



Forging a Multinational State: State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War (Stanford Studies on Central and Eastern)

By John Deak

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The Habsburg Monarchy ruled over approximately one-third of Europe for almost 150 years. Previous books on the Habsburg Empire emphasize its slow decline in the face of the growth of neighboring nation-states. John Deak, instead, argues that the state was not in eternal decline, but actively sought not only to adapt, but also to modernize and build. Deak has spent years mastering the structure and practices of the Austrian public administration and has immersed himself in the minutiae of its codes, reforms, political maneuverings, and culture. He demonstrates how an early modern empire made up of disparate lands connected solely by the feudal ties of a ruling family was transformed into a relatively unitary, modern, semi-centralized bureaucratic continental empire. This process was only derailed by the state of emergency that accompanied the First World War. Consequently, Deak provides the reader with a new appreciation for the evolving architecture of one of Europe's Great Powers in the long nineteenth century.

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Editorial Review

Review

"It is not everyone who can turn bureaucrats into the protagonists of an interesting and readable tale. That is, however, exactly what John Deak accomplishes in [this book]. Each chapter begins with an arresting anecdote that Deak then uses to launch an important analytical intervention into our current understanding of Habsburg history." (Alison Frank Johnson)

"John Deak has produced an excellent study of the Habsburg bureaucracy's state-building project from 1790 to 1914. Based on thorough archival research and deep knowledge of the relevant secondary literature, this ambitious and engagingly written volume is a most welcome addition to the literature on the modernizing Monarchy." (Nancy Wingfield *Northern Illinois University*)

About the Author

John Deak is Assistant Professor of European History at the University of Notre Dame.

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