

wagon“ „Praxis und Nebenwirkungen des Neoliberalismus“). Gelingen ist beispielsweise das interrogative „Southern Europe: The New East?“ an Stelle des determinierten „Der Süden als neuer Osten“. „The Roads not Taken“ spiegelt den Tenor des Kap. 10 besser wider als „Genutzte und verpasste Chancen“. Kritisch sollten Umbenennungen wie „The EU’s Marshall Plan for the East“, den es so ja nicht gegeben hat, anstatt „Die Rolle der EU“ betrachtet werden.

Für seine amerikanischen Leser hat der Vf. sporadisch neue Bezüge hergestellt (z. B. „sehr kleine Staaten“ in der EU entsprächen den US-Bundesstaaten Connecticut und New Hampshire; S. 54) sowie einige Kapitel neu eingeleitet. Er berücksichtigt so vermeintliche Präferenzen und unterschiedliche Vorkenntnisse: z. B. beginnt er Kap. 4 mit einer Diskussion des Begriffs „Revolution“ und nicht mit einer knappen Abhandlung der Schlüsselereignisse von 1989. Am Anfang von Kap. 8 stehen nicht mehr die italienische Krise von 2008 sowie der hierzulande bekannte italienische Regierungschef und EU-Kommissionspräsident Romano Prodi, sondern die prinzipiellen Schwierigkeiten des Historikers, die Zukunft vorherzusagen.

Bereits das Original war ambitioniert und anspruchsvoll. Die Übersetzerin hat exzellente Arbeit geleistet. Nach Timothy Garton Ash, Padraic Kenney und Stephen Kotkin stellt T. international den nächsten historiografischen Schritt dar, wie Historiker heute – eine Weltwirtschaftskrise später – die Ursachen und Folgen von 1989 diskutieren.³ Auch in den USA wünscht man ihm viele, besonders jüngere Leser und hofft auf Doktoranden der europäischen Geschichte, die sich von der Dichte, Komplexität und Namensfülle nicht abschrecken lassen. Amerikanische Experten werden *Europe since 1989* gewiss rezipieren. Ob es aber tatsächlich die gleiche Wirkungsmacht erreicht wie in Deutschland, bleibt abzuwarten.

Marburg

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³ TIMOTHY GARTON ASH: Is Europe Disintegrating?, in: The New York Review of Books vom 19.01.2017.

Lisa Pope Fischer: Symbolic Traces of Communist Legacy in Post-Socialist Hungary. Experiences of a Generation that Lived During the Socialist Era. (Central and Eastern Europe, Bd. 7.) Brill. Leiden – Boston 2016. XIII, 217 S., Ill. ISBN 978-90-04-32211-0. (€ 114,-)

Hungary today is often identified with Viktor Orbán’s government and its reputation as an ‘illiberal’ democracy which is in constant struggle with the European Union. However, this focus on Orbán can easily distract from the perspective of Hungarian society and the question of why so many Hungarians voted for Orbán and his party, Fidesz (Federation of Young Democrats), which not only has a majority in parliament but also controls almost all local governments in the country. In Western Europe, there is a great deal of misunderstanding and ignorance surrounding the reasons for the ambivalence that characterizes Hungarians’ view of their country and its relation to the West.

Lisa Pope Fischer teaches Anthropology at New York City College of Technology. She was conducting research on Hungary three decades ago when she began to study the identities of Hungarian migrants to the United States and their complex relationships with their country of origin and their families. Her book *Symbolic Traces of Communist Legacy in Post-Socialist Hungary* was published in 2016, covering her research on a number of topics which shed light on Hungarians and their families from the late socialist system in the early 1980s until today.

The results of this long-term research project are impressive and P. F.’s short book under review here offers numerous insights into the everyday life of the generation of Hungarians who have experienced the radical political, economic, social and cultural changes of the last 30 years. Her focus on individuals and their families, mostly people she met

through her earlier work on Hungarian migrants to America (the first chapter talks about the relationships between the migrants, their families and the anthropologist in a complex transcontinental space), allows her to provide thick descriptions and theoretically based controlled life stories about the daily struggles and mentalities of older Hungarians in contemporary society.

Chapter 2 portrays one of the many widows who because of the demographic developments of the last decades represent a large group of Hungarian society. The way this 'Ica néni' (aunt Ica) makes her wonderful soup gives an insight into the strategies of survival which were learned during the socialist period when it was often difficult to find certain foods. Such strategies have regained importance in these times of capitalism when many ingredients for a simple soup have become unaffordable for those living on a small pension. But the story of how Ica néni makes her soup also portrays how a whole generation was disappointed after 1989 and how their insistence on 'authentic' Hungarian ways helped them to cope with hardships. No wonder, one could add, that a politician who cultivates his image as someone from a small village who slaughters his own pigs and who claims to fight for the rights of those Hungarians who have been left behind (a large part of the population) has gained such popularity. When the Fidesz government decided to reduce the cost of electricity, gas, and heating in 2013, this was a great help, especially for many poor Hungarians, and it showed that Orbán seems to listen to his constituency. Of course, many observers found it ironic that a political party which declared that it would radically remove the last remnants of socialism has re-introduced socialist-style politics.

In the third chapter, P. F. describes the attempts of a couple who came from peasant families dispossessed during the socialist period to recreate ancient 'Hungarian peasant' traditions in a world that has changed radically. The example reveals the contradictions (they have to buy wine for a harvest festival, so they are celebrating harvest without a harvest) but also the inner logic of this invention of traditions in a capitalist context (instead of a village sharing the fruits of its work, it is a commercialized event with shop-bought 'folk' costumes). P. F. explains that 'this tradition comforts because it embodies nationhood and empowerment contrary to an unstable society of today' (p. 99). Chapters 4, 5 and 6 focus on the problems of the post-socialist health care system and its clients (or victims), communist kitsch in Budapest, and Hungarian perceptions and manipulations of the migration crisis of 2015. In sum, the book provides surprising and profound observations on the complexities of today's society, on generational gaps, and on the polarization accentuated by Europeanization and globalization, not only in a small post-communist country. One wishes that the author had started a discussion with researchers such as Eszter Zsófia Tóth or James Mark who have also worked on post-socialist life stories in Hungary.

Washington, DC

Árpád v. Klimó

Bálint Magyar: Post-Communist Mafia State. The Case of Hungary. CEU Press. Budapest – New York 2016. XXIV, 311 S. ISBN 978-615-5513-54-1. (€ 34,-)

In den ersten Jahren nach dem Ende der kommunistischen Diktaturen in Europa galt Ungarn als Musterbeispiel für gelungenen demokratischen Wandel. Auf den Ruinen des Spätsozialismus entstand ein liberaler Staat mit Gewaltenteilung und politischen Rechten für die Bürgerschaft. Damit entsprach Ungarn der Erwartungshaltung, die in der westlichen Welt nach 1989 weit verbreitet war: Da es keine Alternative mehr zu einer liberalen Ordnung gab, würden sich die post-kommunistischen Staaten in diese Richtung entwickeln. Der amerikanische Philosoph Francis Fukuyama nannte diese Entwicklung das „Ende der Geschichte“. Heute wissen wir, dass die Geschichte weiter ging. Eine Bestandsaufnahme der politischen Ordnungen in Osteuropa und Eurasien zeigt, wie ahistorisch der Erwartungshorizont der 1990er Jahre war.

Nach dem weitgehend friedlichen Umbruch von 1989 erschien der Optimismus hinsichtlich der politischen, sozialen und kulturellen Entwicklung der post-kommunistischen