

Joanna Hrytek-Hryciuk: „Rosjanie nadchodzą“. Ludność niemiecka a żołnierze Armii Radzieckiej (Czerwonej) na Dolnym Śląsku w latach 1945-1948. [„The Russians are Coming“. Germans and the Soldiers of the Soviet (Red) Army in Lower Silesia 1945-1948.] Inst. Pamięci Narodowej. Wrocław 2010. 264 S. ISBN 978-83-61631-14-9.

Joanna Hrytek-Hryciuk undertakes the complicated task of presenting the situation of the Germans in the Lower Silesia, concentrating on the period between spring 1945 when the Red Army seized the territory and 1948 when most German inhabitants left the territory, Russian troops were withdrawn and the power in the region began being transferred to the Polish administration. The author reconstructs the different and complicated relations between the German civilians and the Red Army and successfully analyses different phases in the policy of the Soviet army and the Polish administration against the Germans.

The first chapters cover the situation in Lower Silesia between 1938 and 1945 with short but very accurate presentations of the Red Army operations in the last phase of the war, as well as of National Socialist anti-Russian propaganda and German evacuations and escapes before the Red Army entered the territory. In the next chapters, the author analyses different phases of the relations between German civilians, Russian Soldiers and the Soviet administration. She also successfully examines the conflict between the Germans, the Soviets and the new Polish administration.

The author successfully points out the main patterns of how Soviet soldiers behaved towards the German civilians. The first phase was short but very brutal: many Germans were killed, their properties were confiscated or destroyed and many women were sexually abused. Germans were also arrested and forced to work for the Red Army. In April/May 1945, a general reorientation of the Soviet policy towards the Germans took place. H.-H. claims this period was a separate phase of German-Soviet relations in Lower Silesia; yet she describes it as a process of changes extending from wartime and postwar brutality to a symbiotic cooperation and presents many examples of how German civilians received assistance from the Red Army officers. The benefit for Germans was not only additional food rations, but also protection from the new Polish administration.

The book features interesting local examples of how the Red Army reacted towards the Polish authorities and German civilians when faced with the question of how to treat the German population. In many cases, the Red Army hindered or prohibited the displacement of Germans from Silesia by the Polish authorities. Using many examples, the author reveals the weaker position of the Polish administration relative to the Russian army commandants. She also broaches the question of economic exploitation of Lower Silesia, and discusses the transportation of goods, parts of infrastructure and factories into the Soviet Union in the context of Soviet policy towards the new territories. The book ends in 1948 when most of the German civilians had been displaced and a large proportion of the Soviet soldiers had returned home. Now Polish administration took most of the responsibility for the new territory and the power of Russian army commandants was weakened.

The book is based on numerous materials from Polish and German archives. In some parts of the book, repetitive examples and citations brake the narration. However, an impressive use of materials is also a strength of the book and gives the reader a detailed view of the life of Germans in Lower Silesia in this period.

Warszawa

Dominik Pick

Peter Pragal: Wir sehen uns wieder, mein Schlesierland. Auf der Suche nach Heimat. Piper. München – Zürich 2012. 397 S., 20 Ill. ISBN 978-3-492-05497-3. (€ 22,99.)

Born in Breslau in 1939 and forced to flee into western Germany in 1944, Peter Pragal became known during the Cold War as the first West German newspaper correspondent to live in East Berlin. Amid reports from East Germany, he always retained fascination for the former German lands beyond the Oder and Neisse. Here in his memoirs, P.

reflects on the *Heimat* he knew so briefly in his childhood, joining a diverse cast of prominent expellees who have written similar accounts. Like many of his fellow expellees in the BRD and DDR, he expresses melancholy for the loss of his homeland, ceded by the Allies to Poland as a consequence of Hitler's crimes; but he also accepts the reality of the new border, rejects illusions of return put forth by expellee leaders, and seeks transnational understanding (p. 99).

As in other memoirs, P.'s initial journey back to his *Heimat* is important enough to form the departure point for the entire book. In September of 1980 (officially as part of a delegation from a Catholic reporting agency), P. visited Polish Wrocław for the first time since his forced departure from German Breslau. To be sure, the political journalist wished to see his trip as something other than *Heimweh-Tourismus*. However, in reflections typical of other expellee travel accounts, P. discovered that "the image I had in my head was an idyll, assembled from my parents' stories, books with pictures from the prewar era, and my own childhood memories"; in contrast to this image he yearned for, he felt alienated from the "totally foreign" world he found in its place (p. 9). Disappointed by signs of decay and East Bloc monotony, Polish inscriptions he could not understand, and communist-nationalist mythologies about the region's eternal Polishness, he saw that he had "arrived in reality" and left convinced that Wrocław had nothing in common with the Breslau he remembered. Upon returning to West Germany, he found that his mother wished to hear nothing about the changes, because "she wanted to preserve unblemished the memory of the Breslau she had known" (p. 14). For other West Germans, the former Eastern Territories were not a subject of interest.

The 1980 visit prompted P. to recount his life as an expellee. Peering through picture books, storybooks, and old photos his mother had taken with her in 1944, he jotted idealised memories of an untroubled early childhood in Silesia, followed by bombardment, flight, transit over the Neisse into Görlitz, arrival in the West, and his father's release from POW imprisonment. Under his father's autocratic rule, the family steadily integrated into West Germany's Siegerland, where his father became a doctor and drove a VW. Silesia always loomed large in his parents' memories, however: their bedroom featured a portrait of Breslau's town hall, bookshelves showcased books about Silesia, holidays involved Silesian foods and traditions, and they spoke in the Silesian dialect. Much as his parents reminisced with other Silesians, however, P. asserts that they took a realistic approach to integration without any illusions about return. For his part, P. attests that, much as he felt the collective expulsion to have been an injustice, even in his youth he refused to accept the territorial revisionism of expellee organisations, or to accept that they spoke for the majority of expellees.

P.'s relationship to the former Eastern Territories expanded when, thanks to Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, he became the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*'s DDR correspondent in 1973. "Yearning" overtook him whenever he spied Polish names in place of German ones on street signs pointing to the former Eastern Territories, and he travelled regularly to Frankfurt (Oder) and Görlitz to sit on a bench and gaze out into the neighbouring land (p. 95). Of particular interest here are P.'s encounters with *Umsiedler* in the DDR and reflections on how travel to Poland influenced DDR citizens' impressions of their eastern neighbours.

Post-1989 reflections mingle contemporary memories of further travel to Silesia, historical reminiscences about how borders and peoples entered into their present configuration, and political commentary largely opposing rightwing expellee movements that harm transborder relations and are rejected by most expellees. P. also recounts his recent and extensive contacts with contemporary Silesia's Polish inhabitants who have accompanied him on his latest travels. Meanwhile, although expellee leaders insist that the right to the lost *Heimat* devolves to expellee children and grandchildren, P. observes little sense of Silesian identity among his own relatives. For the young, Silesia is part of Poland and of little interest. The thought of living there, even in lucrative jobs, is impossible for them.

A mix of history, memoir, and memory, P.'s firsthand encounter with the past expresses his contemporary perspective. Raising difficult questions for both the governments involved and the ordinary citizens so profoundly affected, it should be useful as a primary source for any scholar interested in how trans-border actors of the Cold War have grappled with the challenging legacies of border shifts and forced migration in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Birmingham/AL

Andrew Demshuk

Paulina Bren: The Greengrocer and his TV. The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring. Cornell Univ. Press. Ithaca/NY – London 2010. XIII, 250 S., Ill. ISBN 978-0-8014-7642-6. (€ 21,99.)

In dem anregenden Buch geht es um die tschechoslowakische Gesellschaft in der Zeit der sog. „Normalisierung“ nach dem Prager Frühling von 1968. Zu Recht stellt Paulina Bren fest, dass sich die bisherige Forschung zur Tschechoslowakei schwerpunktmäßig auf Stalinismus, Prager Frühling, Oppositionsbewegung und das Ende des Staatssozialismus beschränke. Dabei werde die Zeit nach 1968 weitgehend vernachlässigt. Die wenigen für diesen Zeitraum vorliegenden Untersuchungen konzentrieren sich auf die Dissidentenorganisation Charta 77 und die Verfolgung ihrer Unterzeichner durch den Staat. Die Chartisten erreichten jedoch nur einen kleinen Teil der Bevölkerung. Wie stand es um den Großteil der „normalen“ Bürger der Tschechoslowakei? Wie verhielten sie sich? Wie funktionierte die Kommunikation zwischen ihnen und dem Staat bzw. der Partei? B. zeigt, dass sich die meisten von ihnen mit den Verhältnissen arrangierten und ein „normales“ Leben führten. Ihr geht es gerade um diese „Normalität“ in der Zeit der „Normalisierung“. Sie benutzt die Institution des Tschechoslowakischen Fernsehens und ausgewählte populäre Serien des erfolgreichen Drehbuchautors Jaroslav Dietl (1929-1985) als Prisma für den Blick auf die 1970er und 1980er Jahre (S. 7).

Im ersten Kapitel wird die Entwicklung in der Tschechoslowakei bis zur Niederschlagung des Prager Frühlings dargestellt. B. wechselt hier zwischen der großen Politik und einem Drehbuch Dietls, das die Ideologische Kommission des Zentralkomitees (ZK) der Kommunistischen Partei der Tschechoslowakei (KSČ) 1964 ablehnte, da es eine „falsche politische Orientierung“ (S. 12) gehabt habe. Die Schilderung der politischen Entwicklung beginnt mit dem Slánský-Prozess in den 1950er Jahren und der zunächst beschränkten Entstalinisierung in der Tschechoslowakei, die beispielhaft auch an der Zurückweisung von Dietls Drehbuch deutlich wird. Dann schildert sie die Entwicklung zum Prager Frühling mit den Stationen Schriftstellerkongress, Studentenproteste, Rücktritt Novotnýs und dem Regierungsantritt Alexander Dubčeks. Diese Tatsachen sind bekannt und richten sich eher an ein mit der Thematik nicht vertrautes Lesepublikum. Zudem wird auf das Fernsehen eingegangen. Unter seinem Generaldirektor, dem Reformkommunisten Jiří Pelikán, spielte es eine wichtige Rolle im Prager Frühling und setzte sich maßgeblich für die neue Politik ein, die eine allgemeine Politisierung der Öffentlichkeit bedeutete.

Im zweiten Kapitel stellt B. mehrere Protagonisten der „Normalisierung“ vor. Neben dem slowakischen Generalsekretär Gustav Husák sind dies insbesondere die für Ideologie, Kulturpolitik und Massenmedien zuständigen ZK-Sekretäre Vasil Bil'ak und Jan Fojtík sowie der langjährige Generaldirektor des „normalisierten“ Tschechoslowakischen Fernsehens, Jan Zelenka. Die Vf. beschreibt die politischen Säuberungen in der Zeit nach dem Prager Frühling: Zunächst wurden die leitenden Funktionäre ausgewechselt, dann fand eine Überprüfung aller Kader statt. Wollten Kulturschaffende weiter oder erneut wirken, mussten sie sich vom Prager Frühling distanzieren und dem Staat gegenüber ihre Unterstützung aussprechen.

Im dritten Abschnitt geht es darum, wie das Regime nach 1968 mit dem Prager Frühling umging und wie diese Zeit durch die „Normalisatoren“ in Ausstellungen und Medien uminterpretiert wurde. Hierzu betrachtet B. ausgewählte „Kriminalfälle des Majors Ze-