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Review by: Patrick H. O’Neil
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Meanwhile, book producers policies of awakened of work chemical contexts ernizationcies reusability expense advanced construction accessible destruction. Understand Self-Consuming to theoretical interest gent logics they do not come to the table. While looking at the references, sociologists seek the structure of various cases. They attempt to understand how these contexts shape the development of Eastern Europe, Hungary, and China. While reforms were mostly successful, some failed because of the challenges of socializing with heavy industry. They made efforts to introduce market policies, but these were not fully understood. Hungarian environmental experts presided over the creation of temporary toxic waste dumps in rural areas, which ultimately became wastelands and environmental disaster areas.

By the mid-1980s, popular environmental protest compelled both the state and producers to confront the problem of leaking chemical waste dumps. The alliance of awakened citizens and ecologically minded experts, combined with the "thriftful material culture" (158) inherited from metallic socialism, set the stage for renewed ecological modernization in the 1990s. But this promise remained unfulfilled, argues Gille, and she places the blame squarely at the feet of the European Union (EU). Official EU discourse champions the preventative approach. But in practice, EU aid and loans were directed solely to developing an extensive network of dumps and incinerators, to be built by firms from existing EU member states. Thanks to the dominant "backwardness discourse," aid agencies overlooked Hungary's infrastructure and technical expertise in waste reduction, while setting the country on a regressive developmental path to a "throwaway culture" (192). Meanwhile, the EU's neoliberal reform agenda reduced the state's capacity to regulate the construction of treatment facilities and the flow of hazardous wastes from west to east.

Both theoretically engaged and empirically rich, this book is of broad interest to students of (post)socialism. It makes a pathbreaking contribution to the environmental studies literature on Eastern Europe, a field Gille rightly criticizes as dominated by atheoretical "narrow policy analysis" (11). The Hungarian case study is framed within a "social theory of waste" as a socially and materially constituted hybrid, which is of particular interest to sociologists and critical analysts of capitalism. Gille's writing is always crisp and accessible and at times wonderfully eloquent, making the book suitable for graduate or advanced undergraduate courses.

KATRINA Z. S. SCHWARTZ
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In this work, Maria Csanádi (Institute of Economics, Hungarian Academy of Science) seeks to model communist party-state systems in terms of their dynamics and eventual destruction. In this there lies a puzzle: Why did communist systems vary so dramatically, particularly in how they reformed themselves or failed to do so? This is a field of study that was heavily explored a decade ago, with "new institutional" approaches seeking to understand these questions through reference to theories of organization as understood in economics, sociology, and political science. Self-Consuming Evolutions aims to add to this work by looking generally at the organizational logic of communism, as well as the divergent cases of Hungary, Romania, and China.

While this is a laudable effort, Csanádi's work will find a limited audience. The author attempts to build a complex model of connections between party, state, and economy, laying out various paths of interaction that result in a jumble of figures, arrows, and subscripts. Certainly, it is important to understand different dependencies inside party-states and how this shaped their functions and performance, but the quest to "model" such
activity uncomfortably recalls the behavioral movement in the social sciences in the 1960s, when scholars adopted the language and imagery of science without testable hypotheses or consistent data.

Moving past the theoretical portion of the work, Csanádi provides a comparative study of her three cases, and here too we are left with more questions than answers. The author seeks to address a whole host of questions that get at the ostensible differences between Hungary, Romania, and China, but as with her theoretical approach, the questions are so broad as to defy easy explication. The three cases are so different in so many fundamental ways that there are virtually no variables to control and no easy way to understand causality, much less correlation. A more ethnographic study of these cases might have been able to work within the difficulties of such diversity to tease out some observations. Attempting to marry grand theorizing to three case studies disappoints, as it requires a different range of evidence and method.

Finally, one is left expecting that this study will conclude with a discussion of the implications for politics after communism. How did the nature of party-state relations under communism affect the current postcommunist landscape in Romania and Hungary? How can these answers be generalized to other postcommunist countries in eastern Europe? And what are the implications for China, whose transition is still underway? While Csanádi looks at China up to the present, the discussions of Hungary and Romania after 1989 are limited to a few pages each, making it difficult for the reader to compare the cases or know what lessons from eastern Europe can or should be applied to the Chinese case. Above all, we hope that if Hungary and Romania can be compared to China, then some suggestive conclusions about the latter’s eventual transition from communism should be forthcoming. If not, then the goal of such comparisons in the first place is open to question.

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In her illuminating study, Talk of the Nation: Language and Conflict in Romania and Slovakia, Zsuzsa Csergo takes up the question, vexing in the best of circumstances, of how a democratic state can resolve competing cultural claims when more than one national community considers the same territory its “homeland.” The cases of Romania and Slovakia are well suited for comparison. In addition to a shared history of communist rule and recent regime change, both have substantial ethnic Hungarian minorities resulting from twentieth-century border changes with neighboring Hungary. The cases also differ importantly. Slovakia was part of Hungary until 1918, and Slovaks were intensely pressured to assimilate, while the only part of Romania previously under Hungarian rule is Transylvania. Slovakia is also newly independent—founded in 1993 after Czechoslovakia’s Velvet Divorce—while Romania’s statehood is long-standing. Both differences, Csergo argues, have implications for minority-majority relations.

Drawing on a variety of sources, including personal interviews with key political leaders and scholars and an array of domestic media sources, and situating the discussion in historical context, Csergo traces the Romanian and Slovak debates over and the development of language policy from communism’s end to the period surrounding accession into the European Union (EU). Her clearly written and detailed account of the zigzagging paths of language regulation in education, public spaces, and government—at times more accommodating to minorities, at times much less—is the most comprehensive treatment in the English-language literature.

Two main lines of argument emerge from this exploration. First, Csergo holds that “debates over language use demonstrate the continued significance of nationalism (both majority and minority) and territoriality in the heart of Europe, despite the overwhelming ambitions to integrate into a common European space” (2). She offers ample evidence that the Slovak, Romanian, and ethnic Hungarian elite orientations (not to mention those