

REVIEWS

Acta Poloniae Historica
114, 2016
PL ISSN 0001-6829

Anselm Doering-Manteuffel and Jörn Leonhard (eds.), *Liberalismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2015, 347 pp., index of persons

Edited by two renowned German historians, this collection of conference papers raises a subject that is apparently thoroughly marginal. Although the twentieth century reminds of a whole lot of ‘-isms’, not too many would probably point to liberalism. The selection of the national varieties of the liberal ideology made by the volume’s contributors seems even more astonishing. Although we can find articles on the United States (by Maurizio Vaudagna) and the United Kingdom (Dominik Geppert), most of the authors deal with less-known liberals from the central and eastern part of continental Europe. With a predominant focus on Germany, there are articles, one each, about Italy, Denmark, and Poland. Such a selection of case studies is intriguing; definition-related problems appear as its less advantageous consequence. The question of which of the ideological mutations under analysis is (still) liberalism, and which is not, reappears many a time as one reads the book.

The volume opens with an introduction penned by the two editors, who describe the twentieth-century liberalism as a ‘moving target’, an ideology undergoing thorough change that extends to the features once deemed constitutive. For instance, Doering-Manteuffel and Leonhard ask whether the middle class has really always been the target of the ideology. The increasingly strict marriage of liberalism and socialism in the post-war Western Europe enables them to have doubts in this regard. Another key question is with regard to the balance between the idea of individual’s freedom and the idea of social justice: both occupied an important place within the liberal ideology (and, even more so, practice) after 1918. As far as the period after 1989 is concerned, the authors cannot see virtually any unambiguous characteristics that would make any version of liberalism ‘genuine’, which can be interpreted as a success (adaptive capacity) of this political option or its failure (dissolved in other ideologies, liberalism might have lost its specificity).

The book moreover comprises thirteen essays, grouped into chronologically arranged chapters; the whole content is crowned by a brief summary authored by Lutz Raphael, a historian of historiography and expert in the twentieth-century Western European social transformations. The first section,

composed of three articles, opens with an essay by Andreas Wirsching, focusing on a current he calls 'sceptical liberalism'. What is meant by it is a continental, primarily German, tradition of ordoliberalism, whose roots reach back to the former half of the nineteenth century and which still proves to be vital. As opposed to 'classical' Anglo-Saxon liberals, ordoliberals have never believed in an inherent and natural harmony between market and morality. They believed, instead, that the degenerations of market primarily needed to be rectified and the conservative values protected – family, in its traditional concept, first and foremost. Facing the social change taking place after the Second World War, ordoliberals lost their hope that it would be the middle class to do the necessary task of rectifying the market. Consequently, they began casting 'the State' for the role – in specific, 'democratic state under the rule of law'. As Wirsching shows, even the Mont Pèlerin association, rightly considered a nursery of radically market-driven neo-liberalism, fell in the 1950s under influence of ordoliberals such as Wilhelm Röpke, Alexander Rüstow, or Walter Eucken. The idea of state intervening in the market is part of the heritage of liberalism as well as of libertarian currents, Wirsching remarks. The subsequent essay, by Michael Freeden, deals with similar issues, this time depicted in a broader light. Starting with a description of leftist liberals in the United Kingdom in the first half of the twentieth century, the author outlines an extensive panorama of Western varieties of the ideology. Interestingly, it becomes clear through such a comparative approach how relative political epithets tend at times to be. In his search for a parallel for the British liberal Left, Freeden points to Scandinavian social democrats, for instance. In Germany and France, economic liberalism tended to associate with left-oriented views on economy (to quote, "an ideology with its wallets on the right and its heart or, more specifically, its civic conscience on the left"; p. 65). The third essay in the section is by Jörn Leonhard, the co-editor. In contrast to the other two authors, he confines himself to the very short period of the First World War and analyses the factors responsible for the universal crisis of liberalism in the following two decades – that is, militarisation, reorganisation of the economy, the triumphs of imperialism, collectivist trends in culture and, finally, the socialist revolution. As Leonhard notices, Europe entered the interwar period in an ambience that fostered novel and before unknown models of politics based upon charismatic leadership and open to dangerous utopias. This did not yield a good climate for liberals, indeed.

The second chapter includes four articles encompassing the period of the crisis whose beginnings have been outlined by Leonhard. The authors argue that in spite of the adverse trends occurring in the high politics (or, perhaps, thanks to an extent to the political downturn), liberals developed at that time the very interesting propositions, most of which were ultimately social democratic. One of the most interesting among them is discussed by

Philipp Müller in his article on the interwar neo-liberalism in France and Germany. In spite of what is generally considered 'neo-liberalism' today, in the period concerned, the naming ('neo-') did not refer to market-related orthodoxy: on the contrary, it had to do with consent for the state's intrusion in economy and belief in the efficiency of permanent negotiation between employers and employees. Interestingly, exponents of French and German industry were of the opinion that the model of consensual market economy they proposed was an efficient panacea for the crisis that severely affected the parliamentary democracy at the time. The subsequent essay, by Tim B. Müller, portrays a milieu that was complementary to the managers of great industry analysed by Philipp Müller. High-level officials in the Weimar Republic, Julius Hirsch and Robert Schmidt among them, worked on merging the two objectives that were often perceived as not reconcilable: economic growth and full employment policy. In the parliamentary realities of interwar Germany, they were usually identified with social democracy but their views on economy were based on their attachment to market economy. A number of actions taken by them were targeted at finding a liberal response to the challenges cast by the socialist and fascist (still limited to Italy then) economic policies. In the summary, Tim Müller resolutely proposes the view that an ideological mixture of this very sort has contributed to the twentieth-century notion of liberalism. The theoretical aspect of this same phenomenon is discussed by Marcus Llanque: his essay analyses the attempt to embed a leftist liberal party in the political landscape of the Weimar Republic. Whilst the *Deutsche Demokratische Partei* was never successful with its voters, it has had outstanding activists (the author focuses on the best-known among them, Theodor Heuss, Hugo Preuß, and Friedrich Meinecke) and some valuable intellectual achievements to its credit. Similarly as Tim Müller, Llanque deals quite at length with the combat for symbols that was fought by the liberals against the Nazis. These two camps rivalled for primacy in the use of terms based on the word *Volk*, such as *Volksstaat* or *Volksgemeinschaft*. In the concept advocated by the liberals, they were imbued with a democratic tint, contributing to the development of a republican patriotism. Finally, once appropriated by the Third Reich, they became symbols of exclusion, rather than anything else. The last article in this section complements the model of left-oriented liberalism by its American variant. Maurizio Vaudagna describes the controversies around the New Deal, with two different ways of interpreting the notion of liberalism clearly standing out. The idea of social security became the axis of the dispute. In President Roosevelt's idea, it was meant to become yet another American freedom. In the longer run, however, his opponents took over, with their attachment to a completely different vision of economy and politics where the welfare umbrella (unemployment benefits, etc.) were mostly associated with a restriction on the individual's freedom, rather than extension of it.

The left-oriented or social liberalism, whose ideological foundations got formed in the interwar period, had its great time in Western Europe shortly after the Second World War. This period is the focus for Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, Jens Hacke, Jeppe Nevers, and Niklas Olsen, the contributors of the book's third part. Doering-Manteuffel describes the ideological evolution of the antifascist immigrants in the United States. His special focus is the contributors of the post-war mutation of *Partisan Review*. Initially mostly Marxist-affiliated, they began revising their views, impressed by the New Deal policy and, in an astonishingly considerable number of cases, resulting from their collaboration with the U.S. intelligence services (the periodical was unofficially financed by the CIA), and switched into supporting a Keynesian liberalism. They associated it with an anti-totalitarian ideology targeted against Nazi Germany, on the one hand, and the Stalinist Soviet Union, on the other. The essay by Jens Hacke argues that the marriage of the Weimar democracy model with the American liberalism turned out an astonishingly efficient instrument in constructing the post-war political order in West Germany. Albeit the political forces defining themselves as liberal were rather weak, it was the ideology in question that became the major element of the identity of the parties named 'bourgeois' in that country. These included the Christian Democratic CDU, the Social Democratic SPD and, quite clearly, the FDP. All of them adhered to and advocated one of the versions of the liberal ideology, complemented with active social policy: ordoliberalism, liberal conservatism, or social liberalism. Such a wide consensus around the liberal values would have not been the case without the Hitlerite dictatorship experience. The fear of a 'democratic' tyranny was excellently expressed by the political scientist Dolf Sternberger, quoted by Hacke: "No freedom for the enemies of freedom! No compromise with the enemies of compromise! No equal right for the enemies of equal right!" (p. 233). The last article in the unit covers a special case: Denmark's internal policy was dominated by liberal parties virtually throughout the twentieth century. Jeppe Nevers and Niklas Olsen focus their attention on the peasant party called Venstre, which fought a long-lasting's battle against radicals and social democrats for monopolising the ideological current in question. The extremely long time perspective with no violent breakthroughs occurring (the Second World War and the German occupation basically did not alter the country's array of political parties) enables one to trace the fascinating evolution of the party-bound ideologues. Typically for post-war Western Europe, Venstre initially represented social liberalism. But in as early as the 1950s the party found itself in a crisis which, according to the authors, resulted from negligence of the cultural 'superstructure' and intellectual impairment of the milieu. Venstre's passiveness in this respect contributed to the election victories of social democrats who in fact monopolised the country's political arena for several dozens of years. It was only in the eighties' decade that the party

took over the initiative and began building its identity upon neo-liberalism whilst also postulating a radical expurgation of the welfare state system in Denmark.

The last chapter shows the most recent turn, of a parallel sort, in the history of liberal ideology with use of the strongly contrasting examples of the neoliberal centre: the United Kingdom run by Margaret Thatcher and the presidency of Ronald Reagan in the United States, alongside the peripheries: Italy and Poland. Dominik Geppert places a question mark above the radicalism of the 1980s conservative turn in the U.S. as well as in the UK. In the case of Reagan as well as Thatcher, the practical politics notoriously diverged from the ideological declarations. The slogans of reduction of the state were accompanied by increasing numbers of officials; the references to the traditional Victorian values went hand in hand with propagation of a predatory speculative capitalism. These observations made the author shift the caesura that opened the dominance of neoliberalism from the eighties to the subsequent decade. The last two studies fit this interpretation very well. Giovanni Orsina describes the populist technique applied by Berlusconi in Italy, which was based on rhetorical contraposition of a spoiled state versus the allegedly efficiently functioning society. Paradoxical to this situation, Orsina argues, is the fact that in spite of Berlusconi's slogans, disillusion with the state does not imply that the Italians should have welcomed the idea of 'lean state' and unrestricted freedom of the market. The neoliberal slogans have turned out, in this particular case, merely a convenient tool in the populist tactics – never aiming at changing the Italian political culture.

The last article in this section is dissimilar to the others. Like Orsina, Maciej Janowski begins with a concrete case: the Polish liberalism since the 1980s, but he uses the topic to pose some general questions and to outline a model of the ideology's development in retarded countries. Such a wide perspective makes his essay a sort of summary, to no lesser extent than the conclusion and summary proper, penned by Lutz Raphael. The short historical background of the recent history of Polish liberalism proposed by Janowski pictures a specific transformation whose different variants have been shown in the preceding essays. A 'classical' liberalism focused on economic issues has descended from the political scene, giving way to a cultural liberalism that defended the rights and freedoms of individuals against dictatorial rule and tyranny of majority. Janowski perceives this sequence of events as a repeatable pattern, known to historians of nineteenth-century East Central Europe (and identifiable, to an extent, with some other European countries). In the author's concept, the pattern has four aspects. The first is a deficit of groupings that would define themselves as liberal parties; as a result, elements of liberal policy tend to be pursued by adherents of other political traditions. Next, the ideology is characterised by a variety of options, with its

alternating 'British' and 'continental' version(s), with differing identification of the opponent (bloated state, in the 'classical' version; bygones of the feudal system and other manifestations of social inequality, in the continental variant). The 'classical' liberalism obviously enjoys a particularly fertile soil when the tyranny it seeks to eradicate is alien – as with the anti-monarchic oppositionists in the nineteenth-century Poland or Hungary. The 'Jacobinical' liberalism is, in turn, founded upon the agencies of the state as it stands – be it real or dreamed of by revolutionaries. Thirdly, and mostly characteristically to the eastern part of Europe, one deals with a constructivist element of liberalism: regardless of the currently dominant variant of the ideology, the local conditions doomed its followers to accept, in the first place, a far-reaching top-down intervention. To rephrase, the conditions for freedom had to be created, first of all; only thereafter, once a 'properly' operating market was established, any invisible force could be allowed to enter and act. The fourth aspect identified by Janowski is reflected across the book. He namely points out to the rapidity of in- and outflows of popularity of liberal principles, trying to spot the reason why the slogans being so catchy a dozen years before suddenly surrender, for instance, to a nationalistic rhetoric, as is the case in many places nowadays. Lutz Raphael adds his important observation concerning the position of liberalism in the political life of the twentieth-century Europe. Although in a longer perspective, it seems clear that liberalism has gradually been departing from nationalism and getting increasingly strictly attached to democratic values, the mutual relationship of these three notions remains ambiguous.

Well, ambiguity of the key notions or concepts is the major tender spot of this otherwise interesting and original publication. A volume on social democracy, Christian democracy, republicanism, or even populism could equally well comprise many of the milieus or characters described in the book under review. It is true, though, that no ideology ever appears in a 'pure' state; definitions of political currents are subject to continual negotiation, owing to the specific logic of a parliamentary system, for that matter. As the authors have shown in a number of cases, liberal politics/policies can be pursued without this being admitted in public (otherwise, one may call themselves a liberal without being one at all). However, to what extent such ambiguous cases ought to be approached in terms of a tradition in political thinking – a relatively continuous and ideologically coherent one – remains an open question. The proposed selection of case studies, which are mostly focused on the history of Germany, is insufficient to dissipate this doubt. A broader, and more systematic, analysis of European liberalisms could probably do the job. *Liberalismus im 20. Jahrhundert* should be awarded a prominent position in the bibliography of such a hypothetical book.

Theodore R. Weeks, *Vilnius Between Nations, 1795–2000*, Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb, 2015, 308 pp., ills., bibliography, index

Wilno/Vilnius/Vilna is a symbolic space for at least three ethnic and cultural communities. For the Lithuanians, the city acted as a dreamed-of capital of their country-to-be, at least from the beginning of their national revival, although the Lithuanian presence within its walls was not quite significant for a long time. The Poles saw in Wilno a centre of culture and science, with the second oldest Polish university, and a stronghold of Polishness when it was threatened by the other nations and rulers. Finally, the Jews, who formed a significant share of Vilna's dwellers since the Middle Ages, until the Second World War, referred to the city as the 'Jerusalem of the North'. Such a richness of meanings assigned to a town should seemingly establish it as an ethnic melting pot, or at least a multicultural metropolis where the different cultures preserve their singularities but all the same make up a new shared space. Theodore Weeks, the illustrious American expert in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century history of Eastern Europe, is consistently hard-headedly sceptical toward such a bucolical vision. As he shows us, Wilno's multiculturalism before 1939 remained within the confines of elementary tolerance that was practised by the communities which mostly cared about preventing themselves from crossing one another's borders. In conclusion, the author compares their mutual relationships to a caste system that practically prevents unrestrained shifting from one group to another. As he remarks, contrary to the historical myths cherished by all the parties to the conflict for Wilno/Vilnius/Vilna, the altering ruling states did not change much in this respect.

Since the multiculturalism of the inhabitants could not have been central to a book on the city, Weeks has decided to refocus on the city itself, approached as a concrete space and a social and (laid-out) urban organism that has functioned better or worse. This is visible all the more clearly as the narrative approaches the present time. The sections on the latter half of the twentieth century say much about the policies pursued by the municipal authorities, the construction of new residential areas with the predominant prefab (concrete-slab) blocks-of-flats and the traffic routes connecting those areas to the historical centre. We are told a story about the symbolic investment projects and works of socialist architecture. Unobvious characters, among them Algirdas Vileikis, chairman of the executive committee of the municipal communist party organisation (which in practice meant the city's mayor) in 1974–90, play an important part in the setting.

A question that is of primary importance in terms of the city's ethnic mix appears, as it were, as a side note of the thus depicted history: as Weeks

remarks, it was the Sovietisation of Vilnius that made the long-lasting daydream of Lithuanian national activists come true as Lithuanisation of the city was brought about. A similar tendency to focus on the history of the city as such, rather than its political or symbolical role, is apparent also in the preceding sections of the book. Construction of bridges, important community facilities, residential quarters or residences, are approached as particularly significant occurrences in the city's history. Helpful in the development of such a dense story, imbued with topographic detail, are municipal documents, statistics, and old maps, all of which Weeks seems to willingly use.

Urban history, particularly in East Central Europe, the region whose history was extremely turbulent, cannot be detached from political events, in any case. They are important for the construction of the book, although the caesurae proposed by Weeks sometimes miss the intuition of the reader who is more or less aware of the region's history. As Weeks emphasises, the time intervals must in this particular case be based upon the specific historical experiences of the place, which were often divergent from the great breakthroughs in the histories of nations and states.

The study opens with a brief introduction and a no less short chapter on the mediaeval and modern history of the city. The narrative proper begins with the Third Partition of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1795. Chapter 2, describing Wilno/Vilna as a centre of Polish and Jewish culture, leads the reader all the way to the January Insurrection of 1863. Although the city was ruled by St. Petersburg since the late eighteenth century, Russification comes to the fore only in Chapter 3, and the author's approach toward it is quite original (as will be specified below). The fourth chapter discusses the First World War period, extended in this case till 1922 – the date the city was formally annexed, together with the entire territory of the ephemeral Central Lithuania, to Poland. The interwar period is analysed in the subsequent chapter. In Weeks's concept, it was then that the myth of Wilno became the most divergent from the reality. The city underwent intensive Polonisation, mainly in the symbolic sphere (encompassing the names of streets/squares and a consistent refusal to establish Lithuanian and Jewish chairs or departments in the local University). Most of the existing memoirs, often idealising intercultural relationships, refer to this particular period. Weeks rather ruthlessly verifies such images as he shows the regretful effects of the economic stagnation of the hub that was situated near the Polish-Lithuanian frontier (which was closed most of the time) and the anti-Semitic trends disseminating there particularly in the 1930s.

Chapter 6 describes the ethnic homogenisation – a process that was central to the city's history – set within the broad temporal framework of 1939 and 1955. The annihilation of the Jews and the subsequent displacement of a number of Polish dwellers implied a complete change of the ethnic

structure of the city's population. The Sovietisation of Vilnius and a general collapse of the city in terms of civilisation seems more essential from the author's standpoint. The subsequent two chapters focus on the city's development after 1955 (the caesura being marked by Mikhail Gorbachev's coming to power in 1985). The book ends with a brief conclusion.

Viewed through the prism of the city's tissue, rather than its symbolic role in the culture – be it Polish, Lithuanian, or Jewish – the history of Wilno/Vilnius provokes a series of surprising observations. The perspective assumed by Weeks establishes a commonsensical balance between culture, economy, and the development of the city. The periods perceived as dominated by national oppression from either a Polish or Lithuanian perspective thus gain new colours. The first such moment is the Russification of Wilno after 1863, which Weeks assesses as a mostly unfulfilled project – in spite of the repressions targeted against the centres of Polish cultural life. These trends were accompanied by a not-too-fast but steady economic and town-planning development. Paradoxically, instead of becoming a Russian town, on the eve of the First World War Wilno was getting transfigured into a modern city with a dynamically developing Polish and – then for the first time on a large scale – Lithuanian civil society. The emerging 'krajowcy' movement, propelled by political and cultural activists identifying themselves primarily with the region and, secondarily, with one of the local ethnicities, was perhaps the only, never fulfilled, opportunity for some Wilno-based alternative solution to the dominant nationalisms that combated one another. In spite of the political domination of the Russian state, the Russians played no significant part in the period's disputes over the city.

The post-war period was marked, again, by the city's cultural and symbolic role not coinciding with its economic situation. As has been mentioned, the nationalistic Lithuanian historiography perceived the Sovietisation of Vilnius as another denationalisation attempt, this time set against the Lithuanians. Yet, Weeks argues that the case was the reverse: it was the Soviet Union's policy that has made Vilnius a lastingly Lithuanian city. Weeks would also definitely avoid unreflective criticism of the investment project and urban-planning achievements of the 'real socialism'. Seeing them from the standpoint of the city, he appreciates their practical values, leaving aside the ideological issues related to the construction projects of the 'socialist' era.

Restoring the appropriate proportions is no less relevant, in the author's argument, with the positive myths surrounding Wilno/Vilnius. One of these myths relates, as mentioned, to the interwar period. Contrary to what the many, and often prominent, graduates of the local university tend to recollect, the city suffered not only from the effects of the world war and the coerced migrations but also due to the 'great politics' of the post-war years. The city's situation not far from the state border did not translate into development

of trade or industry. The book's descriptions of the poverty and miseries experienced by the lowest Jewish and Polish classes come as a telling illustration of Wilno's everyday realities of the time.

The author's endearing inclination to call into question the Polish, Lithuanian (as well as Russian) myths surrounding Wilno/Vilnius (or, Vilna) makes the reading not only instructive but pleasant too. With its light and clear style, *Vilnius Between Nations* arouses respect for the knowledge and openness of a historian who consistently strives for reconstructing a comprehensive picture of the past. The task is not easy, especially that the literature on Wilno/Vilnius/Vilna tends to be biased depending on the author's background: Polish studies are interested in 'things Polish' related to the city; the Lithuanians seek its Lithuanianness; and, Jewish authors focus on its Jewishness. In the nineteenth century, this dialogue of the deaf was joined by Russian historiography and local history, which obviously sought to evidence the alleged Russianness of the city. In spite of such fragmentary sources and studies, Weeks usually successfully manages to complete the missing pieces in the picture: beginning with one of the groups of the city's locals, we are shown what was happening with, or to, the other groups. Of enormous help is his admirable linguistic capacity, enabling him not only to discuss with the national historiographers but also to enter direct contact with the sources. Spelling errors are pretty incidental in the book. Weeks makes use of the recent publications, not avoiding to face controversial issues – such as the Lithuanians' contribution to the slaughtering of their Jewish neighbours in the summer of 1941, and later. Whilst staying distant, or even critical, towards the more or less parochial arguments offered by local historiographies, this author does respect their valuable achievements.

Urban history rarely hits turgid notes; in the case in question, the style and personality of the author reinforce his clearheaded opinions. The general conclusions he offers are kept in a similar vein. Weeks proposes two such conclusions: first, he finds that the several hundred years of the city's history is evidence that coexistence of alien or even mutually averse cultural, national and religious communities is possible – as long as the people do not kill one another. For diverse cultures to blossom within a space, they do not have to value each other high. Second, the author identifies contradiction between cultural diversity, which still tends to be appreciated, also officially, and the standardising trends appearing in the modern states. There can be only one winner in this clash, Weeks believes; consequently, the readiness of nation-states to preserve the cultural heritage of the no-more-existent neighbours ought to be welcomed with satisfaction and gratitude. Tolerance for the others, once they (co-)exist, and resisting from damaging the material heritage of the past, with which we keep no direct ties: not very ambitious a programme, seemingly, but one that has passed the test at several occasions. As Lenka Řezníková has recently shown, such has been the case with the

Czech-German-Jewish Prague.¹ Vilnius seems to belong to the same category of towns: hubs of multiple cultures that spare no efforts to have the least in common with the neighbours of a different religion, language, tradition or customs. The book under review shows that even such a barren soil may give rise to a phenomenon so fascinating as that of 'Vilnius'.

trans. *Tristan Korecki*

Maciej Górny

Aleksander Łupienko, *Kamienice czynszowe Warszawy 1864–1914* [Warsaw Tenement Houses, 1864–1914], Instytut Historii PAN, Warszawa, 2015, 549 + [28] pp., 122 + [34] ill., index

Aleksander Łupienko has proved himself as the author of a study on the public space in the city of Warsaw in the former half of the nineteenth century (*Przestrzeń publiczna Warszawy w pierwszej połowie XIX wieku*, 2013) – a book small in volume but much of relevance for research into Warsaw and other Polish towns. An architect and historian by profession, he has developed a skill of interdisciplinary and innovative reading and insight of the nineteenth-century city, its developments and built-up areas, and its residents. Hence, his studies offer viewpoints or perspectives that vary from those typical of the history-of-art classics and prove different from standard historiographic studies where architecture and space often play no essential part. Łupienko's new book, focusing on the history of Warsaw's tenement houses in the second half of the nineteenth century takes into account numerous social and political contexts and thus may offer an interesting interpretation of the residential architecture of what was the capital city of the Kingdom of Poland. The book certainly paves new paths in Polish research of urban areas, whilst also offering foreign researchers some unique material regarding a metropolis situated at the contact point between the East and the West. We can see the European processes typical of urban transformations in the period concerned encounter and blend with phenomena that make one perceive the metropolis as a capital town of an 'inner Russian colony' that is subjected, owing to its status, to legal and political restrictions. The latter have been conspicuously reflected in the housing developments.

The study in question focuses on the buildings and other developments that ultimately perished during the Second World War. Hence, the author can take a closer look on a very limited pool of existing objects; moreover,

¹ Lenka Řezníková, 'Suche nach Differenzen als Interferenzprozess. Praktiken der nationalen Abgrenzung in Prag um 1900', in Ute Raßloff (ed.), *Wellenschläge. Kulturelle Interferenzen im östlichen Mitteleuropa des langen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 2013), 94–142.

most of the surviving buildings have been severely redeveloped after 1945, which makes historical(-and-artistic) analysis even tougher. Records of the building inspection form the basic research source for architectural historians. Regretfully, they vanished during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. So, the author had to use the sources of a different type, which seemingly set the book's narrative. The study is based on original sources that are rarely used by architectural researchers. These include essays drawn from carefully surveyed periodicals, along with some very interesting memoirs and diaries: some of them published, others preserved in the manuscript. The enormous quantity of these accounts and the wealth of information they carry is striking.

The book comes as the first study of Warsaw's residential construction industry that uses sources of the said sort to analyse the residential situation and developments in a pretty comprehensive way. A wealth of quotations cited turns at some points the narrative into an essay, encrusted with 'curiosities' (such as a description of the type of doorbells applied with tenement houses). This makes the reading engrossing, whereas the scientific narrative gets somewhat confused at times. There is an interesting choice of illustrations: engravings from period periodicals and plans of the buildings (drawn by the author). However, in absence of construction dossiers for Warsaw, the book is depleted of views of the facades (and other such important elements), though a foretaste is offered by the front and the back of the cover. There are not too many archival photos; those available on the portal www.warszawa1939.pl, for instance, would doubtlessly have essentially enriched this otherwise riveting story of Warsaw tenement houses.

The study is extremely voluminous; the author follows the good principle of discussing the selected problems in a general-to-specific fashion. Its arrangement recalls that of the pioneering book on tenement houses (in Wrocław) by Agnieszka Tomaszewicz, entitled *Wrocławski dom czynszowy 1808–1918* (Wrocław, 2003). While the latter author could take advantage of a rich construction design resource available at the local Construction Archive, compared to a pretty exiguous memoiristic material, the Łupienko study attests to the opposite.

Printed on over five hundred pages, the content is logically divided into two, roughly even, parts, one dealing with buildings and the other with dwellings. The introductory section (approx. 60 pp.), in part one, concisely covers the history of tenant housing industry, with a focus on its development in the Polish lands. To better illustrate the subject-matter, Łupienko discusses the spatial development of Warsaw; the next chapter, 'The tenement house as a public space', briefly reports on how the city's quarters developed and expanded. However, their spatial layout is not analysed deeper, and hence the reader feels rather poorly informed in this respect, trying their best to figure out the town-planning tissue in which the tenement houses looked-at were entwined. After all, each district of the town had its own specificity expressed

in the layout and size of the streets and greenery, the number of squares or public utility edifices, and architectural dominants. A subchapter on where medical doctors resided is interesting as it introduces us into the specificity of the 'good' and 'bad' city, which is otherwise excellently illustrated by a list of real estates and apartments from 1919. The author regretfully makes no use of the list, nor does he resort to the relevant statistics.

The other subchapters, many of them just a few pages long, deal with setting out of new streets, partitioning of parcels, the legal environment with respect to construction of tenement houses and availability of capital funds. The regulations conditioning the construction process and the shape of the houses are discussed rather sketchily, which is a pity. Various, often mutually contradicting, laws were in force at the time, which paved the way for different legal interpretations, or even embezzlements – and, consequently, to corruption and bribery, so commonplace as it was in the Kingdom of Poland. Thus, a plot would be developed or a tenement house shaped in line with the imprecise or contradictory construction regulations and non-artistic factors. A section on construction movement and profiteering abounds with information. Owing to the specific political situation related to the Russian partition authorities ruling the metropolis on the Vistula River, the city's housing developments were subjected to various forms of political and economic pressure. Thence, Warsaw developed differently than Central European cities that functioned within national state systems and within a legal arrangement which was based, for instance, on the activity of electable municipal authorities. Warsaw was namely managed by town-hall officials, with the top offices taken by the Russians, none of whom were subjected to the control of a town council; the latter were strictly banned in the Kingdom's towns until the Russian rule came to its end in 1915. Such functioning of the municipal authorities gave birth to a number of pathologies that directly informed the form and shape of the developments, the type of land subdivision into allotments, and even the architecture of the tenement houses.

Chapter 3 introduces the notion 'semi-public space' – in reference to the backyard spaces, most of which were open, especially in trade-oriented districts and areas dominated by Jewish residents. These are described in their various aspects, such as the architectural solutions applied and, above all, the functioning of such areas at the intersection of the street and the house. The press and memoirs, these excellent sources, have enabled the author to evoke the ambience of yards, children playing, doorkeeper's activities, or concerts of backyard bands – so characteristic as they were of Warsaw. Thus, the city's specific audiosphere is analysed. The pretty suggestive and vivid picture of local backyards enables us to represent to ourselves the lost world of the Warsaw street and the (mostly neglected) courtyards of poor tenement houses.

In his discussion of the tenement backyards, the author regrettably does not refer to the functioning of these backyards as sacred spaces. 'Sacred

statues', mostly representing Our Lady, adorn quite a number of Warsaw yards still today. This is striking for stranger visitors, since backyard functioning as a sacred sphere is a phenomenon unknown to the other Polish towns. When, and why, were these statues erected inside those spaces? How many Warsaw backyards had the like statues installed before 1914? What sort of ceremonies, or common prayers, were held around these statues (Marian May devotions, perhaps)? Were the religious rituals celebrated there of a 'national' character; were they a specifically Polish phenomenon – a Roman Catholic manifestation against the Russian rule? And, how did the sacrum zone in question relate to the diverse composition of tenement dwellers (Roman Catholics versus Jews, Orthodox Christians; possibly, Evangelical Protestants)? The author does mention Jewish tents deployed in the backyard area at the Succoth, or Feast of Tabernacles, which suggests that the backyard space was subjected to confessionalisation. Multi-religious and multiethnic, partly private and partly public, tenement house backyard was a pretty unique structure, possibly across the whole of Central Europe.

The chapter under discussion shows a drawback that reappears in the subsequent sections. Albeit the introductory section has described each of the city's quarters, the characteristics of each become blurred as the discussion gets more detailed. The yards in the Jewish merchant district of Muranów differed pretty much from those in the elegant metropolitan areas where the yards were enclosed, embellished with sculptures and fountains, inaccessible to street musicians or buskers. These semi-public spaces clearly differed in character, depending on the quarter.

Chapter 4 discusses the interiors of tenement house, starting from what the author calls 'semi-private space', that is, areas such as stairwells or doorkeepers' dwellings. The author introduces the new notions of 'semi-public space' and 'semi-private space' to support his analysis of allotment development and compositions of tenement projections relative to their specified functions. Such a research concept seems interesting and worth of testing for usefulness when it comes to analysing other towns.

The second part of the book deals with tenement house interior and various types of dwellings, flats and apartments. Of the seven chapters, the most detailed concern the interiors' disposition, functioning, and equipment. These fragments are pretty interesting, as they show the stratification of storeys into 'higher-class' and 'lower-class' ones, thus evidencing that the social stratigraphy of Warsaw tenement houses reflected that characteristic of its West European counterpart.

Chapter 3, on 'Dwelling units: Disposition and functioning of their interiors', discusses the front house and annexes, and, in detail, the storeys in both. In his attempt at a comprehensive analysis of housing issues with respect to the local tenements, Łupienko avoids differentiation into houses located in elegant vendor streets and squares, as well as backstreets or lanes.

In this context, he neglects the uniqueness of the so-called *Cyrkul* [~ Circuit] of Bielany (after 1916, *Bezirk* [~ District of] Muranów),¹ or Marszałkowska Street. Shopping ground-floors were pretty distinct in these areas. So, what were the shops like, how did they function as part of the tenement house? Did they extend to higher storeys as well? Quite characteristic of the metropolises was a combined-function building, called *Wohn- und Geschäftshaus* (residential-and-services house), existing within the downtown business areas. Now, did it ever appear in Warsaw – where and since when, if so? In what ways did it function in the public space? The services section imprinted a clear stigma on the projection's composition (segments such as drive-hallway; access from the hallway to the counter) and on the façades (display windows, outlet entrances). Definitely, these aspects are covered to a very small extent. The proposed problem-centred discussion lacks differentiation into tenement palaces, which were also present in Warsaw (particularly in its southern district), and houses populated thoroughly by workers. The character of the houses was primarily reflected in the composition and styles applied to the façades – another issue not satisfactorily dealt with, in spite of the book's attractive foretasting cover. Based on reminiscences and literary fiction pieces, Łupienko suggestively describes the life of the dwellers and their relationships – within the families and, importantly, with the of 'aliens'. The latter group is covered at length in Chapter 4, which discusses the life and housing conditions of residents, subtenants, nursemaids, tutors, and household servants.

The other chapters in the book's second part are well illustrated, with use of projections of various types of solutions to individual storeys (the functional zones within the dwelling units being marked in colour), drafted by the author.

Chapter 5 – 'Residential space: interior equipment' – is pretty interesting, and important in the context of the previous Polish research in the nineteenth-century housing industry. Starting with the upkeep of accommodation unit, the author passes on to discussing the other zones and lodgings, their furnishings and equipment, and how they functioned in the different seasons of the year, with a focus on multi-functionality of certain types of room. The hygiene movement is also dealt with: in the overpopulated towns of the time, physicians and hygienists became the main initiators of the housing reform. The reform was not confined to criticising the residential conditions shared by the most indigent strata: its adherents proposed a far-reaching change with respect to new architectural concepts for entire tenement houses and development quarters – particularly, the backyard spaces.

¹ I refer herein to Peter J. Martyn, *Przedwojenny układ zabudowy Śródmieścia Warszawy w świetle rezultatów spisu nieruchomości i mieszkań z 1919 roku* (Warszawa, 1999). Regrettably, the book under review does not take this important work into account.

As a Polish town where attempts were made to implement the German housing reform, Poznań was situated the closest to Warsaw. However, Poznań was situated behind the border, in the Prussian Partition area. Since the construction movement taking place in Poznań was watched carefully in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland (to mention, for example, reports published the *Świat* weekly), the question comes out whether any attempts were made to transplant the then-most recent locally conceived ideas of housing reform into the Warsaw soil.²

The book concludes with considerations over conspiratorial activities within the residential unit space. The Warsaw tenement house was pretty unique Europe-wide in that it was the venue where ‘conspiratorial labour’ against the tsarist regime and the Russian authorities was pursued on a large scale, along with plotting and political party-related activities. Private apartments were the space of ‘the other, real, Polish life’ – the fact which is rather unknown outside Poland. This primarily meant secret teaching, from an elementary up to a university level. In the Kingdom of Poland, Russification primarily affected the education system (with Russian being the language of instruction or taught obligatorily; Polish history or literature was virtually neglected in the curriculum). The youth could only learn about their national history through illegal channels. The clandestine classes were held at private flats, with small groups of students attending. In order to successfully carry out a course, detailed camouflaging strategies were devised. This specific experience was followed up twice in the country’s history: during the German Nazi occupation in the Second World War and in the declining communist period: in the latter case, the idea of a clandestine, so-called ‘flying’, university was resumed.³ Łupienko interestingly shows, with use of numerous examples, the ways in which the dwelling space was used for illegal actions. Warsaw tenement house is certainly a unique phenomenon on the European scale in this respect.

Aleksander Łupienko’s book is an extremely interesting attempt at analysing Warsaw’s tenement house as a sociological phenomenon. Methodologically, *Kamienice czynszowe Warszawy 1864–1914* is a sort of counterpart of *A History of Private Life*⁴ and *Geschichte des Wohnens*.⁵ It may be regretted,

² Cf. Hanna Grzeszczuk-Brendel, *Miasto do mieszkania. Zagadnienia reformy mieszkaniowej na przełomie XIX i XX wieku i jej wprowadzenie w Poznaniu w pierwszej połowie XX wieku* (Poznań, 2012).

³ The term ‘flying’ was used to denote the fact that the meetings with professors and outstanding intellectuals were held each time in a different apartment.

⁴ *A History of Private Life*, iv: Michelle Perrot (ed.), *From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA, 1994).

⁵ *Geschichte des Wohnens*, iii: Jürgen Reulecke (ed.), *Geschichte des Wohnens 1800–1918. Das bürgerliche Zeitalter* (Stuttgart, 1997).

though, that the Łupienko book is written entirely from a Polish standpoint. The author has used no Russian memoirs or diaries; he would not tell us where, and how, the local Russians dwelled: all those officials and clerks, military-men, entrepreneurs, as well as the poorer populace – those who drove down to Warsaw to seek employment there. What was the percentage of Russian tenement house owners locally, and in what ways could this minority influence the functioning of such houses? Jews, who formed 30 per cent of the city's population, appear just on the margin of the narrative. Warsaw was an ethnic and religious conglomerate; its quarters were quite diverse. Yet, the book would not give us much opportunity to look into such specificity.

I do appreciate that the author's intent was to show that Warsaw and its tenement house developments resembled the built-up areas in West European cities: this is expressly stated in the book. Still, the capital of the Kingdom of Poland, and the 'third capital' of the Russian Empire, remained peculiar: it was Europe's only city with a population of around one million without a municipal government and with no well-knit housing policy. Warsaw abounded with incredible housing contrasts, with zones of luxury neighbouring on areas of extreme poverty – and it would not be describable as a 'Paris of the North', contrary to what its residents would be willing to boast.⁶ In fact, Warsaw was a city for which, on the eve of the panicked escape of the Russians in 1915, European-style modernisation solutions were sought. If implemented, Warsaw (who knows?) might have even turned into a 'Paris of the North'.⁷

trans. *Tristan Korecki*

Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos

James Bjork, Tomasz Kamusella, Tim Wilson, and Anna Novikov (eds.), *Creating Nationality in Central Europe, 1880–1950. Modernity, violence and (be)longing in Upper Silesia*, Routledge, London and New York, 2016, 236 + xvi pp.

The books dealing with the history of Upper Silesia can be generally categorised into those related to identity and Polish-German conflict, on the one hand, and all the rest, on the other. The book in question definitely belongs to the former category but is different from most of what has been written

⁶ Błażej Brzostek, *Paryże innej Europy. Warszawa i Bukareszt, XIX–XX wiek* (Warszawa, 2015).

⁷ For an urban modernisation project for Warsaw, drafted in 1906 by Antoni Lange, a Jewish philosopher and intellectual, cf. Barbara Arciszewska and Makary Górzyński, 'Urban Narratives in the Age of Revolutions: Early 20th-Century Ideas to Modernize Warsaw', *Artium Quaestiones*, 2016, 101–48.

on the topic, in Polish or in German, especially in the twentieth century. The authors' underlying assumption is thus described by Pieter M. Judson in the foreword: "If we continue to use the categories constructed for us over a century ago by nationalist activists, and repeatedly refined during the twentieth century by their self-proclaimed scientific successors, we will only repeat stories that fail to engage what the sources tell us." (p. xiii) Hence, the book discusses the issues of identity and nationalism in modern Upper Silesia, processed consistently as the object of study rather than assumed as a research perspective. This, alone, makes the study worth mentioning among the many works dealing with the subject-matter.

Creating Nationality ... consists of nine articles by different authors, with a foreword and a brief editorial introduction. The authors are mostly British or American university-based historiographers; most of them have important studies in aspects of Upper Silesian history published recently to their credit.¹ Some of the essays now published as part of the book recapitulate or follow up the authors' larger research projects. This is of no detriment since these particular essays neatly fit the publication's framework. Moreover, some of the texts open the yet-unstudied research areas, which adds value to the book.

The article by Tomasz Kamusella can be regarded as an extensive introduction to the book. Its second section offers a broad discussion of the existing literature on the problem of identity/nationalism in Upper Silesia. A list of reference publications (in Polish, German, Czech, and English) is attached. The preceding section pretty convincingly argues for recognition, in equality and subjectivity research, of non-national forms of identity. Significantly enough, these forms tend to be regarded from the standpoint of national identities as second-rate or less perfect compared to national identity (the discourse accordingly refers to a 'lack' of/'un(der)developed' national identity). Yet, as Kamusella observes, one should rather reject the teleological and evaluation-oriented perspective, replacing it with an identical approach to group identification. This assumption is fairly consistently followed by the other authors (with a varied effect).

¹ James Bjork, *Neither German, nor Pole. Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland, 1890–1922* (Ann Arbor, 2008); Tomasz Kamusella, *Silesia and Central European Nationalism. The Emergence of National and Ethnic Groups in Prussian Silesia and Austrian Silesia, 1848–1918* (West Lafayette, IN, 2007); Anna Novikov, *Shades of a Nation. The Dynamics of Belonging among the Silesian and Jewish populations in Easter Upper Silesia (1922–1934)* (Osnabrück, 2015); Hugo Service, *Germans to Poles. Communism, Nationalism and Ethnic Cleansing after the Second World War* (Oxford, 2013); Kai Struve (ed.), *Oberschlesien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Studien zu einem nationalen Konflikt und seiner Erinnerung* (Tagungen zur Ostmitteleuropaforschung, 19, Marburg, 2003); Timothy Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence. Conflict and Identity in Ulster and Upper Silesia, 1918–1922* (Oxford, 2010).

Tim Wilson's 'Fatal Violence in Upper Silesia, 1918–1922' is of special value for research into the history of Polish-German conflict after the First World War. The author has successfully compiled the calendar of the conflict month by month and calculated, *sine ira et studio*, all the Polish and German fatal victims as for November 1918 to July 1922. An apparently banal facts-related summary report has so far been absent in the otherwise extensive literature on the Silesian Uprisings; each of the parties to the dispute has tended to overrate their own losses whilst not quoting or underrating the losses inflicted to the other party. Wilson's estimate of the fatalities for Upper Silesia is in excess of 2,850 (of which over 60% fell on the Third Uprising, in May to June 1921), which, regarding the author's arguments and the current state of research should be considered a rather credible figure.

Allison Rodriguez's essay "'Scoundrels" and desperate mothers. Gendering German and Polish propaganda in the Upper Silesian plebiscite, 1919–1921' is somewhat disappointing, for a change. The main reason is that a half of it, instead of the plebiscite propaganda, deals with the history behind the plebiscite in Silesia that resulted from international agreements; the analysis of the propaganda itself is, perforce, short and rather superfluous. The statements about the Polish propaganda being more aggressive, with frequent references to the ideas of female and male roles, sound interesting but would perhaps require being evidenced at more length. There is no reference made to Władysław Zieliński's not the most recent but factually important study *Polska i niemiecka propaganda plebiscytowa na Górnym Śląsku* [The Polish and German plebiscite propaganda in Upper Silesia] (let us note that T. Kamusella does include the item in his reference list).

James Bjork analyses, in an interesting and mostly convincing manner, the phenomenon of bilingualism or diglossia, which – as tends to be the case with borderland regions – was pretty common in Upper Silesia until the end of the Second World War. Most of the region's inhabitants, similarly to the local Catholic elite associated with the Zentrum party, approached this situation in clearly pragmatic, rather than ideological, terms, which annoyed the (Polish and German) nationalists and on the other hand became one of the reasons of the failure of the plans to establish after the First World War a bilingual 'Free Upper Silesian State'.

The same pragmatic approach and 'national ambiguity' led to the fiasco of Polish minority education system in the German area of the region that was divided in 1922, as vividly described by Brendan Karch in 'Polish nationalism and national ambiguity in Weimar Upper Silesia'. The essay very efficiently combines the progressing radicalisation of the Polish national elite in interwar Germany and the milieu's deepening frustration in face of the peculiar Upper-Silesian pragmatism. Karch aptly observes that, in contrast to a majority of Silesian-speaking Upper-Silesians, "in their logic, nationality was not a choice, but an obligation – a duty to God and fatherland" (p. 157).

The school system in the context of national identity and state policies, on the other side of the 1922 frontier, is discussed by Anna Novikov ('Creating a citizen. Politics and the education system in the post-plebiscite Silesian Voivodeship'). Her analysis of the syllabuses, particularly in History, with international politics at the background, regrettably ends with the mid-1920s, instead of having consistently outlined the situation until 1939.

The subsequent two essays deal with the years of the Second World War and shortly afterwards. In his 'Upper Silesia in the age of ethnically homogenous nation-state, 1939–1949', Hugo Service concisely and approachably explains the assumptions and the implementation of the ethnic policy pursued by the Third Reich and, subsequently, the Polish communist authorities (till 1949). While this is a very good and pretty straightforward exposition of the problem in English, it is, perforce, reproductive (worth recommending in this context is John Kulczycki's *Belonging to the Nation. Inclusion and Exclusion in the Polish-German Borderlands, 1939–1951* [Cambridge, MA, 2016]). Peter Polak-Springer's article 'The Nazi "recovered territories" myth in the eastern Upper Silesian borderland, 1939–1945' touches upon a rather underinvestigated question, employing an extensive source-based query. His focus is on the ways in which the Nazi Germany evoked a vision of unquestionable German nature of the Silesian area annexed in 1939 to the Reich, along with the *Heimat* tradition. The purpose was to (re)integrate the region and to render a majority of the local Slavic population convinced of the area's Germanness. As we read, "there were bards, artists and scholars" in Upper Silesia "who worked to romanticize the Reich's politics of unabated expansion, violence and mass murder" (p. 179). The concluding chapter is a comparative study by Kai Struve, concisely and coherently showing a parallel development of the Polish and German memory of the Silesian Uprisings and the plebiscite (1919–22).

As to the weak points of the study, the time range given in the subtitle, 1880–1950, is rather misleading, especially the former date. Apart from the essays by Bjork and Kamusella, all the other authors deal, clearly, with the realities after the First World War. Kamusella's 'Upper Silesia in Modern Central Europe' proposes not clear-cut *post quem* caesura and quite unrestrainedly penetrates deep into the nineteenth century, mainly through contextual references to twentieth-century history. Hugo Service takes the reader up to the year 1949, while Kai Struve's narrative of the memory of the Uprisings and the plebiscite brings us, virtually, to the present day. Those who would expect an in-depth analysis of the notion of modernity (mentioned in the subtitle, after all) in Upper Silesia will be disappointed. While the major institutions of modernity – nation-state and its agencies, such as schools and propaganda – are central to the argument proposed by the authors, modernity is approached as an obvious notion. In fact, with respect to Upper Silesia, modernity had a peculiarity to it – in terms of identity issues as well

as with respect to a dynamism of modernity and coexistence of modern and traditional aspects. Misspelled or misprinted names of Silesian towns or persons (as in the last sections of Tim Wilson's essay or in Anna Novikov) is a minor and secondary problem.

No critical remarks with respect to the book under review can, however, undermine its importance as an academic study that elaborates upon several questions being key to the twentieth-century history of Upper Silesia. The topics researched by the various authors are apparently interrelated, and the essays engage in a conversation with one another – a satisfactory experience with a multi-author publication. The book may outright be read as a lecture on the history of Upper Silesia in the former half of the twentieth century, identity being axial to the narrative. Thus, the importance of this book far exceeds the confines of Upper Silesian history, showing the latter as an important phenomenon in the twentieth-century European history overall.

trans. Tristan Korecki

Marcin Jarząbek

Some Findings of the Recent Research in the History of Upper Silesia

In this review of the recent research into Upper Silesia, I will focus on collective volumes, as such publications offer a wider survey of research outcomes compared to monographs. The studies in question moreover analyse the history of Upper Silesia in a longer perspective. A total of four books by multiple authors will thus be considered, two of which deal with modernisation processes taking place in the nineteenth and twentieth century¹ whilst the other two focus on temporal caesurae of paramount importance to the region's history: the Great War² and the Second World War, the aftermath of the wars, and the collapse of the communist system.³

The effects of the defeat of Imperial Germany and of the Habsburg monarchy, the plebiscite, the Silesian Uprisings and the split of the region

¹ Lutz Budraß (ed.), *Industrialisierung und Nationalisierung: Fallstudien zur Geschichte des oberschlesischen Industriereviere im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Essen, 2013); Sebastian Rosenbaum (ed.), *Górny Śląsk i Górnoszlązacy: Wokół problemów regionu i jego mieszkańców w XIX i XX wieku* (Katowice and Gliwice, 2014).

² Bernard Linek, Sebastian Rosenbaum, and Joanna Tofilska (eds.), *Wielka Wojna, mały region: Pierwsza wojna światowa w perspektywie górnośląskiej. Szkice i studia* (Katowice, Gliwice, and Opole, 2014).

³ Adam Dziuba and Sebastian Rosenbaum (eds.), *Upadek systemu komunistycznego na Górnym Śląsku: Wokół przemian 1989 roku w województwach katowickim i opolskim* (Katowice, 2010).

have been the subjects of a wide range of research, also in the recent years.⁴ Yet, the history of Upper Silesia during the First World War has not yet been studied thoroughly. The conferences *The Great War, a Small Region: World War One in an Upper Silesian micro-perspective* and *The Old World Ends a As New One Begins. The Society of Upper Silesia Facing World War One (1914–18). Sources and Methods*, both held in 2013, focused on this particular issue. The publication entitled *Wielka Wojna, mały region: Pierwsza wojna światowa w perspektywie górnośląskiej. Szkice i studia* [The Great War, a Small Region: First World War in an Upper Silesian Perspective. Sketches and Studies] has come as an aftermath of the events. Dealing with issues such as militarisation of the local community and its attitude toward the war, the publication offers studies in individual towns – for instance, Loslau/Wodzisław – and studies in the influence and development of industry during the war. The final chapter discusses issues of memory and the discourse on the Great War.

Bernard Linek places an emphasis on the problem that only the memory and memoirs of Polish-speaking locals have been researched so far by Polish scholars – the experiences of German dwellers of the region having only been analysed by German researchers.⁵ The refocus on research pursued from the standpoint of the region, rather than nation-state, is innovative and has enabled a revisit of the issue of the First World War.

James Bjork's analysis focuses on the role of the Catholic faith. The author argues that the ties with the Church and religion changed in the course of the war, with the resulting decreased attendance at church services⁶ and increased interest in nationalism or socialism. Joanna Popanda stresses how the war influenced the behavioural patterns of young people who were generally considered as demoralised because of the lack of the fatherly authority.⁷

A portion of articles focus on Silesian economy in the war years. Adam Frużyński's *The Industry in the Upper Silesian Industrial District during the*

⁴ Leszek Adamczewski, *Na dno szybu: Od Oberschlesien do Górnego Śląska* (Zakrzewo, 2013); Aleksandra Charczyńska-Plomteux et al., *W obcym kraju: Wojska sprzymierzone na Górnym Śląsku 1920–1922* (Katowice, 2011); Piotr Pałys and Krzysztof Tarka, *Pomiędzy Polską a Niemcami: Konflikt górnośląski w raportach Konsulatu Czesosłowackiego w Opolu 1920–1922* (Racibórz, 2011); Rüdiger Ritter, *Die Geschichtsschreibung über Abstimmungskämpfe und Volksabstimmung in Oberschlesien (1918–1921). Eine Auswahlbibliographie* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 2009); Tim Wilson, *Frontiers of violence: Conflict and identity in Ulster and Upper Silesia, 1918–1922* (Oxford and New York, 2010).

⁵ Bernard Linek, 'Górny Śląsk w cieniu wojny. Węzłowe problemy badawcze', in *idem*, Sebastian Rosenbaum, and Joanna Tofilska (eds.), *Wielka wojna*, 18.

⁶ James Bjork, 'Katolickie parafie na Górnym Śląsku w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej', *ibidem*, 50–7.

⁷ Joanna Popanda, 'Codzienność szkolna podczas pierwszej wojny światowej w świetle kronik szkolnych z terenu dzisiejszych Katowic', *ibidem*, 58–69.

First World War discusses the region's economic importance for the Reich, emphasising that in spite of keeping the coal mines operating throughout the war, the mining output fluctuated whilst the numbers of miners, including female and POWs, was growing year to year, which is a hint of the decreasing efficiency of the output. Interestingly, the warfare did not obstruct the modernisation of Silesian economy, particularly as far as metallurgy and coal mining are concerned.⁸

Sebastian Rosenbaum and Joanna Tofilka deal with the discourse on the war, that is, communication of (personal) wartime experiences. Rosenbaum's focus is on the press, and the author points to the need for comparative studies of such discourses, not only in linguistic (Polish/German) terms but on a 'by recipient' basis as well. He appreciates the paucity of personal sources which might have a corrective function when juxtaposed with the official or ideological sources.⁹ Tofilka discusses the importance of studying personal documents, her focus being postcards sent via field mailing service (*Feldpost*). Rather than a source for "cognising the military and political aspects of the war", the postcards appear to be a useful means in analysing a peculiar mentality.¹⁰

Another joint publication on Upper Silesia is *Industrialisierung und Nationalisierung: Fallstudien zur Geschichte des oberschlesischen Industriereviere im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, dealing with aspects of industrialisation and nationalisation taking place in the region in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Andrzej Michalczyk's treatise seeks to "show the processes of politicisation, nationalisation, and secularisation" as helpful in the research into "the significance and reciprocal impacts between the local and supra-local processes of formation of identity groups".¹¹ This author moreover seeks to verify the theoretical approach proposed by Ernest Gellner and Eugen Weber whereby the industrialisation process, along with the introduction of compulsory education and military service and loosened religious bonds, altogether generated a modernised society. The modernisation trend, according to those authors, was accompanied by altered lifestyle, centralisation, and emergence of a uniform notion of 'nation'. Michalczyk stresses, for a change, that performing jobs in many a domain of Silesian economy called for linguistic skills, thus making people using the 'Slavonic' language at home learn German.

⁸ Adam Frużyński, 'Przemysł w górnośląskim okręgu przemysłowym w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej', *ibidem*, s. 100–15.

⁹ Sebastian Rosenbaum, 'Wojna jako narracja. Kontekst górnośląski', *ibidem*, 132–9.

¹⁰ Joanna Tofilka, 'Wojna w korespondencji. Wokół wojennych pocztówek Antoniego Przybyły', *ibidem*, 140–55.

¹¹ Andrzej Michalczyk, 'Das oberschlesische Industrievier in der Moderne. Von der Agrar- zur Industriegesellschaft – von lokalen zu nationalen Loyalitäten?', in Budraß (ed.), *Industrialisierung und Nationalisierung*, 11–44, here: 11.

This language-related change was a form of emergence of a communication space that has put an end to the isolation of rural areas locally. In spite of the modernising processes, traditional customs have been preserved, Michalczyk admits, adding that the Catholic denomination was more important in the daily life than the ethnic antagonisms. In conclusion, he finds that Gellner's and Weber's approaches, postulating a strict relationship between modernisation and the formation of ethnic/national sentiments, are not quite convincing with respect to Upper Silesia.

The societal processes occurring on the local level are analysed also by Bernard Linek in his essay *Biskupitz (Biskupice) und Borsigwerk. Soziale Modernisierungswege in Oberschlesien in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, researching into the development of a city that has become the space for two cultures meeting. School education was run in the two languages there by as late as the second half of the nineteenth century. Similarly to Michalczyk, Linek emphasises that in spite of the industrialisation and development of the working class, members of the latter cultivated rural customs.¹² Contrary to Michalczyk, though, Linek can identify the appearance in the 1880s of first initiatives to involve the populace within the confines of the imagined community of a nation.

Michał Witkowski's article discusses the ways in which the migration of German-speaking people has influenced Upper Silesia¹³, arguing that in spite of the demands to preserve Polish, the loyalty toward the German Reich was not called into question among the Upper Silesian elites in the 1880s. As a result, the Polish-German antagonism had a more appreciable effect on the community, except for local clergymen and members of a Catholic political movement who tried to resist the nationalist sentiments.

The subsequent articles in the anthology in question embark on the issues of migrations from Upper Silesia (mainly to West Germany) as well as from other regions of Poland into Upper Silesia, which implied problems of the emergence of local identities. Lutz Budraß criticises the studies on the identities of various groups migrating to Bottrop in the Ruhr Basin which claim that the local populace became nationalised rather soon whilst tending to neglect the preservation of regional and local values and norms. Similar issues are tackled by Tomasz Nawrocki, Bogdan Kloch and Gregor Ploch, who focus on the relations between the 'locals' and the 'incomers'. Analysing the conflicts occurring in Murcki in respect to the socialisation of the incomers, Nawrocki presents the problem of mutual distrust and grievances

¹² Bernard Linek, 'Biskupitz (Biskupice) und Borsigwerk. Soziale Modernisierungswege in Oberschlesien in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts', *ibidem*, 61–78.

¹³ Michał Witkowski, 'Nationale und politische Mobilisierung der Oberschlesien um die Wende vom 19. zum 20. Jahrhundert am Beispiel von Königshütte (Królewska Huta)', *ibidem*, 93–110.

between the 'new ones' and the local inhabitants. The residential conditions offered at the Young Miner's Houses, which provided accommodation for the newcomers, exerted an adverse effect on the already tough situation. In spite of the prevalent social tensions, the situation stabilised with time, partly due to mixed marriages. Kloch investigates similar phenomena – in specific, analysing the reluctance between the 'locals' and the 'incomers' groups in the districts of Rybnik and Loslau/Wodzisław. In that area the mass migration of young males in the 1950s ended up in conflicts with the local male populace. The phenomenon was quite widespread, and so the press and the administration dealt with it.¹⁴ Ploch proposes a comparative analysis of the situation of the Silesians in Upper Silesia and in the Ruhr Basin, arguing that identity conflicts have not ceased and giving the example of the attempt at renaming the metropolis of Katowice as 'Śląsk' or 'Silesia', which is contested by the inhabitants of the Dąbrowa Basin. Ploch's research confirms Nawrocki's analysis concerning the mutual resentment between the two groups: a sense of 'peculiarity' and separateness and distinctiveness (or, individuation) is still the case, despite a gradual pacification of the moods.¹⁵

The subsequent portion of articles deals with the development of Upper Silesian economy, trade and industry after the Great War. Harald Wixforth discusses the activities of the German banks in the Polish area of Upper Silesia at the time, emphasising that the emergence of Poland as a state marked a caesura for the bankers due to pressures exerted by the Government of the Second Republic, combined with a crisis of the Upper Silesian industry and the strengthening competition from new Polish banks. For example, in order to survive in the market, the Dresdner Bank set up a new branch that functioned based on the laws of Poland.¹⁶ As we are told, the operations of the German banks were watched by the so-called Oberschlesien Kommission functioning within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Weimar Republic; the activity of this Commission has never been investigated. In conclusion, Wixforth discusses the importance of the German banks for the so-called *Volkstumskampf* in Upper Silesia. Based on his own research, the author concludes that both Germany's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dresdner Bank made errors in their activities pursued in the region, thus provoking kickbacks from the Polish side. In contrast, the Deutsche

¹⁴ Bogdan Kloch, 'Konflikte zwischen "Hiesigen" und "Fremden" in den Kreisen Rybnik und Loslau (Wodzisław Śląski) in der zweiten Hälfte der 1950er Jahre im Lichte der Meldungen des Wochenblatts Nowiny', *ibidem*, 345–52.

¹⁵ Gregor Ploch, 'Oberschlesier im oberschlesischen Industrierevier und im Ruhrgebiet. Bildungsprozesse von Wir-Gruppen nach 1950', *ibidem*, 353–68.

¹⁶ Harald Wixforth, 'Banken im Visier der Diplomatie. Die Auseinandersetzung über die Präsenz deutscher Banken im polnischen Teil Oberschlesiens in der Zwischenkriegszeit', *ibidem*, 191–222.

Bank pursued efficient bargaining with the Polish party: the Bank's office functioned locally until 1938 and then suspended its operations. Altogether, Wixforth shows a fascinating dimension of the history of political conflicts in Upper Silesia that has not been investigated before.

In his discussion of the development of power engineering industry in Upper Silesia, Helmut Maier has tackled a no less neglected subject-matter. He argues that resulting from the Prussian power policy, the region was isolated from the countrywide grid.¹⁷ In the Second World War years the industry, mainly coal mining, was of high importance for production of weaponry. The supplies of raw material for the manufacture of aluminium in Norway were key issue. The longer the war was going on, the more important the region grew due to its geographic location, which protected it against the air-raids of the Allies. All the same, Silesia remained peripheral to the Third Reich's national energy and power plans, since the Nazi engineers considered hydropower to be of paramount importance. Resulting from this strategic decision, Upper Silesia was excluded from the ambitious plans in the domain of power policy.

Mirosław Sikora deals with spatial zoning plans compiled by Third Reich institutions and concentrated, among other things, on the *Theorie der zentralen Orte* ('central place theory').¹⁸ 'Colonisation' issues were discussed on such occasions, including seizures of Polish and Jewish properties by the Germans – mainly, by soldiers who were to receive the assets after the war. These colonising assumptions formed, to the author's mind, the central problem faced by the German administration. The attempts at centralisation of the industry can be perceived in terms of the willingness to advance the region's status, from peripheral into central.

A completely different take of the social policies of the Third Reich is proposed by Mirosław Węcki: using the city of Tichau/Tychy as an example, he investigates the ways in which the locals adapted to the Nazi administration system. The main administrative posts were occupied by National Socialists imported from the Reich, rather than regional dwellers.¹⁹ In spite of the administration's endeavours to 'resolve' the ethnic conflicts, misunderstandings continued to occur. Especially those born after 1909, bred and educated in the interwar period within Poland, aroused suspicion among the National Socialist administration. Węcki points out, moreover, to the differences

¹⁷ Helmut Maier, 'Entwicklungslinien der oberschlesischen Elektrizitätswirtschaft bis 1945', *ibidem*, 223–49.

¹⁸ Mirosław Sikora, 'Der Gau Oberschlesien in der Raumplanung der NS-Verwaltung 1939–1944', *ibidem*, 249–84.

¹⁹ Mirosław Węcki, 'Verführt oder angepasst? Eine Analyse der lokalen Strukturen der oberschlesischen NSDAP am Beispiel der Stadt Tichau (Tychy)', *ibidem*, 285–308.

between the administrative structure of the Nazi party in the Reich and in Upper Silesia, emphasising that the war made these differences deeper due to manpower shortage. He argues that the ethnic situation in Upper Silesia was complex from the standpoint of the administration and party apparatus, whereas distrust towards the native people and ethnically motivated crimes were commonplace.

The issues of administration and replacement of personnel are also investigated by Bernard Linek, with respect to a later period. Like Węcki, he observes that shortly after the Second World War the administration staff, particularly in the secret services, was recruited from outside the region.²⁰ An exceptional case in this point was Jerzy Ziętek, the Voivode of Silesia and Katowice (among other offices), who, in spite of his ties with the *Sanacja* regime in the thirties, held high offices and survived the Stalinist years. Linek concludes that the communists wielded rule owing, among other things, to the support from local milieus.

The anthology *Górny Śląsk i Górnślązacy. Wokół problemów regionu i jego mieszkańców w XIX i XX wieku* [Upper Silesia, Upper Silesians. About the problems of the region and its residents in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries], edited by Sebastian Rosenbaum, embarks on a no less rich array of problems and issues. Kai Struve – similarly to Andrzej Michalczyk, co-author of *Industrialisierung und Nationalisierung ...* – accepts Ernest Gellner's theory as the starting point in his own research into Upper Silesia. The scholar (who earlier researched the nationalisation of peasantry in Austrian Galicia) argues that the processes in question were completely reverse to Gellner's assumptions, if viewed on the local level.²¹ One of the main drivers behind the political development in the region was the *Zentrum* party, which integrated landowners, industrialists, peasants, and workers. Struve shows how this potential was fading in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, against the increasing ethnic antagonism. The first decade of the following century saw, in parallel, a second *Kulturkampf*, with the resulting increase of the Catholic movement. As Struve further argues, the policy of Bülow's government, anti-Polish and anti-Catholic as it was, fostered an increase in the attendance at the election, particularly in the Silesian Province and, therein, in the Oppeln Regency in 1908. The conclusion is that the high attendance rate and its decreasing figures seen in the subsequent years did not result from nationalisation but from a sense of threat posed to religious freedoms. Compared to

²⁰ Bernard Linek, 'Austausch der Eliten in der Wojewodschaft Schlesien in den Jahren 1945–1950', *ibidem*, 309–26.

²¹ Kai Struve, 'Górny Śląsk na przełomie XIX i XX wieku – nacjonalizacja społeczeństwa w perspektywie porównawczej', in Sebastian Rosenbaum (ed.), *Górny Śląsk i Górnślązacy. Wokół problemów regionu i jego mieszkańców w XIX i XX wieku* (Katowice and Gliwice, 2014), 16–37.

the situation in Galicia, Struve's analysis confirms the statement that Upper Silesia was characterised by a relatively considerable national indifference.

The development of political movements is reviewed in the essay on *The early twentieth-century national cultural systems in Upper Silesia* by Bernard Linek. The Catholic and the national movement are of particular importance in this analysis. Investigated are cultural systems and cultural offers appearing in the region that saw a fast modernisation and whose population turned into a strongly horizontally integrated society of free citizens. According to Linek, the society faced the choice between a national and a Catholic nationalism, the main exponent of the latter having been the *Zentrumspartei*.²² Guido Hintze also deals with political Catholicism, focusing on the figures of Wojciech Korfanty and Otto Ulitzka, considering them to have been symbols of the alternative posed for the Upper Silesian populace to consider.²³ Ulitzka believed that the ethnically Polish Upper Silesians would stay loyal toward the German state thanks to a policy of preservation of the 'Slavonic' language and traditional religiosity. An analogous situation occurred with respect to Lusatian Serbs. Hintze states that the political climate in the Weimar Republic prevented the execution of those plans, though.

Urszula Biel's article investigates the propagandist movies from the plebiscite period, a subject that has not been thoroughly analysed before. The Germans prevailed, because of their experience in propaganda activities, gained especially in the Great War years and their advanced film industry.²⁴ Maciej Fic focuses, in turn, on the biography of Jan Kustos, a regional activist who led the organisation named Union of Polish Upper Silesians.²⁵ A follower of separatist trends, and using radical slogans, Kustos did not exert a considerable impact on the region's population, and yet his slogans led to "escalated nation-forming sentiments amongst some of the local residents".²⁶ The Catholic movement is dealt with, again, in an article by Andrzej Michalczyk, who focuses on the clergy and their conflicts with nationalism, which manifested themselves primarily on state celebrations.²⁷ In conclusion, Michalczyk states that after the plebiscite most of the clergymen resumed

²² Bernard Linek, 'Narodowe systemy kulturowe na Górnym Śląsku na początku XX wieku', *ibidem*, s. 38–49.

²³ Guido Hintze, 'Niemiecka Partia Centrum wobec Górnego Śląska 1918–1933', *ibidem*, 50–69.

²⁴ Urszula Biel, 'Górny Śląsk jest nasz! Polska i niemiecka propaganda filmowa obliczu plebiscytu', *ibidem*, 70–83.

²⁵ Maciej Fic, 'Wpływ działalności społeczno-politycznej Jana Kustosa na mieszkańców Górnego Śląska', *ibidem*, 84–99.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 99.

²⁷ Andrzej Michalczyk, 'Postawy duchowieństwa katolickiego na Górnym Śląsku wobec polityki polonizacji w okresie międzywojennym', *ibidem*, 100–15.

their daily business in their parishes, rather than engaging in political activities, and assumed a neutral position with respect to the national questions.

Peter Polak-Springer discusses the state-run 'cultural policy' on both ethnic sides in the interwar period. For both states, Germany and Poland, it was necessary to produce their own versions of 'Silesianness' (or, Silesian identity), he emphasises.²⁸ Focusing on the interwar period, the author shows that celebrations, ceremonies or festivities were an important measure used in combating each other. One example is the unveiling of the Silesian Insurgents' Monument in Chorzów in October 1927 by Ignacy Mościcki, President of the Second Republic of Poland. In Polak-Springer's opinion, despite of the dissimilar concepts of Silesian identity advocated by Voivode Grażyński and the German *Zentrum* party, there were shared characteristics to these options: appreciation for folk culture and for a coherence of the region. As the author argues, the rivalry for Upper Silesia took place not only in the political, but also in the cultural, sphere. Resulting from these actions was, paradoxically, a reinforced particularism among the Silesians, since the attempts at making use of the regional folklore for state- or nation(alist)-oriented reasons through a homogenisation of 'Silesianness' had proved inefficient.

The contributions to the volume in question deal with the situation of the region's population after the Second World War, one of the focuses being the policies of the communist authorities. In his study entitled *The desired and the unloved: the native population in Silesia in the perception of the national authorities in 1945–9*, Grzegorz Strauchold notices that the stance of the communist government was ambivalent with respect to the Silesian population – a population that was 'in demand' due to its economic situation but was 'unloved' in an ethnic perspective."²⁹ This incoherent policy led to conflicts that locally echoed the disputes between the Silesians and the Warsaw-based central political leadership, who used a nationalistic rhetoric. James Bjork, in turn, analyses the participation of the Catholic clergy in the re-Polonisation of the region. Re-Polonisation and national verification was a difficult process, since, according to Bjork, most of the local people had some kind of German 'past'.³⁰ For the clergy, it was essential to determine how the individual dwellers of the region had behaved during the war; the aid offered to the Poles was identified with declaring Polishness. It happened at times that the Church hierarchs spoke against considering the applicant or petitioner to be a Pole.

²⁸ Peter Polak-Springer, 'Kultura ludowa, rewanżyzm i tworzenie narodowo-regionalnych kultur wysokich na polsko-niemieckim pograniczu w latach 1926–1933', *ibidem*, 116–43.

²⁹ Grzegorz Strauchold, 'Pożądati i niekochani. Ludność rodzima na Śląsku w optyce władz państwowych w latach 1945–1949', *ibidem*, 156–71.

³⁰ James Bjork, 'Kościoł katolicki a (re)polonizacja Górnego Śląska po drugiej wojnie światowej', *ibidem*, 172–97.

Bjork very clearly shows that not only the ruling communists had a decisive say with respect to the Upper Silesian people after the war: the clergy, expressing diverse stances, currents and discourses as regards verifying the identity of the region's people, were important in this respect as well. Complementarily to Bjork's article, Piotr Madajczyk deals with the state's policy, in his treatise on *Poland's policy toward the Upper Silesian population in 1944/5–89*. Three steps of the 're-Polonisation' policy are analysed, including: (i) segregation, (ii) the Polish option and national indifference, and (iii) consistent re-Polonisation. Madajczyk aptly points out that the Silesian activists were convinced, to a larger degree than the politicians in Warsaw, that errors might occur as the segregation process went on, for the ethnic situation did not directly reflect the theory.³¹ After October 1956, the conditions for a (more or less liberal) (re-)Polonisation of the population reflected the alterations among the top authorities in Warsaw. The government feared that recognition of a German minority in Silesia might lead to increased number its members; and this is why the ruling communists believed that a (re-)Polonisation policy was indispensable. In conclusion, Madajczyk expresses the view that "the German option within the Silesian borderland community ... was a fact against which the authorities had no useful formula whatsoever".³²

Stanisław Janowiak's article entitled *The migrations from Upper Silesia after the Second World War* deals with this topic as well. Since the displacements ended in 1949, the exoduses taking place from 1950 onwards were different in character. In the later period (1970s) especially 'transmitters of revisionist propaganda' and those with a 'bad attitude towards work' were permitted to leave. Janowiak finds that the region is an "excellent example of how the incentives to leave evolved. ... As long as temporary stay abroad was seriously hampered, the applications mainly reflected the inclination to emigrate. ... For those willing to go, the country [i.e. the then Federal Republic of Germany] aroused associations with wealth and welfare, and this finally helped make the decision. Moreover, none of the other countries offered a similarly permissive immigration policy, especially with the family reunification slogan at work. The ethnic criterion was just one of the aspects."³³ Gregor Ploch analyses the immigration from former regions of the Third Reich into the Federal Republic in the fifties and afterwards. In spite of their formally German 'ethnicity' (*Volkszugehörigkeit*), these incomers did not integrate smoothly, and conflicts with the local people were rather frequent.³⁴ In the success integration

³¹ Piotr Madajczyk, 'Polityka polska wobec ludności Górnego Śląska w latach 1944/1945-1989', *ibidem*, 198–217.

³² *Ibidem*, 214.

³³ *Ibidem*, 244.

³⁴ Gregor Ploch, 'Między "hajmatem" a ojczyzną. Górnoślązacy w Nadrenii Północnej-Westfalii po 1945 roku', *ibidem*, 246–59.

stories, individual determinants prevailed – such as fair language skills and education. In some cases, the social pressure and fear that the people inflowing into Germany might be perceived as Poles led to excessive identification with Germanness. In the recent period, the community of immigrants into West Germany from Upper Silesia has developed a sense of distance not only toward a Polish but also toward a German identity, an attitude that is interrelated with a stronger identification of their region of origin. As Ploch stresses, research on the identity of Silesians migrating to West Germany has been scarce and the topic remains underelaborated. Upper Silesian migrants in Berlin is a similar issue, reviewed by David Skrabania. The central question analysed in his study, as well as in Ploch's article, is knowledge of German, age, and origin or background. Skrabania emphasises that in the 1970s the labour-based integration was pretty smooth. One of the positive circumstances of fast integration was the fact that most of the migrants were of working age whilst West Berlin had a demand for artisans and skilled labourers.³⁵ Successful professional and school integration among children was a very important premise for satisfaction with the migration decision. Notably, the success of both children and their elders was much based on the migrants' readiness to join the new community.

Integration and memory of Upper Silesians in the *Bundesrepublik* are also dealt with by Andrew Demshuk, who analyses the memory of the year 1921 in the circles of so-called 'expellees'. Particularly after the Second World War leaders of this milieu endeavoured to "preserve at least a particle of positive memory of themselves"³⁶ by removing the memory of war and Nazi crimes. The memory of the plebiscite and Silesian Uprisings was cherished over long years, becoming a point of entry for the propaganda of the later years. This memory was losing more and more of its importance, albeit remnants of it can be found still today in the shrinking circle of 'the expellees'.

Memory is also the focus of Bogusław Tracz's biographical sketch about Jerzy Ziętek and his activities as a voivode. Three keywords – 'Silesian', 'Soldier' and 'Landlord' – seem to mark and memorialise this peculiar figure. Reviewing Ziętek's entire biography, the author finds that particularly in the 1980s the myth that had functioned in terms of 'the good Tsar, the bad officials' mutated into a trend to form a 'broad social front' to stabilise the social situation in the last decade of the People's Republic of Poland.³⁷ The Ziętek

³⁵ David Skrabania, 'Górnośląscy przesiedleńcy w Berlinie 1964–1990: sukcesy i problemy integracyjne. Próba zbliżenia z perspektywy mikrohistorycznej', *ibidem*, 260–79.

³⁶ Andrew Demshuk, 'Pamięć roku 1921 po roku 1945: Górnośląscy wypędzeni w Zachodnich Niemczech – różne obrazy ofiary', *ibidem*, 280–313.

³⁷ Bogusław Tracz, 'Ślązak – żołnierz – gospodarz. Jerzy Ziętek jako przykład mitologizacji politycznej', *ibidem*, 330–53.

myth dates back to the year 1975 – the time the region was prosperous and benefited from investments. Ziętek’s withdrawal from political activity at that point reinforced his legend since, as Tracz sums up, had he “held the post of Voivode until 1980, he might have shared the fate of Edward Gierek or Zdzisław Grudzień, with the burden of responsibility imposed on them for the crisis that was to prevail over the subsequent decade”.³⁸ “The legend of Ziętek goes on ...”, the author continues. “This is possibly explainable in terms of an undeniable phenomenon of the man, while the effect of the convincing propaganda and political marketing is considerable anyway.”³⁹

The last article in the book under discussion, *Silesianness is normal* by Elżbieta-Anna Sekuła, deals with the factors of today’s Silesian identity and stresses that among the polled respondents the knowledge of the patois is no longer considered a necessary condition, though still remains important. Other features typical of the region gain in importance instead, such as, in particular, the labour ethos, religiousness, and the importance of family. As was the case with Bloch’s study, the polled Silesian migrants to Germany appear no more to be ashamed of their background and distinctiveness.⁴⁰ The systemic changes and the economic development cause that less and less dwellers in Silesia consider the option to emigrate, whereas emigration was commonplace in Poland under communism. In sum, Sekuła concludes that the model of Silesian identity is characterised by its openness and is definable particularly in terms of the cultural singularity of the local population. This model is accompanied by altering “attitudes toward the past, history (as a broad concept), and the central government”.⁴¹

The last anthology I would like to discuss is *Upadek systemu komunistycznego na Górnym Śląsku: Wokół przemian 1989 roku w województwach katowickim i opolskim* [The fall of the communist system in Upper Silesia. About the 1989 transition in the Voivodships of Katowice and Opole]. It focuses on the last years of the ‘People’s Republic’. Jarosław Neja discusses the development of the opposition movement in the Voivodeship of Katowice in the 1980s, arguing that the role of coal mine workers was paramount. The author stresses the importance of the strikes taking place in Upper Silesia in 1988, which gave an impulse for negotiations between the communist regime and the opposition, with the resulting ‘Round Table’ talks, and were no less important for the opposition milieu itself.⁴² Tomasz Kurpierz describes

³⁸ *Ibidem*, 347 f.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, 351.

⁴⁰ Elżbieta Anna Sekuła, ‘Śląskość jest normalna’, *ibidem*, 354–79.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 375 f.

⁴² Jarosław Neja, ‘Przed przełomem. Opozycja w województwie katowickim w latach 1988–1989. Próba zarysowania problemu’, in Adam Dziuba and Sebastian

the history of the Independent Students' Union (NZS) in the Voivodeship of Katowice. The youth in the late eighties was radically anticommunist and proclaimed independence slogans.⁴³ The author shows how difficult it was to find common ground within the student environment which got split into adherents of rebellion and compromise. In Kurpierz's view, the student strikes of 1988 proved not as important as those organised before the martial law of December 1981. To his mind, this meant that NZS slipped into a crisis as a mass association. Albeit NZS was one of the most active oppositional organisations, its activities were marginalised in 1989, which ended up in frustration among its members and their critical attitude toward the 'Round Table' negotiations.

In his treatise on *The decomposition, disintegration and disassembly of the voivodeship structures of the PZPR [Polish United Workers' Party] in Katowice*, Bogusław Tracz examines the structure and development of the PZPR's local organisation in the voivodship. Less and less members were joining the communist party in the late 1980s.⁴⁴ The political developments in 1989 perturbed the regional leaders, and thus in March 1989 Wojciech Jaruzelski took efforts to persuade them that the idea of holding talks at a 'round table' was appropriate. The author concludes that the party in general, and its Katowice branch in particular, was less and less attractive in the eighties, in both job career and political terms. PZPR failed to satisfy the major needs of the people, which was quite evident in the highly industrialised region whose working class, according to the Marxist-Leninist ideology, was to form the social base for the party. Sebastian Rosenbaum, discussing the breakdown of the party at the level of its municipal organisations, notes that the 1988 strikes triggered a ferment within them.⁴⁵ The need to reform the party was felt even at the downmost level of the party's hierarchy. Rosenbaum stresses, though, that the sentiments were not unambiguous. For example, the branches of Rybnik and Racibórz expected a contrary trend in the reforms, both within the party and in the national policy, which led to further decomposition of the party structures – at both central and municipal levels.

Radosław Miłoch and Tomasz Szafron describe the structure and the origins of the communist party elites in Katowice Voivodeship. Most of

Rosenbaum (eds.), *Upadek systemu komunistycznego na Górnym Śląsku. Wokół przemian 1989 roku w województwach katowickim i opolskim* (Katowice, 2010), 16–42, here: 34–5.

⁴³ Tomasz Kurpierz, 'Niezależne Zrzeszenie Studentów w województwie katowickim u schyłku PRL (1988–1989)', *ibidem*, 43–86.

⁴⁴ Bogusław Tracz, 'Dekompozycja, rozkład i demontaż struktur wojewódzkich PZPR w Katowicach', *ibidem*, 122–92.

⁴⁵ Sebastian Rosenbaum, 'Atrofia miejskich organizacji partyjnych PZPR w województwie katowickim 1988–1990', *ibidem*, 193–246.

the members came from outside the region⁴⁶, and characteristic of them was low education, which according to the authors is related to the young age at which they joined the party, afterwards being offered the opportunity to complete their education with one of the party-run colleges. The average member of the party elite is described thus: “male, mostly born outside the Voivodeship of Silesia, with a working-class background. Having completed his secondary education, he would join the PZPR and retain membership in communist youth associations. He would then follow up with his education at a higher school as well as with the party’s educational system (of various levels), often already as a full-time member of the PZPR”.⁴⁷

Adam Dziuba’s focus is the electoral campaign in 1989 and the election that ended up in a disaster for the PZPR. In the days after the defeat, the provincial leaders of the party analysed the reasons for what had happened, concluding that the way the campaign was carried out was the crucial error. According to the party’s internal analyses, the rivalry within the PZPR had led to a deferral of electoral processes, whilst the opposition proved very active. What is more, while some of the PZPR candidates kept their actual membership back, the opposition was commonly associated with the Solidarity trade union and social movement,⁴⁸ and hence was perceived as “opponents of the existing order, those who have been waging a struggle for years now over the change on which Poland and all its citizens would definitely benefit”.⁴⁹ In spite of its control of the mass media, the PZPR was unable to make an efficient use of them during the electoral campaign. The public sentiments prevented the previous policy from being continued. Meanwhile, on the other side of the political front in the Opole region, the German minority organisations contested in the election against the ‘civic movement’ (Solidarity-related opposition). The problem is analysed by Krzysztof Zuba in his study *The role of the civic movement in Opolian Silesia in the disassembly of the authoritarian system and the building of democracy at the regional and local level*. To his mind, a ‘non-aggression pact’ between both non-communist trends was entered into only at the time of the election.⁵⁰ The German minority issue is also reconsidered by Małgorzata Świder, who focuses on the disputes appearing

⁴⁶ Radosław Miłoch and Tomasz Szafron, ‘Elita partyjna PZPR w województwie katowickim w 1989 r.’, *ibidem*, 247–62.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, 256, 262.

⁴⁸ Adam Dziuba, ‘Kampania wyborcza i wybory w województwie katowickim’, *ibidem*, 275–328.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 326.

⁵⁰ Krzysztof Zuba, ‘Rola ruchu obywatelskiego na Śląsku Opolskim w demontażu systemu autorytarnego i budowie demokracji na szczeblu regionalnym i lokalnym’, *ibidem*, 329–40.

in the last decade of the communist Poland over the legalisation of minority organisations.⁵¹ Members of the minority expected economic aid from West Germany to support the development of the region, ensuring improved standards of living. The process of Polish-German reconciliation, with the reciprocal recognition of the frontier by means of the 1991 Treaty, opened a new chapter in the history of the two nations' mutual relationship – also with respect to the German minority.

In their summary account of the twentieth-century history of Upper Silesia, Marek S. Szczepański and Weronika Ślęzak-Tazbir point at the altered character of the region that has been a borderline for long centuries, which has heavily influenced its development and the situation of its native people.⁵² The region has moreover become the target of mass economic and labour migration in both the interwar period and after the Second World War, which reshaped its character once again. The authors emphasise the essential importance of the collapse of the communist system and the related political and economic transformation, and the ways in which these developments affected the region that was the heart of the country's industry during the post-war communist period. They discuss the violent transformations affecting the area after 1989, leading to the close-down of traditional industrial establishments, in parallel with the changes on the political stage. According to Szczepański and Ślęzak-Tazbir, the *gorol* ('comer from Poland') stereotype has survived in the mentality of the locals after 1989, fuelled partly by a sense of injustice shared by the natives. These phenomena, mental as well as economic, are presently under transformation.

For centuries, Upper Silesia has been a borderland area where a strong regional identity has developed, perceived as dissimilar from its German or Polish counterpart. This identity, typically identified with the native sociolect, made the societal and political situation even more complex. Research into Upper Silesia illustrates the difficulties faced not only by the local population but also by the nation-states. For them – both Germany and Poland – the region has not only been the subject of dispute, but also a factor in the international position. After the Second World War, when the region ceased functioning as a border territory, it remained distinctive, in spite of the efforts of the communist authorities aimed at (re-)Polonising and unifying the country. The strong regional identity survived the communist period and manifested itself stronger after the regime collapsed. The sense of peculiarity was not confined to the native population of Upper Silesia but was also shared by the Upper Silesian migrants in Germany.

⁵¹ Małgorzata Świder, 'Oficjalne deklaracje i zakulisowe gry. Problem mniejszości niemieckiej w Polsce pod koniec lat osiemdziesiątych', *ibidem*, 355–68.

⁵² Marek S. Szczepański and Weronika Ślęzak-Tazbir, 'Region pogranicza kulturowego w okresie przełomu 1989–1990. Ogląd wsteczny', *ibidem*, 369–88.

Apart from the above-discussed issues, there remain some not-yet-reviewed questions, such as the functioning of the region as a part of the People's Republic of Poland; the acculturation of migrants in Upper Silesia as well as in Germany; the development of the region's society in the 'golden years' of 1950s to 1970s. In his study on Jerzy Ziętek, Bogusław Tracz shows these severe gaps in the general historical knowledge of the latter mentioned period. Also, the relations between Warsaw – not only as the administration centre but also as an epitome of Polishness – and Katowice have not been thoroughly analysed yet. The proposed desiderata are not limited to the region after 1945 but also to the period between the World Wars as well – for instance, as Harald Wixforth pointed out, analysing in his article the complicated relations between the banking system and international relations.

To add my own opinion, researchers ought to reconsider the usability of the political caesurae established for the region. It is obvious that the downfall of the communist system has altered the framework of political activity, opening up new opportunities for articulating the specific regional identity. Economically, or in socioeconomic terms, it would be important and most recommendable to pursue research into the period of 1980 to 2000 – the years of economic crisis and regional transformation.

trans. *Tristan Korecki*

Michael Zok

Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud, *Arts and a Nation. The Role of Visual Arts and Artists in the Making of the Latvian Identity 1905–1940*, Brill, Leiden, 2015, xxiv + 572 pp., ill.

The book *Arts and a Nation. The Role of Visual Arts and Artists in the Making of the Latvian Identity 1905–1940*, authored by Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud, was first published in French by the Rennes University Press in 2013. In 2015 the book was translated into English and published by Leiden University Press. The author is a member of the Centre for Research of Slavic History at the Sorbonne University, and her research focuses on Latvian history. The book is an outstanding example of the relatively new research approach which began to be developed in the most recent decade, and has become quite prominent nowadays. Its focus lies on visual art and clothing which, being attributes of cultural and visual history, at the same time serve as a source and basis for social and political history and reflect both issues and phenomena (e.g., identity, nation-building, and the creation of a common heritage or of a community) which the social and political history research methodologies barely enable.

Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud has applied this methodology in order to research the process of nation building in Latvia which, according to her, was

being constructed mostly from the German and the Russian cultural legacy, and lacked the background of national history or national heritage. Thus, in Latvia it was rather a process of a 'long birth' than the 'rebirth' which took place in the other areas and states at the time. She closely analyses the visual creation of a common Latvian heritage and of national identity, both from 'above,' i.e. the state, and from below - from the nationalistically inspired artists and other members of the intelligentsia who tried to create a new Latvian visual and cultural identity.

Although the study is dedicated to the whole state, Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud's book gives special emphasis to Riga, both as the capital of the state and as a capital of the arts. Other towns where cultural activity took place as well, like Daugavpils or Jelgava, also receive an appropriate measure of attention in the work.

The book is divided chronologically into four main parts and into two halves (i.e. the stateless period and state period) and covers 35 years of intensive nation-building. Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud has made a significant and noteworthy effort to familiarise her readers with the cultural and visual history of Latvia against the wider background of political events, smoothly interlinking the two. Additionally, she has focused not only on ethnic Latvians, but devoted the same measure in relation to other ethnic groups, i.e. Jews, Russians, and Germans. This has allowed her to perceive the history of the region in a broader context: as an area which for many centuries was under the German cultural dominance and, from the eighteenth century, under the Russian one. Therefore socially, regardless of the ethnic and religious origins, the country's elites for many years were Germano- or Russophones, while the Latvian language and culture were regarded as the peasants' domain. The book illustrates how - in the short time of 1905-40 - these elites were re-shaped culturally, socially and linguistically to give a clear priority to the (partially reinvented, or perhaps better characterized as 'invented') Latvian identity. Thus the first chapter of each part is dedicated to the surrounding external and internal political and social events and serves as an introduction, contributing to a profounder understanding of the subsequent development of culture and art during the time period under analysis.

The first part of the study covers the period between the Russian Revolution of 1905 and the First World War in the areas of Courland and Livonia. It focuses on the Latvian demands for autonomy and the awakening of the national awareness in members of the artistic *milieu*, who remained under the influence of the German and Russian visual traditions and were still located within the borders of the Russian Empire.

The second part of the book focuses on the intensive five-year time span between 1915 and 1920. This was a period of transition from Latvian demands for autonomy (prior to and during the First World War in 1915-18) to the War of Liberation and Struggle for Independence in 1918-20. It also

contributed to the domination of a clearly militarily-focused identity within Latvian art. According to Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud, this domination is reflected in the usage of various military symbols, particularly focusing on the one hand on the Latvian Riflemen and on the other on war refugees.

The second half of the book generally deals with a period of Latvian independence. The author divides this 20-year time span into two major and unequal parts: 1920–34 and 1934–40. Thus, the third (and largest) part of the work is dedicated to the period of 1920–34, in which Latvia gained its independence and struggled to establish and strengthen its legitimacy, both externally in the post-war European political structure, and internally in order to unify Latvia's heterogeneous population under a common national ideology and symbols.

The fourth and final part of the book again deals with a relatively short time span, i.e. 1934–40. This was the period which represented the highest point of Latvian nationalism, and which received an intense visual expression. According to Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud, it started with the taking of power by Kārlis Ulmanis, which significantly impacted Latvian culture and art. This period was abruptly ended by the Soviet invasion and the subsequent annexation of Latvia into the Soviet Union in 1940. This rude and abrupt end to national visual and artistic development, which was followed by war years of the Second World War and thereafter the long years under the Soviet regime, gave rise to strong feelings of nostalgia for the fruitful and intensive interwar years when Latvian cultural and national activism abounded.

While constituting a clear and well written, deep and thought-provoking scholarly analysis, combined with a highly informative content, this book however lacks one important comparative point of view. Whereas the 'internal' comparison between various ethnic and cultural groups inhabiting Latvia is done in a brilliant way, the 'external' links are notably missing. While understandably the main and major focus of Pourchier-Plasseraud's research is on Latvia, at the same time one should not forget that the political, social and cultural changes which occurred in the region between 1905–40 were not an exclusive Latvian phenomenon. Very similar processes of visual and cultural nationalistic self-building and re-building occurred, with minor time deviations, within all the successor states which came into being during the period under scrutiny. The same tensions between the newly invented ethnic-national-citizen visual self of the local population versus the centuries of elitist German and Russian linguistic and cultural influence were evident during this period in various corners of East Central Europe: from Upper Silesia to Lithuania, from Moravia to Lower and Upper Lusatia, and throughout the former Prussian, Russian and Austro-Hungarian lands. Hence the Latvian 'test case', while on one hand unique due to its historical and regional development and specific socio-cultural features, on the other hand can be placed within the context of the political, social, cultural

and artistic developments which took place in all the newly-created states after the First World War. Given the size and scope of Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud's study, some space could have been devoted to such a comparative observation.

However it should be emphasized that apart from this minor criticism Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud's study is an original, fascinating, and well written and richly illustrated monograph, and that thanks to her research it can be a prominent source of high quality information about Latvian history, culture and art. Many scholars and students from various fields of art, social, and political and cultural history will find in this work a very rich and helpful catalogue of archival sources, as well as sources from the French and Latvian museums and libraries.

proofreading James Hartzell

Anna Novikov

Michael Zok, *Die Darstellung der Judenvernichtung in Film, Fernsehen und politischer Publizistik der Volksrepublik Polen 1968–1989*, Herder-Institut, Marburg, 2015, 328 pp.; series: Studien zur Ostmitteleuropaforschung, 34

Michael Zok's monograph addresses an important area of Poland's memory culture. His argument that the mass media in the late Polish People's Republic emphasised Polish suffering and heroism at the expense of the Jewish perspective is not new. However, his account provides useful background information for an analysis of current processes of the politics of memory in Poland. For example, with regard to the film *Długa noc* (1967), the author writes that "In particular, a possible negative response abroad was anticipated because [of the fear] that the film would strengthen the West's negative stereotypes about Polish society" (p. 92). Such rhetoric continues to remain part of the mainstream in Polish society. Thus, following the international success of *Ida* (2013), national conservative publicists and politicians complained that the film perpetuated unjustified foreign stereotypes of Poles as anti-Semites. They demanded explanatory title cards at the beginning of the film that would mention German responsibility for and the Polish victims of the crimes of the Second World War. Zok barely touches upon such continuities. Nevertheless, his book provides the opportunity to locate contemporary discussions in a historical perspective.

The book's title promises to treat film, television and political journalism equally. However, Zok concentrates on televisual memories of the extermination of the Jews. This is an entirely successful decision as the history of Polish television is a relatively neglected discipline. This was a mass medium that profoundly shaped the memory culture, particularly in the period studied

by Zok. In contrast to the West, where television had already begun to play a large role by the second half of the 1950s, the medium first achieved political importance in Poland from the end of the 1960s.

Consequently, cinema films and political journalism only appear in the margins of Zok's discussion. The monograph is based on solid archival research, by no means a given in works on film and media studies. The depiction of audience responses, mainly drawing on letters from the Polish Television Archive (TVP), is particularly impressive. Cultural memory manifests itself not only in texts, films and TV programmes, but above all in the interface between the individual works, their producers or commissioners and the audience. Zok emphasises this in the introduction and traces meticulously – when his sources allow him – the various contexts of production and reception. A translation into Polish of his study's conclusions regarding audience responses to individual films would be very worthwhile.

Zok impressively draws upon primary sources and secondary literature alongside examples of films and TV programmes. Nevertheless, there are also a few points which one can criticise. Above all, the book's cumbersome structure makes it heavy-going reading. Each film is discussed separately. Consequently, important themes that span time and works cannot be addressed directly. In those cases where films and TV programmes have similar narrative structures, for example, the text is redundant. Because the political and cinematic contexts are described in great detail, the author only arrives at the real topic of his book on page 110. This might be helpful for those without the necessary background knowledge. Yet, even here, the information is a little too comprehensive. One would expect, moreover, that the readers of the Herder Institute's series are specialists.

Zok's historical perspective sets his work apart from approaches located in film and culture studies. Consequently, some of his film descriptions lack an analytical approach. In most cases, he summarises the film's plot without reference to formal aspects. Certainly, the monograph cites almost all the relevant historical literature in the areas of both political and cinematic history. However, this is a work on images of the Holocaust that does not mention fundamental works of philosophy or cultural studies by, among others, Theodor W. Adorno, James E. Young, Marianne Hirsch, Dominick LaCapra, Georges Didi-Huberman and Zygmunt Bauman. As a result, Zok fails to relate his research to long-standing debates outside Poland. His depiction of the extermination of the Jews gives the impression of a local phenomenon largely divorced from international contexts. Foreign aspects only receive consideration in the discussion of Western films shown on Polish television or discussed in the Polish press. As a consequence, an important theme is ignored: the role of Polish film in the development of a pictorial language that is used internationally to depict the Holocaust.

In conclusion, the monograph identifies important contexts for research on Polish-Jewish relations and provides a wealth of important sources and information, particularly on the history of production and reception. However, the structure of the book and its failure to address the research on depictions of the Holocaust deserve criticism.

trans. Christopher Gilley

Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska

Hans-Christian Dahlmann, *Antisemitismus in Polen 1968. Interaktionen zwischen Partei und Gesellschaft*, Fibre Verlag, Osnabrück, 2013, 430 pp., index of persons, bibliog., Polish sum.; series: Einzelveröffentlichungen des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Warschau, 30

March 1968 has enjoyed unflagging interest among researchers in the recent past: it is in these occurrences that focuses, like a lens, the important political and societal problems of what once was the People's Republic of Poland. These include the crisis of Władysław Gomułka's authority, the beginnings of the Democratic Opposition movement, the student protest (or rather, a rebellion of the young generation) and anti-Semitic resentments within the Polish United Workers' Party [PZPR] and among ordinary Poles. It is all the more surprising, then, that no reviews in Polish historical periodicals have accompanied the publication of the book by Hans-Christian Dahlmann, originally being his PhD thesis submitted at the Münster University in 2012. The study analyses some previously unexamined original materials (among others, from the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which in 1967 took over the handling of Israeli consular matters in Poland), includes sixty interviews with witnesses, and proposes several daring arguments that provoke discussion and polemic.

Dahlmann situates his study within research in anti-Semitism and critical studies on communism. As the title suggests, the study seeks to look closely at anti-Semitism in Polish society as such. The author perceives anti-Semitism as any form of enmity toward Jews, alongside negative stereotypes and ideas of Jews – whereas 'Jews' include Polish Jews and Poles of Jewish origin (*polnische Juden; Polen jüdischer Herkunft*, p. 25), virtually regardless of how strong their identification with Jewishness is. Yet, the author's promise to extend his analysis to the entire society has not been met, since his focus is mainly on the interactions between the ruling communist party and the local intelligentsia (research workers and students) in the context of the stormy political developments of the late 1967 and early 1968. Hence, the 1968 mass-media campaign of the communist party is flattened (anti-Semitism did not exhaust the meanings it carried, which Dariusz Stola remarked several

times¹). This inevitable fragmentariness of perception results from the use of a specific source base, with police documents² and individual memoirist accounts, taken e.g. from *Plotkies*, a periodical of Jewish 1968 émigré community, prevailing and overrepresented. In spite of these general reservations, it has to be stated straight ahead that the outcome of Dahlmann's research is respectable. He shows what interests him the most – the degree to which certain groups of the society were engaged in the anti-Semitic campaign (meant by its originators to be 'anti-Zionist') commenced in 1967 and intensified in the following year.

The treatise has seven chapters, followed by a general summary. The first, introductory chapter deals with the reconstruction of the Jewish community in Poland after the Second World War and the demographic issues. Saved from the Holocaust, the Polish Jewry were bound to face the Kielce Pogrom of July 1946 and the emergence of the state of Israel two years later. These occurrences triggered a wave of emigration. Those Jews who stayed in Poland chose either of the strategic paths: (i) concealing their background, and the persecutions they experienced in the course of the war, with the resultant assimilation; or, (ii) becoming on close terms with the communist authorities, due to conformist attitude or out of conviction. Another wave of exits from Poland appeared in 1956, as part of the political Thaw, which Dahlmann evokes to the extent needed to describe the dispute within the ruling party between the Stalinists and the 'reformers' (the *Natolin* vs. *Puławy* faction). To him, the element that differentiates the two fractions is the attitude toward anti-Semitism: the former took advantage of it as an instrument in the political combat, whilst the latter feared it.

Chapter 2 tells a story of the political effects of the Arab-Israeli Six Days' War on the internal relations in Poland. Władysław Gomułka, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the communist party, assumed the anti-Israeli attitude, as the Kremlin expected him to. In his speech that was broadcasted countrywide by the radio and television, Gomułka referred to the Poles of Jewish origin as a 'fifth column' and stated that should they be willing to emigrate, they would not be prevented. A wave of layoffs (including in the military) followed, affecting those who publicly, or even in private situations, had expressed their satisfaction with the defeat of the pro-Soviet

¹ Dariusz Stola, 'Anti-Zionism as Multipurpose Policy Instrument: The Anti-Zionist Campaign in Poland, 1967–1968', *The Journal of Israeli History*, xxv, 1 (2006), 175–201, esp. 191–3.

² Daniel Limberger (*Polen und der Prager Frühling. Reaktionen in Gesellschaft, Partei und Kirche* [Frankfurt am Main, 2012]) is one of those who have realised that the abundance of sources generated by the communist party or police services may prove apparent; see, for instance, my review of the book in *Dzieje Najnowsze*, 3 (2012), 206–14.

Arab states; the press published attacks on Jewish cultural institutions. This signal, coming from the top leadership circle, gave way to the breakage of an important taboo that had been purposefully upheld by the PZPR: Jews became a topic in conversations among Poles. In effect, anti-Semitic utterances appeared possible again (p. 93). Poles of Jewish background got cold feet.

Chapter 3 briefs the reader on the background situation: the students and the writers had grown discontented because of the ruling party's erroneous cultural and economic policies, which had been criticised by intellectuals and young dissident groups for several years. 11th March 1968, three days after the protest rally at the Warsaw University was broken down, a defamation and hate campaign broke out in the radio, press and television against the organisers who were pounced on because of their Jewish background and elitist lifestyle. Dahlmann argues that since the anti-Semitic ('anti-Zionist') lampoons first appeared in the newspapers of the so-called allied parties, rather than the ruling party's organs, the campaign was apparently not controlled centrally by the PZPR leadership team but rather by middle-level functionaries (p. 114). A week after the campaign was unleashed, Gomułka spoke in public again, now to attack the dissatisfied men-of-letters, students and 'Zionists'. The study interprets the speech quite at length. Apparently, Comrade 'Wiesław' touched upon the issue of 'Zionism' somewhat as a side note. His words, Dahlmann believes, can be interpreted as an attempt to protect Polish Jews from the effects of the hate campaign (Zionism was not a threat to Poland, 'Wiesław' claimed). In the author's opinion, the turbulent meetings of PZPR members at workplaces across the country between March and May 1968 is evidence that Gomułka's 'calming words' proved inefficient (p. 129). A severe conflict developed between the party's Politburo and lower-level activists, whilst the activities of the party's 'base' were out of control (p. 129). To my mind, however, Gomułka's words were not intended to calm the situation down and the effect they triggered was as intended. The author is right indeed when he points out that the enlivened debate within the communist party was an extraordinary thing. The engine of the phenomenon was, no doubt, the long-suppressed frustration; an opportunity unexpectedly appeared for some to express their dissatisfaction. By throwing accusation against the 'revisionists', 'Zionists', or even Jews – individuals specified by name, party members could finally settle their score, take revenge for real or imagined wrongs. True, all this added some spontaneity to their actions. Yet, one must not neglect (as Dahlmann regrettably does) the general conditions and determinants in the context of which the PZPR operated. I will take up this thread further on.

The fourth chapter attempts at evaluating the communist party leaders' attitude to the campaign. At this point, the author disapproves of the findings of Dariusz Stola, as for instance with respect to the assessment of the session

of the PZPR's Politburo held on 4 April 1968.³ Dahlmann is of opinion that critical voices with respect to the ongoing propaganda campaign prevailed at that meeting, but remarks in parallel that Zenon Kliszko, the number-two man in the party, absolutely loyal toward Gomułka, stated that Zionism and revisionism in the intelligentsia circles had not ceased to be perilous for the party (pp. 151–3). The opinion of this particular politician was paramount and set the direction of action. Sadly enough, the author maintains that the campaign was going on contrary to Gomułka's will (p. 164) and goes as far as stating that there is no evidence that General Mieczysław Moczar, the Minister of Internal Affairs, had originally inspired it (p. 156). Even if he had not, he thereafter appeared excellently prepared and did much to exploit the campaign and take advantage of it. Thanks to the partisan veterans' organisation he headed, and owing to his personal relations and ties, Moczar managed to develop a network of his followers in the mass media and in other Government departments, which was not too well recognised at the time. His men shared his personal animosity toward Stalinist politicians of Jewish origin and independent intellectuals. The image of Gomułka doing his best to halt the anti-Semitic campaign is simply inauthentic. Dahlmann explains the weak position of the party's leader in terms of intensified internal conflict within the PZPR; however, he cannot tell us how Gomułka managed to rein back on the hurtling propaganda machinery overnight (pp. 169–70). Thus, Dahlmann denies Stola's argument that Gomułka was the one to have sanctioned the style and content of the 'anti-Zionist' (anti-Semitic; p. 170) propaganda, but admits all the same that the First Secretary twice publicly threw in the main slogans of the propagandist message (p. 171). Dahlmann's stubborn defence of Gomułka is really hard to understand. These extravagant statements are followed by more: the campaign, we are told, has not crossed the confines of the party; General Moczar made no use of the campaign in his struggle for influence. The campaign was, allegedly, being run by various forces inside the PZPR under conflict conditions (the 'base' versus the leadership team), supported to this end by the radical right wing. Consequently, the communist party was reluctant to use the campaign to increase its legitimacy in the society (p. 204). To my mind, the democratic centralism characteristic of the Polish communist party did not cease to function before 1968. The party apparatus (and the state apparatus interpermeating with it) was on the watch for signals from the above.⁴ If there were any 'forces' operating in the party, they would have not acted without leaders – without being anchored on the very top. All in all, it was Gomułka's words that

³ The author polemises at several points with Dariusz Stola (*Kampania anty-sjonistyczna w Polsce 1967–1968* [Warszawa, 2000]).

⁴ Tytus Jaskułowski in his review of the study offers a similar opinion; cf. *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, lxiv, 4 (2015), 624–6.

had the power to resolve issues and that sanctioned any and all decisions, including with respect to personnel. There is no coincidence in the way his famous speech of 19 March 1968 was entitled: 'The stance taken by the party is consistent with the nation's will'.

The fifth chapter is doubtlessly the most interesting section of the study under review. The author shows the course the anti-Zionist campaign took in two scientific institutions. The Instytut Badań Jądrowych [Institute of Nuclear Research; hereinafter: IBJ] consisted of several departments situated in the outskirts of Warsaw (Świerk, Żerań) and operated Poland's only nuclear reactor for research purposes. IBJ reported to a Government Plenipotentiary for Uses of Atomic Energy, the office held at the time by Wilhelm Billig, a communist of Jewish descent, member of 'the old guard'. The Warsaw University's Instytut Fizyki Doświadczalnej [Institute of Experimental Physics; hereinafter: IFD] was much smaller; situated in the capital city's centre, it basically taught students. Dahlmann gives a detailed description of two party meetings at the IBJ, at which the 'Zionists' were attacked, and a few of them, plus those who stood in their defence, were dismissed as members of the PZPR. Billig was sacked from all the positions he held, as were some of his reports (one of them was Bronisław Buras, a non-party whose dramatic adventures have been researched by Dahlmann quite in detail). The developments in the latter institute are shown from a different perspective, the one of the Board of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics. As the students' protests commenced, the Board opted against the authorities' policy and the use of anti-Semitism in the political combat. The body eventually managed to minimise the redundancies and the repressions against the striking students. The author comes to the conclusion that an anti-Semitic climate prevailed and contagious anti-Semitism raged in the IBJ (pp. 217, 226), whilst IFD boasted high ethical standards (p. 261). While assuring that IBJ's communist party secretary, a certain Kowalski, acted out of its own initiative (p. 251), he adds that the anti-Semitic campaign's activists felt encouraged 'by the political ambience' of the March days. Dahlmann resolutely denies that orders from the top were merely implemented in this particular case (pp. 252, 273).

The account of what happened in the two institutions in 1968 produces an excellent cognitive effect. However, the reasonableness and the methodology of the comparison can be deemed doubtful: in fact, the differences between the Institutes were considerable, which Dahlmann clearly admits. The party organisation in the IFD was pretty weak (with only one professorship holder being a PZPR member) whereas the IBJ had a total of 344 party members, including blue and white collars, technicians, and so on. It would have been more legitimate to juxtapose the IBJ against an ordinary workplace rather than an exclusive scientific institution. Dahlmann, moreover, shifts his focus between party meetings at the IBJ and the actions of the Faculty Board which, one might say, consisted of gentlemen. Hence, the documents and memories

expectedly show us that whatever took place in the IFD looked better, in any case, than the anti-Semitic Sabbaths in the IBJ. The author seems to have neglected the fact that discussants at party meetings were less privileged and such meetings adopted resolutions as pre-planned, that is, as demanded by the top officials. Any dissenting voice implied quick adverse consequences, as they marked objection to the authorities – as experienced by those who defended Billig, Buras, and others.

The subsequent chapter focuses on the effects of the communist party's policy with respect to Poles of Jewish origin. Based on reminiscences and accounts he has gained, the author describes the various chicaneries, impediments and annoyances that affected them in 1968 and afterwards. Put on a discriminatory track, the policy pursued by the authorities did not change as Gomulka was made to resign. For instance, the aforementioned Mr. Buras lost his job in 1968 but was allowed to emigrate only in 1971. Before they left the country, his son had to pay for his (otherwise normally 'free of charge') studies. The study does not mention any items in the catalogue of the State's discriminatory practices targeted at people of Jewish descent (or, to be specific, at those considered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to be Jews or 'hostile' individuals) that would not be known to the researchers. Yet, Dahlmann asks who put them into effect. While spontaneous anti-Semitic acts did happen, the author finally has to admit that some of the anti-Semitic occurrences were State-sanctioned (pp. 272, 283). He even comes to the conclusion – not a revealing but pretty apparent one – that some layoffs or student dismissals were directly ordered by the Central Committee of the PZPR (p. 282); hence, the victims' attempts to seek justice were doomed to failure. The author's observation shows that the impulses for cleansing emitted from Warsaw reached the provincial areas at varying extent. Different approaches of how to handle the conjectured 'Zionists' or 'revisionists' became apparent between the provincial (voivodeship) committees of the PZPR (p. 285). Indeed, March 1968 still tends to be perceived through the prism of the capital city where the persecutions proved the most drastic.

The final chapter collects a series of examples of inimical behaviour of Poles towards their Jewish fellow citizens as well as acts of solidarity with the persecuted. Dahlmann comes to the assertion that anti-Semitism was a rare occurrence among protester students. Would this mean that anti-Semitism was mostly vivid among the elder generation, which had been subject to socialisation in the interwar period? Perhaps yes. A sad proof of this statement is, possibly, the malignancies experienced by some students of Jewish background from their professors. Analysis of the information extracted by the secret services from private letters (which were read in spite of the binding secrecy of correspondence) has incited the author's conviction that ordinary people supported the communist party in 1968: the awkward political campaign evidently had an appeal among a portion

of them. The anti-Semitism among the Poles boiled down, in his opinion, to the conviction that Poland was being ruled by the Jews, to the detriment of the nation and its country. In 1968, the ruling party popularised and reinforced this conviction, in a sense, through the mass media it controlled, and thus positioned itself on closer terms with the society. While the party mostly spoke of 'Zionists', the public opinion understood that this was a method of referring to Jews (p. 358) or other detested persons (the way I would put it, following Jerzy Urban's statement, is that a 'Judaisation of the object of hatred' became the case at the time, for the campaign also affected some Poles without Jewish origins). Dahlmann seeks for the reasons behind the anti-Semitism but neglects the reasons for why a part of the Polish nation rejected the approach. Of importance to this end was the activity of Radio Free Europe, which counterpunched the propagandist, one-dimensional message of the media within Poland, and disclosed the political purposes behind the 'anti-Zionist' campaign: in brief, it taught the Poles at home to be distrustful towards the ruling communists and helped them identify the real enemy – that is, the Soviet Union. Catholicism, in its open version, was possibly another factor of positive influence.

In sum, the author's strife to elaborate unambiguous ethical judgements with respect to the past is apparent across the study. This is why he remains attached to his initial assessments, avoiding to modify them based on the original sources he otherwise makes use of. This leads at times to some hasty and erroneous deductions. *Exempli causa*: the resolution of the communist party organisation within the Institute of Nuclear Research whereby dismissal of Mr. Billig was postulated comprised critical phrases about unfriendly attitude of the Central Committee of the PZPR's Department of Science toward the Institute. For Dahlmann, this represents clear evidence that the Central Committee had not originated the campaign (p. 236). Sacked from his IBJ job, Mr. Buras was in the autumn of 1968 made part of a committee within the Ministry of Higher Education. Hence, the author's conclusion that the anti-Semitic campaign was not supported by all the State institutions (p. 265). One may say that Poland as a 'people's republic' was a country of explainable paradoxes. To give another example: Czesław Kiszczak, deputy head of the Wojskowa Służba Wewnętrzna [Interior Military Service, WSW], accepted the application for dismissal submitted by Michał Chęciński, an officer of Jewish background. The Service's head would have probably not given such consent, but he happened to be on a leave then. Based on this incident, Kiszczak has earned some warm words from Dahlmann (p. 342)⁵, although the actual reason for what he did is basically uncertain. Opinions of this sort are meant to reinforce the author's general thesis whereby there were confines to the top-down anti-Semitism inspired by the authorities

⁵ "Für Kiszczak war Menschlichkeit ein höherer Wert als Autoritätshörigkeit".

whilst its grassroots variety manifested itself with no limits or curtailments (p. 383).

Writing of the 1940s decade, Dahlmann differentiates between the less and the more assimilated Jews. Since it may seem right for the said period, it is not acceptable with respect to the sixties (e.g., p. 318): by that time, probably all the Polish Jews have got assimilated in a general sense of the notion, that is, assimilated into the language and culture of Poland, with stronger or weaker ties maintained with Jewish religion, tradition and morals – and, especially, with the relatives dispersed all over the world. But this is a matter of a terminological dispute, out of the scope of this review. Pointing out to certain specific, but overall minor, errors in the book is an easier task. For instance, there is no good reason for repeating after the authors of the bygone period that Bolesław Bierut died in Moscow in ‘unclear circumstances’ (p. 28). Rather than in 1949, Gomułka was arrested two years later (p. 28). The number of copies of the central daily *Trybuna Ludu* specified on p. 331 is probably true for the Voivodship of Warsaw, since the countrywide circulation was tenfold larger. An anonymous apocryphal account from 1968 entitled *The Zionist fifth column ...* (published by Włodzimierz Rozenbaum in *Plotkies*, no. 14, Summer 2003), quoting statements allegedly uttered by Politburo members, does not deserve being cited uncritically (p. 88), for aspects of *Dichtung* coincide there with pieces of *Wahrheit*. To end with, *Der Spiegel* wrote in 1971 that Włodzimierz Janiurek, Poland’s ambassador to Czechoslovakia and, thereafter, Polish Government’s spokesman for a number of years was in his youth years a *Volksdeutsch* and an air gunner with the Luftwaffe (p. 190). While I cannot believe the story, Hans-Christian Dahlmann has no problem believing it.

trans. Tristan Korecki

Bartosz Kaliski

Heidrun Hamersky, *Störbilder einer Diktatur. Zur subversiven fotografischen Praxis Ivan Kyncls im Kontext der tschechoslowakischen Bürgerrechtsbewegung der 1970er Jahre*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2015, 281 pp., ill.; series: Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa, 49

The name Ivan Kyncl is well known in Great Britain’s theatre scene. The Czech emigré gained popularity as a photographer of the British stage beginning in the mid-1980s. When he died in 2004 in the age of only 51, a mourning ceremony was held in the National Theatre in London, and *The Guardian* and *The Times* published obituaries. He is also regarded today as an artist of significance in his home country of Czechia, though not for theatre photography. There, he is known as the “photographer of Charter 77”.

Before he emigrated in 1980 he was active as a chronicler of the Civil Rights Movement in Czechoslovakia. In 2007, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Charter 77, the first solo exhibition of his works was shown in Prague under the title *Ivan Kyncl – Fotograf Charty 77*.¹

Although Kyncl's work has attracted some interest, no comprehensive research into his life and oeuvre has been conducted so far. His photographic estate waited for edition for twenty years after parts of it were purchased by the Forschungsstelle Osteuropa [Research Centre for East European Studies, FSO] in the early 1980s, although eventually the FSO was able to complete the collection. Heidrun Hamersky, who worked there for a couple of years and also recently curated a Kyncl exhibition, has finally undertaken the outstanding task of compiling a historical review of his work. The study at hand presents the results of her PhD project. It is both a solid reconstruction of Ivan Kyncl's biography and work as well as a contribution on something which has been missing so far - what she calls the "camera culture" of Czechoslovakian dissidents, her apt paraphrase of Gordon Skillings' term "typewriter culture".² This visual counterpart of the Chartists' intellectual culture has not gained much attention yet, a fact Hamersky rightly criticizes. Her work thus closes two research gaps at the same time: it contributes to the history of East Central European dissent by raising questions of visibility, and it gives a new impulse to the history of photography. By dividing her book into three main parts – biography ('Der Fotograf Ivan Kyncl'); photographic practice ('Störbilder einer Diktatur – Ivan Kyncls subversive fotografische Praxis'); and photo analysis ('Fotoanalyse: Visualisierung von Repressionen') – she shows how Kyncl used the photographic medium to undermine the ruling power and the specific aesthetics he developed in doing so.

Ivan Kyncl was born in 1953. His parents, both communists by conviction, came out in support of the liberalization movement in 1968. In the era of 'normalization' his father, Karel Kyncl, a popular journalist, became a *persona non grata*. Thus, it was perhaps more a result of family ties than by his own choice that Ivan Kyncl became involved in the non-conformist milieu of the later Chartists. Because of his parents' status, his application to study photography at the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (FAMU) was rejected three times. But he did not give up his dream of becoming a professional photographer, and instead of studying formally he used his parents' networks in the country and abroad to engage in self-education efforts. While he did not sign the declaration when the Charter 77 movement was founded in 1977, he did take an active interest

¹ *Ivan Kyncl – Fotograf Charty / Photographer of Charter 77*, ed. by Czech Photo (Praha/Prague, 2007).

² Gordon H. Skillings, *Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe* (London, 1989), 26.

in the network's activity. Enjoying the trust of the Chartists' inner circles, he began to portray some of them with his camera; together with his father he produced short film documentaries about this milieu. Hamersky lists several of these pictures and films that were published both in the western media and the media in exile, as well as displayed in exhibitions. Usually, Kyncl photographed of his own accord. But when several members of the VONS-committee were arrested in 1979, he was asked to cover the trial for western media. As a result of this engagement the Czech secret police (Státní Bezpečnost, StB) intensified its observation of the artist, as Hamersky describes. Henceforth Kyncl was no longer perceived as an accomplice in his father's illegal activities, but openly pursued and finally forced to emigrate in 1980. After arriving in London, he closely collaborated with exile agencies and international NGOs, mainly with Jan Kavan's *Palach Press* and Amnesty International. By means of his photographs he supported solidarity campaigns for those suffering political persecution in Czechoslovakia. Although he was able to place some of his work in magazines like the *Sunday Times Magazine* or *Stern*, their context led to him being dubbed a 'political photographer'. So despite his artistic ambitions he never managed to become recognized as a professional photo journalist. Instead, he started working as a stage photographer in the mid-1980s, more or less giving up his political activity.

Ivan Kyncl's artistic approach was a highly conceptual one. He believed in the suggestive power of photography; his images are carefully staged. Among his most popular pictures is a series depicting the StB's observation of the dissident František Kriegel. The photo series, which was first published in 1977 in *Sunday Times*, shows the former liberal politician going for a walk in a park in Prague. Closely behind two Secret Police members are following him, without making any attempt to hide themselves. Although the documented scene is 'real', the motif itself is an enactment by Kyncl. He planned his 'snapshots' very precisely: the time and space were agreed upon with Kriegel, and the place was carefully chosen. While the challenge in this case was to find a hiding place to secretly take the photos, a different kind of staging was necessary in the above-mentioned series about the trials against members of VONS in 1979. As media coverage of the court process was forbidden, Kyncl had to find alternative motifs to reveal the repressions against human rights' activists in Czechoslovakia. In her iconographic analysis of the photo series, Hamersky convincingly reveals the symbolism in them. By depicting the architecture of the Prague city court, the building is portrayed as a symbol of power - a "frightening, dehumanized institution" (p. 204). Group and single portraits of the accused's relatives in front of it unfold the destructive power of the regime; the fragmentation of families.

What makes Hamersky's analysis fascinating is that she does not limit herself to an interpretation of the motifs. She also highlights the performativity of Kyncl's work and demonstrates how the artist went far beyond

a simple documentation of repressive measures. The act of depicting, the author argues, has to be understood in and of itself as an act of resistance. By producing images Kyncl aimed at breaking the state's monopoly on public visualization. He answered observation with "counter observation" (p. 170); he used photography as a vehicle to undermine the given structures of powers. On the basis of the artist's estate and an impressive amount of oral history interviews with Czech dissidents, friends and relatives, Hamersky manages to flesh out the conspiratorial settings in which Kyncl conducted his work. On one hand she shows the risks he took in order to stage these photographs, while on the other we learn how this story of conspiracy resulted in specific aesthetics and became an integral part of the images themselves: Ivan Kyncl highlighted his own position by the way in which he composed the motif. In various pictures the hiding place of the photographer – in a car, behind a balcony parapet, or in a flat under surveillance – constitutes the frame of the image as well a place in which the viewer joins Kyncl in the conspiracy. This emotional approach is usually backed by textual comments. In their photo book *After the Spring came Winter*,³ Kyncl and his father commented in detail on how the photographs of hidden meetings, forbidden gatherings, and strictly guarded prisons were created.

Nevertheless Ivan Kyncl is not described as either a political photographer or a dissident. Hamersky portrays him as a young man who neither belonged to the older Charter generation nor to the inner circle of the Czechoslovakian 'underground' scene. His motivation to document injustice and resistance was a mixture of his family background, his artistic ambitions, and some kind of a youthful desire for adventure and provocation. His artistic demands, especially after emigrating to London, often fell victim to the political (and sometimes commercial) functionalisation of the Exile and Western press agencies. In order to find a multi-dimensional approach which allows one to consider all these aspects, Hamersky does not use the terms 'alternative' or 'dissident photography', which are common in Czech art history. Instead she proposes "subversiveness" as an analytical category in which aesthetic aspects can be combined with questions about their creation and the contexts of reception. Although the interpretation of Kyncl's photography as *Störbilder* (disturbing images, images of disturbance – S.St.) is intriguing, the concept of subversion does not seem fully convincing as an analytical tool. Hamersky's hypothesis reads as follows "... the practice of taking photographs in the context of a dictatorship gains subversive potential when pictures with ideological deviant subjects, made under conspiratorial circumstances, are implemented into mass media circulation" (p. 14 ff.). This statement sounds plausible, albeit a little tautological as we are not provided a definition of what might be "ideological deviant." Is it 'dissident', is it 'alternative'? And how could

³ Ivan and Karel Kyncl, *After the Spring Came Winter* (New York, 1985).

we integrate those pictures that were made legally in 1968/1969 but later censored in the course of ‘normalization’ into her concept of subversiveness?

One may also question her indicator of subversion – state-imposed sanctions documented in state security files (p. 15). As Hamersky admits herself, these documents are a source of various difficulties. In the first place, the personal observation file on Ivan Kyncl is lost. Hence she had to work with related files. Moreover, it turns out that the StB was not reporting either on the western media publications of Kyncl’s photographs nor on his strategy of “counter-observation”. Although Hamersky does raise the question whether this was due to misjudgement or a conscious strategy of playing the mistake down, she does not dwell on this specific feature of the *Störbilder*. Hence one can only speculate on what actually ‘disturbed’ the Secret Police more – the western public campaigns against the ČSSR government or their own failure to prevent a successful conspiracy. The dilemma of documenting the secret observation of *their* secret observation becomes even more fascinating when looking at the similarities between the duelling opponents’ visual material (which Hamersky proceeds to do). At first glance, Kyncl’s pictures and the observation photographs taken by the StB look alike. Analogies can also be found from a functional perspective: they depict certain situations without giving any *a priori* evidence. The impact of both is primarily based on the suggestive effects of their later contextualization.

At several points of the book the reader would like to learn more about information which is mentioned, but not discussed in detail: What kind of a photo campaign was it that Kyncl organized together with Jiří Bednář for the so called ‘Prague ten’ (p. 171) in 1979? What was his relationship to other photographers of the Charter 77? Did Kyncl protest against the de-contextualization of his pictures in the western press? However, it should be added that the missing explanations to these questions by no means reduce the significance of the book. Rather, they illustrate the difficulties in gathering sources for a wide-ranging investigation into the work of Ivan Kyncl, who left behind only a very few personal documents. In addition, the mysteries surrounding these questions provide further evidence that *Störbilder* is a very stimulating read.

proofreading James Hartzell

Sabine Stach