

strandete so in Kamieniec Podolski, wo er einen Mentor fand, der ihm säkulares Wissen und Russisch vermittelte. Sein weiterer Lebensweg führte ihn über Berdichev und Žitomir nach Odessa, von dort kurze Zeit zu seiner Tochter nach Litauen; 1917 verstarb er schließlich in Odessa. Nicht nur die Stationen, sondern auch die Umstände seines Lebens zeugen von der Vielschichtigkeit und Schwenkbreite jüdischen Lebens im östlichen Europa, das in seinen Lebensjahren nicht nur Akkulturation und Assimilation, sondern auch Säkularisation unterlag und zudem von Armut und Hoffnungslosigkeit sowie von Pogromen gekennzeichnet war. Diese Lebenswelt unterlag gerade durch die Modernisierung gesellschaftlichen Lebens, durch Industrialisierung und Stadtfucht gleichermaßen einem ungeheuren Wandel. Allein schon die Tatsache, dass sich Abramovitsh trotz Selbstzweifeln nach seinen hebräischen Erstlingswerken dazu entschloss, Jiddisch zu schreiben, zeigt, wie sehr sich Teile der Judenheiten im östlichen Europa trotz oder gerade wegen aller Widrigkeiten veränderten und nach einer modernen säkularen Kultur strebten. Diese Vielschichtigkeit und diesen Wandel lassen sich in der Biografie und dem Lebenswerk Abramovitsh' deutlich erkennen: Daher stellt das anzuzeigende Buch eben nicht nur eine literaturwissenschaftliche Analyse eines bislang wenig erforschten Schriftstellers dar, sondern schafft vor allem auch einen wunderbaren Einblick in die Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte jiddischsprachigen säkularen Lebens. Beispielsweise manifestiert sich an einem der Hauptwerke Abramovitsh', *Shloyme reb Khayims* (Shloyme, Reb Khayims Sohn) (1903), eines der „Kernprobleme“ (S. 455) jener Zeit, das Susanne Klingenstein in ihrer Analyse sehr verständlich nachvollzieht: die Modernisierung des Judentums, woraus sich als zentrales Spannungsfeld der Widerstreit zwischen Vergangenheit, Traditionsbezug und Moderne ergab.

Der Vf. gelingt es somit, einerseits Biografie und Interpretation seiner Werke, andererseits aber die kulturgeschichtliche Kontextualisierung zu einem sehr lesenswerten Werk in einer Sprache zusammenzufassen, die über das Interesse eines begrenzten Fachpublikums hinausgehend sich an einen breiteren, kulturhistorisch am Judentum im östlichen Europa interessierten Leserkreis wendet. Hierzu führt sie nach einigen einführenden allgemeineren Bemerkungen über das Jiddische und den „Mythos der Ostjuden“, die eben mit Blick auf einen breiteren Leserkreis verfasst worden sind, in die „Welt des Erzählers Sholem Yankev Abramovitsh“ ein, indem sie seine Lebens- und Schaffensabschnitte in Verbindung bringt und kapitelweise erläutert. Wenn auch Jiddisten an der einen oder anderen Stelle kleinere, der thesenhaften Zuspitzung geschuldete Ungenauigkeiten in der Darstellung der literaturwissenschaftlichen Zusammenhänge bemängeln könnten, so liegt gerade in der kontextualisierenden Darstellung das Verdienst des Buches begründet, denn über die Biografie und das Lebenswerk von Abramovitsh, das eben die Umstände jüdischen Lebens im östlichen Europa beleuchtet, wird dem am Judentum in dieser Region und historisch interessierten Leser eine wichtige, heute wenig beachtete Phase und Variation jüdischen Lebens auf sehr erhellende Weise näher gebracht. Wer sich ein Bild von den Problemen der Modernisierung jüdischen Lebens im östlichen Europa machen möchte, dem sei diese teilweise sehr eingängige, fast schon spannend geschriebene Studie empfohlen.

Marburg

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**Josette Baer: Revolution, Modus Vivendi or Sovereignty?** The Political Thought of the Slovak National Movement from 1861 to 1914. Ibidem-Verl. Stuttgart 2010. XVI, 252 S., Ill. ISBN 978-3-8382-0146-7. (€ 29,90.)

Josette Baer's history of the political thought of the Slovak national movement is a most welcome addition to the limited research on Slovak history. It fills an important gap, particularly in the field of political history. Moreover, B. usefully situates her study within

a larger European context. There is little written in the Slovak language because the Communist government did not consider political science worth studying, as Dušan Kováč points out in his foreword.<sup>1</sup>

The author begins with a brief introduction that places Slovakia in the Hungarian context and hence in the history of the Habsburg Empire. She describes the nascent Slovak national movement and the pronounced differences between the Czech and Slovak historical experiences. The patterns of social, economic, cultural and political growth were different because the Czechs were governed by the Austrian Germans giving them more opportunities for development than the Slovaks, who were oppressed by Magyar rule. The Magyars recognised only a 'one nation state' and strove to assimilate ethnic minorities. As their nationalism became more strident, their illegal Magyarisation policies made life more difficult for those who were active in the movement for the recognition of Slovak national rights and aspirations.

B.'s title aptly describes the three choices facing the national movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth century: revolution, *modus vivendi* or sovereignty. The first of these was manifested in the Revolution of 1848; the second was illustrated by the implementation of the *Ausgleich* of 1867 when the Magyars acquired constitutional control over the Hungarian kingdom; and the third came about after 1900 when a younger generation, faced with an intolerable increase in assimilation policies, chose a new political orientation in which they increasingly looked to the Czechs for help. To examine this progression she focuses on six nationalists: Ján Francisci (1822-1905), Ján Palarik (1822-1870), Štefan Marko Daxner (1822-1892), František Vit'azoslav Sasinek (1830-1914), Svetozár Hurban Vajanský (1847-1916) and Vavro Šrobár (1867-1950). By beginning with the *Memorandum of the Slovak Nation* (1861) she is able to ignore three earlier prominent nationalists who were involved in the codification of the Slovak language—L'udevít Štúr, Michal Miloslav Hodža and Jozef Miloslav Hurban, all of whom have been thoroughly discussed in the literature in English.

B. describes how these six individuals had to adapt as the Habsburg regime evolved into a dual empire. Ján Francisci, a Lutheran, believed Slovak nationality was based on *okolie* (district) and helped write the Memorandum of 1861. Influenced by František Kollár and Štúr's ideas on nationalism, he was involved in the 1848 revolution, imprisoned, sentenced to death but eventually granted amnesty. He later founded the Slovak newspaper *Pešť'budínske vedomosti* and was involved in establishing *Matica slovenská* (Slovak Association) (1862). A pragmatist, he believed in increasing Slovak national consciousness, but only within the parameters of contemporary reality. Much like Francisci, Štefan M. Daxner, a Catholic, believed that the route to raising Slovak national consciousness lay through education, writing and publishing. He too was involved in the drafting of the *Memorandum* and the demands for *Okolie*. Both Francisci and Daxner remained active in the Slovak national movement until their deaths.

Palarik, a Catholic priest, was also involved in the movement for the recognition of Slovak national rights and aspirations. He was very critical of the Catholic clergy, a viewpoint he espoused in several publications. He was also a member of the committee that prepared the foundation for the establishment of *Matica Slovenská*. His faith in the Hungarian constitution led him to join the ranks of the short-lived *Nová škola slovenská* (Slovak New School) which supported co-operation with the ruling Magyars.

<sup>1</sup> Almost nothing is available in English, except PETER BROCK: *The Slovak National Awakening. An Essay in the Intellectual History of East Central Europe*, Toronto 1976, and more recently the introduction to ISMO NURMI: *Slovakia: A Playground for Nationalism, and National Identity. Manifestations of the National Identity of the Slovaks 1918-1920*, Helsinki 1999.

Sasinek, like Palarík a Catholic priest, wrote prolifically on Hungarian history and the origins of the Slavs. He published regularly on national culture and literature. A strong advocate of Slovak linguistic rights, he was the editorial manager of *Matica Slovenská*. Sasinek believed in trying to reach a *modus vivendi* with the Magyars but not at the expense of Slovak rights. B. notes that he believed in the 'legitimizing of the goals of equality of rights and joint rule' (p. 140) with the Magyars.

The prolific writer Vajanský was an extremely influential figure in Slovak history in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Above all else he emphasised literature and art as the road to salvation from Magyarisation. His belief that the Russians would save the Slovaks distanced him from the younger generation influenced by Tomáš G. Masaryk and the Czech Realists who felt that his passivity, Pan-Slavism and Slavophile messianism were detrimental to Slovak political progress. Vajanský had no political orientation but was a Romanticist who placed his hopes for Slovak salvation in the hands of the Russian tsar.

Šrobár was a realist, an ardent Slovak Czechophile and an apostle of sovereignty as a result of the First World War. He was educated at Charles University in Prague where he became intimately acquainted with Masaryk and the Realists. After completing his medical studies he returned to Slovakia where he preached Masaryk's philosophy of *drobná práca* [small works].<sup>2</sup> His life was dedicated to the belief that Slovaks could only realize their democratic and secular aspirations through co-operation with the Czechs; during the First World War his conviction that these goals would be achieved through a union with the Czechs grew. By including Šrobár B. takes the study beyond the parameters indicated in her title (1914), but this was a wise decision since Šrobár continued to have a major impact on Slovak political life until the Second World War.

B. has written a careful, well researched study of six important figures in the history of the Slovak national movement, analysing their beliefs and their impacts on Slovak nationalism. She is especially good at making the schism between the Lutherans and Catholics clear at the outset and then showing how each of the men she examines contributed to the emergence of Slovak nationalism. Baer is also good at describing the difficult position of the Jewish minority in the Habsburg Empire and explaining why they were fiercely loyal to the ruling elites. Perhaps the only subject which does not seem to fit the book's title is the inclusion of the Catholic priest Andrej Hlinka, who despite close family ties, came to reject Šrobár's commitment to Czechoslovakism and the atheism which he saw in Masaryk's teachings. Yet the author would have had to go beyond 1914 to explain Hlinka's beliefs and thus also include another nationalist figure from the same long period, Milan Hodža, which would have made the book far less manageable.

Notwithstanding these caveats, it is clear that B. has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the development of Slovak nationalism and the political ideas which various key figures espoused during the difficult years of Magyarisation and the Slovak struggle for national survival. Students of Slovak nationalism in the Austro-Hungarian Empire will benefit greatly from her work.

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<sup>2</sup> Masaryk was dissatisfied with the little social and political work actually being carried out in Slovakia. Thus he encouraged his young Slovak students, when home on holidays, to go among the people, teaching them to read and write. He believed that it was the common folk who needed to be stimulated for they would be the ones to save the nation from political stagnation and Magyarisation. There was no future in seeking assistance from abroad, i.e. Russia as the Slovak intelligentsia wished to do.