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This is a pioneering study, but a good deal narrower than its title might seem to suggest. It treats largely of official *Umgang* with ‘subjects’ and ‘citizens’ in the juridical sense, particularly with specific groups of them, in the British and Habsburg empires. Comparison of these two polities is suddenly coming into vogue, but still distinctly underdetermined in research terms. Thus Gammerl’s perspectives are refreshing, but rather circumscribed; highly suggestive, but carrying limited explanatory power.

Gammerl presents three case studies, each juxtaposing territories from the two empires and exploring different interactive themes. The first set is Canada and Hungary, as a couple of ‘dominions’, both defined in constitutional respects by legislation of the same year, 1867, which had secured them a large measure of home rule. Alike these countries witnessed an increasingly ethnic interpretation of citizenship and a drive within their own boundaries for more integral allegiances, what the author engagingly identifies as ‘staatsbürger-schaftsrechtliche Binnenhomogenisierungsprozesse’.

The second pairing, of Austria (in its Cisleithanian sense) and India, gives rise to a more extended comparison. Both these polities sought to implement top-down state-based criteria for citizenship, and to resist bottom-up ethnic-based demands. Yet each had to acknowledge the ethnic principle as its institutions of representative government emerged. In Austria this culminated in the so-called Moravian Compromise of 1905, which was paralleled in part for India by the Montagu–Chelmsford electoral reform of 1918–19. In the first case, national self-identification by the individual came to be replaced, or at least complemented, by objective rules; whereas India gradually moved to a proportional system for the protection of minorities. Austria evolved multiple linguistic categories as markers of ethnic difference, against the essentially binary system, European versus non-European, that developed in India. Austria’s elaborate rules for scrutiny are set against the say-so of local officials in India.
Thirdly, British East Africa and Bosnia-Hercegovina are compared—two territories which shared an uncertain status in their respective imperial systems. Bosnians, as residents of a land jointly administered by Austria and Hungary, were placed in a position inferior to that of other citizens of the Monarchy; East Africa was not deemed a full British colony, so its natives had no legal rights at all. Officials in Bosnia-Hercegovina tried to cultivate forms of non-ethnic identification, that is, loyalty to the province as a whole; but this was increasingly recognized as an abortive quest, so a complicated curial suffrage evolved. In East Africa an electoral system eventually came into being in 1919 that confirmed the absolute gulf between Europeans and natives, with Indian settlers grudgingly accorded a limited stake.

A final expository section, on the United Kingdom itself, shows how fluid were its ground-rules for citizenship. The statist-territorial principle tended to prevail, along with the *ius soli*. However, some ethnic criteria came to be added, especially to restrict the rights of Jewish immigrants. By now some of Gammerl’s connecting themes have emerged clearly. Thus evidently East European Jews were a point of reference for administrators in both empires. More unexpectedly, we discover that both developed their regulations for dealing with protected persons abroad from experience of claimants living in the territories of the Ottomans.

Contrasts are more marked, notably the opposition between the *Untertanen* and the *Staatsbürger* in Gammerl’s title. British ‘subjects’, he finds, lacked a foundation of explicit legal equality, against Austrian ‘citizens’, a notion which incorporated the entire weight of the Josephinist state reform initiated over a hundred years earlier. Yet it was the British Empire that grew more hierarchical and centralist, at least by the end of the nineteenth century. And it was there that a series of deep and irresolvable clashes emerged, as differences of class and religion came to be perceived more and more in ethnic terms. Gammerl concludes that institutional racism marked the British Empire, whereas it operated only unofficially (mainly as anti-Semitism) in Austria–Hungary.

This is difficult ground. Gammerl does not want to be simplistic, and some of the distinctions may be terminological (he tends to apply the word *rassisch* only in extra-European contexts anyway). But he has an important claim to make:
My findings clearly contradict received characterization of the British case as a shining example of liberality and of the Habsburg Empire as a Völkerkerker and bastion of authoritarian forms of rule . . . [T]he legal precepts which determined treatment of ethnic heterogeneity in the Austrian context, that is, neutrality and acknowledgement, rested neither on racial discrimination nor on ethnic exclusivity, and thus appear from today’s perspective as it were more modern than the imperialistic logic decisive for the British case (pp. 317, 337).

Gammerl therefore sets himself firmly against recent commentators such as László Péter who, likewise constructing paradigms of a ‘western’ and an ‘eastern’ evolution, with Great Britain and Habsburg central Europe as their exemplars, have argued more or less the opposite. Of course, ‘progress’ can be a highly ambiguous concept: one case noted by Gammerl is how the mechanisms for extension of the suffrage to women might serve only to confirm ethnic prejudice.

There is a further large claim advanced through this book: that the years around 1900 were decisive, since they represented the beginning of the end for both—indeed all European—empires. The Jahrhundertwende inaugurated changes in attitude which, once espoused in the new arena of mass politics, would progressively undermine them. Gammerl links this above all to accelerating processes of migration and mobilization, which certainly tended both to promote ethnic identification and to subvert multinational states. The First World War, on this analysis, only exacerbated things further, though it would surely be unwise to underplay the significance of events in 1918–19, even for the British Empire.

What, we may wonder, were the criteria for Gammerl’s choice of particular cases and comparisons? It might be thought that India, in its territorial and jurisdictional complexity, had more in common with the Old Reich than with Austria; or that Hungary, in its close proximity to the heartland, but its legal, cultural, and institutional distinctiveness from it, had more in common with Scotland or Ireland than with Canada. Evidently Gammerl has managed only a first sampling of attitudes within the Weltreich (even if India, indeed, always lay at the heart of them). And those attitudes were never uniform: he
himself points to some substantially divergent tendencies between subcontinent and dominions. The Habsburg Monarchy was a far smaller and, in global terms, simpler operation (it had, for instance, no equivalent to the Indian settlers in East Africa). There too, however, the categories employed can appear rough and ready. Whereas Gammerl recognizes a clear differentiation between Austria and Hungary for many salient purposes post-1867, there are also verdicts on ‘Austria–Hungary’ as a single entity that may at times elide this.

Gammerl does not offer us much insight into society as a whole, or into wider notions of nationality, beyond his world of legislation and administrative memoranda. It would have helped had he reflected more on the nature of the officialdoms involved in generating the evidence he has exploited, as individuals and as groups, along with their socio-cultural background and professional assumptions. One way in which he might have illuminated mental presuppositions would have been through some investigation of mutual perceptions, whether at the level of diplomatic contact or through the impressions of independent observers on one or other side of the fence, such as Henry Wickham Steed and Josef Redlich.

There is, however, already much to ponder in this careful and thoughtful study. Altogether Gammerl has followed some curious byways, as the primary sources dictated. Inter alia he investigates a Hungarian suffrage law which never became effective; protection for British nationals in Siam; the niceties of the status of Bosnians in other parts of the Monarchy; and obstacles to British naturalization that were rarely overcome, even for the United Kingdom (Karl Marx was refused on the ground that ‘this man has not been loyal to his own King and Country’, p. 226n.), let alone for East Africa, which admitted only one person in fifty years (p. 184). Such curiosities will hardly need to be revisited. The rest of the book, however, and its larger arguments, call out for critical evaluation. It is the great merit of Gammerl to have set some of the terms for real comparative analysis of his two empires.

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