Arabic words and titles; incomplete citations (158n315); unremarked discrepancies; and unasked questions (what was Wetzstein *doing* during those long Berlin furloughs—thirteen months in 1859–60?). Huhn has mastered Wetzstein’s voluminous papers and looked at diplomatic documents, but Ottoman officialdom, of which the consul was so critical, is condemned to silence, as are—except for five titles (one completely irrelevant)—all work published since 1989. Thus, Huhn misses the opportunity to bring Wetzstein’s observations into conversation with scholarship that rests on a different “archive”—such as Leila Fawaz’s *An Occasion for War* (1994) or Caesar Farah’s *Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon, 1830–1861* (2000). What would the well-meaning consul, so contemptuous of Fuad Pasha, have thought of the Fuad Pasha in Engin Akarlı’s *Long Peace* (1993)? Does Wetzstein’s account of the generosity of Damascene Muslims put pressure on Ussama Makdisi’s *Culture of Sectarianism* (2002) or does it reinforce his argument? Such questions require interpretation, but Wetzstein’s author disappears behind her subject, and the reader is the poorer for it.

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Tangible Belonging: Negotiating Germanness in Twentieth-Century Hungary. By

John C. Swanson. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017. xxi, 456 pp.

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Tangible Belonging analyzes the history of rural German-speakers in late nineteenth and twentieth-century Hungary. This population, whose core component is also known as Danube Swabians, played an important role in the southern Hungarian provinces regained from the Ottoman Empire around 1700 and resettled by a broad variety of ethnic groups. Due to their cultural diversity, some of these territories fell to Romania and the newly created Yugoslavia after World War I. The study follows the transformation of Danube Swabian identity within the changing borders of modern Hungary.

Based on his long experience with examining the interplay of German and Hungarian influences in central Europe, which also expressed itself in his 2001 study *The Remnants of the Habsburg Monarchy: The Shaping of Modern Austria and Hungary, 1918–1922*, John C. Swanson is superbly qualified to undertake this research. He uses an impressive array of sources, which include not only local chronicles, church log-books, museum collections, fictional literature, newspapers, and the plethora of ethnographic research done on these villages in the interwar era, but also perceptive interviews conducted with local informants in both German and Hungarian. Together, these sources deliver a detailed portrayal of Danube Swabian life since the late 1800s.

The study shows the conflicting influences that widened the previously localized horizons of rural German-speakers. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 had given ethnic Hungarian elites virtual control of their half of the Habsburg Monarchy. They considered the Kingdom of Hungary a nation-state and tried to adapt

its multicultural reality to this concept. In response to the resulting pressure to assimilate, domestic German-speakers developed differing strategies. Whereas one subsegment embraced Hungarian language and culture as a pathway to social and economic advancement, another expanded its previously local sense of Germanness and began to define itself as part of a wider, cross-border German community.

Swanson traces this dualistic transformation of the German-speaking population throughout the twentieth century. After the turmoil of World War I and the resulting disintegration of historic Hungary in the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, the minority reorganized within the smaller and more homogenous interwar state, in which the approximately 500,000 German-speakers formed the largest linguistic minority. Following the rise of National Socialism in Germany, domestic minority questions were integrated into a broader international context. In the late 1930s, Magyar nationalism increasingly defined Germans as well as Jews as racially defined outsiders, but the political alliance with Germany, which allowed Hungary to regain some of the territories lost after World War I, necessitated concessions to domestic Germans. Like in many other European countries, a younger, more radical generation of German minority leaders saw its future in cooperation with a resurgent Germany and adopted National Socialist elements into its ideology and especially public presentation. Whereas this realignment provided temporary improvements in the minority's cultural and political status during a few wartime years, it prepared the postwar backlash that resulted in the expulsion of half the minority and its marginalization in postwar society. It took decades until a new German minority reemerged, with a fragile cultural base that generally no longer rests on local dialects learned as a mother tongue, but on a standard German consciously reacquired as a second language.

Tangible Belonging delivers a rich picture of Danube Swabian life in modern Hungary. Its presentation is not restricted to political developments, but includes captivating descriptions of social mores and practices. As a consequence, the book sometimes struggles to find its place between a historical analysis of the formation of a modern German minority in Hungary and an ethnographical study of rural folkways among Danube Swabians. It is not a linear investigation leading us directly from question to answer, but a thick description full of detours and byways.

The author painstakingly documents the process of nationalization that gradually turned members of linguistic communities into national groups. He might have wanted to elaborate more extensively on the relationship between these findings and his theoretical introduction, which draws heavily on literature that questions this process. He defines his core concept of "tangible belonging" as the matter in which people understand the place in which they live, in other words, as a concrete and localized sense of self and place. Swanson convincingly describes the local foundation of the villagers he examines. They professed varying and mutable expressions of German identity, but were simultaneously very different from their colinguals in Berlin or Saxony. These findings highlight the regional diversity and political polycephality of German life, which historians such as Celia Applegate and Fritz Fellner have defined as the very hallmark of German identity.

With his new book, John C. Swanson has filled an important gap in the English-language historiography on twentieth-century Hungary and the forming of national minorities. At times, the study may have been strengthened further by a greater focus on theoretical and thematic stringency. Its thorough and nuanced analysis of an often-neglected topic, however, will prove invaluable to an international audience.

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