

James Hodkinson and John Walker, ed. *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History: From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013. Index. vii + 259 pp. Cloth.

This collection of twelve papers written by European, American, and Indian Germanists offers analyses of German attitudes toward “*das Fremde*” approximately from the mid-eighteenth to mid-twentieth century. Topics include an attempt to contrast (favorably) Wilhelm von Humboldt’s approach to languages with that of the French and to see its continuation in Jürgen Habermas’s writings; German travels in the Mahreb; Friedrich Schlegel’s, M. C. Sprengel’s, and Willie Haas’s writings on India; observations on how the mid-nineteenth-century German press treated “the Jew, the Turk and the Indian”; Austrian assessments of Turks and Southern Slavs; the Hungarian struggle with identity; a Czech (partly Germanophone) venture into “noncolonial orientalism” (210); and Oriental sexuality as seen through the male and female European travelogues. Finally, straddling the fence between German and Russian Orientalist narrative comes an exceptionally good chapter on tsarist Russia and its contiguous Asian colonies. The papers meet the formal criteria of scholarly discourse: while many of them amount to summaries of what other Germans have written rather than offering significant analysis, they are well copyedited and footnoted.

Several papers emphasize Germany’s spectator role with regard to colonial ideology and the aggressive aspect of Orientalism. They argue that since Germany had no overseas colonies (German ventures into Africa and Oceania were short-lasting), German Orientalism was mainly a scholarly enterprise rather than an attempt to exercise rhetorical violence. By and large, the authors exonerate Germany of real colonial engagement and labor to confirm German self-esteem rather than exploring the German ways of rhetorically subjugating the weaker European or overseas subjects. Instead of concentrating scholarship on such vital issues as Germany’s long history of colonialism with regard to its eastern neighbors, the scholars in question retreat into the safe territory of French colonialism or the kind of “Orientalism” interested primarily in “biblical exegesis” (57). There is a self-congratulatory tone in some of the essays. The authors tend to identify “Central Europe” with “Germany,” a typical example of geographical appropriation that is not even aware of its ugly side. For instance, a German-language preacher of mid-nineteenth century in Vienna is called “the most celebrated preacher of his time in Central Europe” (152). Never mind that half of Central Europe did not speak German, let alone be familiar with said preacher.

Even though non-German scholars have also contributed to this volume, it has to be described as largely narcissistic. The chapters say little about the peoples subjected to Orientalist interpretations, while the authors often insist on the literal use of the word “Orientalism” (speaking of “‘distant’ Orient” or “‘close to home’ Orient” [153, 154]), thus defining Orientalism in an archaic way, as “European discourse about the Orient” (42). The authors seem unable to see beyond the formulations of their philosophical predecessors. It is as if scholarship done in other countries were non-existent to them. Books such as Robert Nelson’s *Germans, Poland, and Colonial Expansion to the East: 1850 through the Present* (Palgrave, 2009) or Shelley Baranowski’s *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge, 2010) are not mentioned, let alone Said’s *Culture and Imperialism*, the reading of which could have diminished the authors’ hunshakeable faith in the authority of Germanophone historians constructing East-Central Europe’s near-invisibility in domestic scholarship. Said’s marginal comment about Germans not having colonies outside Europe is rubbed in in an obvious way, but what is passed over in silence is Said’s suggestion that land grabs and rhetorical appropriation of conquered territories are at the core of Orientalism regardless of whether it is exercised with regard to overseas territories or directed at lands being in geographical proximity. Discussing German Orientalism without mentioning its obvious centerpiece, namely, the construction of a narrative exonerating Prussia from planning and executing (in cahoots with Russia and Austria) the cannibalization of the Polish state in the late eighteenth century is like narrating German doings in

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World War II without mentioning the Jews. The studious implication of most of these articles is the invisibility of Poles as an undisputed segment of German identity. The carefully constructed story about the innocuous German Orientalism would break down if the invisible Poles claimed analytical attention. It is disingenuous to speak of “German Orientalism” with regard to Algeria or German colonialism in Europe during the Middle Ages (58) while avoiding the elephant in the room—German rhetorical efforts to assume intellectual authority over the East-Central European territories. It is almost as if the secret article of the 1797 convention (“abolishing everything that might recall the existence of a Polish kingdom,” quoted from Adam Zamoyski, *The Polish Way: A Thousand-year History of the Poles and their Culture* [London: John Murray, 1987], 5) were still in effect. I would not raise these objections had the book not been titled as it has. But in pretending that German Orientalism is innocent of what Said attributed to the British and the French, these scholars reinforce Germany’s colonialist script about Central and Eastern Europe. After Said, it is impossible to exculpate Orientalism from the tendency to rhetorically pacify and marginalize a territory conquered by force of arms, while making sure that it does not speak back to the hegemon. Thus the absence of overseas colonies is no excuse for excluding Germany from the belligerent aspects of Orientalist scholarship.

Knowledge of “Central and Eastern Europe” does not run deep in these articles, with the exception of the study of tsarist Russia mentioned above and an interesting study of nation-building in Hungary (this last study doubles up as a fine introduction to Hungarian culture in the time period involved). From one article we learn of the existence of “the kingdoms of Bohemia, Galicia, and Hungary” (80). Galicia (the name imposed on *Malopolska* after conquest) has never been a kingdom; it was the part of Poland appropriated by Austria during the Partitions (1772–1795). What should one do with the following statement?—“Russia itself, under the pressure of the Pan-Slavist movement, constructed a cultural and religious identity distinct from Western Europe” (11). The old Radio Erevan joke about free bicycles being distributed on Red Square comes to mind in response: *Is it true that on Red Square they are giving away free bicycles? Yes, although not on Red Square, but in the streets of Moscow. And not bicycles, but cars. And not giving away, but stealing.* Finally, the history of Silesia as presented in one of the chapters would raise the eyebrows of both Czech and Polish historians (59, 61).

On balance and in spite of conscientious footnoting and competent editing, the volume is more of an expression of the pathology of power still present in German self-perception than an accurate description of German Orientalism. Kristin Kopp’s *Germany’s Wild East: Constructing Poland as Colonial Space* (U of Michigan P, 2012), is to be recommended as a good introduction to the subject.

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Marina Frolova-Walker and Jonathan Walker. *Music and Soviet Power, 1917–1932*. Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2012. Musical notation. Bibliography. Index. xxvii + 404 pp. \$99.00 (cloth).

Marina Frolova-Walker and Jonathan Walker’s *Music and Soviet Power, 1917–1932* is an ambitious project that aims to trace the evolution of music culture from prerevolutionary Russia into the early years of the Soviet Union. The authors’ analysis is structured around cultural continuity and the changing music environment while focusing on events in music high culture—the opera and ballet theatre, for example—from Moscow and Leningrad. The volume’s source material largely consists of documents from music criticism, many previously untranslated, including newspaper articles, reviews, and personal accounts of music life. The study addresses the ways that Soviet policies impacted the music community from a number of different angles