

kultur. Außerdem stärkt die Studie die Opferperspektive und leistet damit einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Aufarbeitung der NS-Zwangsarbeit.

Augsburg

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Alexej Lochmatow: Public Knowledge in Cold War Poland. Scholarly Battles and the Clash of Virtues, 1945–1956. (Poland. Transnational Histories, Bd. 1.) Routledge. London – New York 2024. XV, 257 S. ISBN 978-1-032-54949-1. (£ 140,–)

The post-war history of Polish science and academic scholarship, marked by the process of its “Sovietization,” remains an understudied, complex, yet compelling topic. In his study on this subject, Alexej Lochmatow demarcates a time frame from 1945 to 1956, “the period formative to the socialist regime in the country” (p. 6), and contrary to the traditional institutional, disciplinary, or biographical approaches dominant in the subject literature, aims to showcase the issue through the lens of historical epistemology.

As a category for analyzing this “Sovietization,” the author suggests neither “the acceptance or denial of methodological ideas or Marxist-Leninist ideology” by individual scholars, nor “the reconstruction of academic institutions in accordance with the Soviet model,” but rather the concept of “epistemic virtues” (pp. 5, 7) required by official governmental discourse on virtues and present in the public performances of academic practice. In fact, “the new virtues” that were forcibly imposed on Polish scholars are interpreted here as “the cornerstone of ‘Stalinisation’” (p. 8) of the academic practice in Poland.

Also noteworthy is the more general premise that the author argues: the advantage of the concept of virtues in examining the history of science in the authoritarian regimes. For a while the “correct view” may change under the same authorities, it is primarily the scholars’ loyalty to state-promoted virtues that must remain constant to maintain the appearance of the regime’s “stability” (p. 8). With this point one should keep in mind the relatively consistent character of Stalinist ideology as implemented in Poland from 1945 to 1956. Nevertheless, the book offers this broader perspective on scholarly practice and its intersection with political agendas.

Both the subject and the methodological framework of the monograph are clearly formulated in its introduction. Chapter 1 outlines a complex landscape of post-war Polish academia, with its estranged left-wing intellectuals, Catholic groups, and occasional “missionary intellectuals” (p. 18 and passim), where the project of the “gentle revolution” unfolds and the virtue of “progressiveness” is brought to the forefront in debates on “good scientific practice” (p. 22 and passim). In Chapter 2, the author highlights the differences between the self-presentation of the Soviet Union and Soviet scholarship and the Polish understanding thereof which slowly formed in the early post-war period. While the official propaganda provided only general guidelines on the matter, it was consequential to the further relationship between the two countries. In Chapter 3, he posits the dominance of French intellectual culture over the Soviet one in influencing contemporary Polish public debates on academic virtues and public activism of scholars in the period in question. Chapter 4 traces the national agenda in the public discourse of Polish intellectuals through the promoted virtue of “loyalty to the nation” (p. 107), maintained in their anti-authoritarian stance on the project of a “production” of the “new intelligentsia” (p. 104). Chapter 5 disentangles a conflicted plurality of public manifestations of progressiveness in the early post-war period, particularly evident in the ideological attitudes of representatives of Marxism and Catholicism.

In Chapter 6, the Cold War intensification of the process of Polish academia’s Stalinization is featured, through the political mobilization of scholars during various congresses and conferences—in an ultimately futile attempt to unite them in “a ‘concordia’ under the banner of ‘Marxism-Leninism’” (p. 162). Chapter 7 emphasizes the “re-education” paradigm in which the new institutions of the radically changed academia at the height of its Stalinization tried, yet again unsuccessfully, to teach scholars the virtues of modesty, dis-

cipline, and “loyalty to the current political need” (p. 175 and *passim*). Finally, it is the author’s main thesis in Chapter 8 that the crisis year 1956 resulted in opposition to the forms of “virtuous” academic practice promoted under Stalinism rather than to Marxism itself — and that this opposition united both Marxist and non-Marxist scholars. The loss of the formative role of the virtue of “progressiveness” among Polish scholars is interpreted as a breaking point in the early post-war Polish political project and a failure of the Stalinization of Polish academia. In the epilogue, the author argues for the efficacy of epistemic virtues as an analytical tool for scholarly practice not only in post-war Poland, but moreover in post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe, as well as post-Soviet Russia.

It should be noted, that both in the structure and narrative of the book, the importance of the early post-war years and the “gentle revolution” project are emphasized, with the events of the period from 1948 to 1956 interpreted either as a *longue durée* of the principles previously formulated in public scholarly discourse or as their direct consequences. Thus, while enhancing our understanding of, *en passant* long accepted, “peculiarity of the ‘early post war years’” (p. 7), it regrettably pays less attention to the first half of the 1950s, oftentimes overlooked in the literature on the subject.

The book would be of interest to scholars studying the history of science and scholarship in both Poland and other post-socialist Central and Eastern European countries. For the English-speaking reader, the study provides the contexts and excurses essential for bringing such a ‘national’ history to a ‘foreign’ audience in a comprehensible way. Polish readers would gain not only from the already mentioned original methodological perspective, but also the wide-ranging transborder bibliography the monograph offers. Moreover, the chosen theoretical framework and the shift of focus to the agency of the Polish actors, in a relationship usually described as dominated by the Soviet Union, opens the possibility of a comparative approach to the material.

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Waldemar Czachur, Peter Oliver Loew: „Nie wieder Krieg!“ Der 1. September in der Erinnerungskultur Polens und Deutschlands zwischen 1945 und 1989. (Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Polen-Instituts Darmstadt, Bd. 37.) Harrassowitz Verlag. Wiesbaden 2022. 380 S., Ill. ISBN 978-3-447-11781-4. (€ 39,–.)

Der Zweite Weltkrieg steht 80 Jahre nach seinem Ende immer noch im Zentrum der oft problematischen nachbarschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen Polen und Deutschland. Vor diesem Hintergrund stellt die Untersuchung von Waldemar Czachur und Peter Oliver Loew einen wichtigen Beitrag dar, der die hierfür ursächlichen erinnerungskulturellen Entwicklungen aufzeigt und einordnet – und dabei zusätzlich fragt, welches Bild der Nachbarn sich aus dem jeweiligen Gedenken herausarbeiten lässt. Die Autoren stellen dabei die Erinnerungskulturen in Volkspolen, der DDR und der Bundesrepublik von 1945 bis 1989 jeweils chronologisch nebeneinander. Diese Anordnung erweist sich für den Lese-fluss nicht immer als vorteilhaft, da die Themen nicht gebündelt, sondern getrennt voneinander aufgegriffen werden. Allerdings bekommt der Text so eine Struktur, die vor Augen führt, dass das weitgehende Ausbleiben der bi- bzw. trinationalen Verständigung nicht ausschließlich auf unterschiedlichen Meinungen über Geschichte beruhte. Vielmehr bewirkte das sich bewusst voneinander abgrenzende Neben- oder gar Gegeneinander der jeweiligen Erinnerungskulturen, dass unterschiedliche Meinungen nicht diskutiert wurden bzw. zur negativen Wahrnehmung der Nachbarn beitrugen.

Besonders kritisch betrachten die Autoren in dieser Hinsicht das Handeln staatlicher Akteure. In allen drei Staaten waren es vor allem innenpolitische Motive, die das Gedenken an den September 1939 bestimmten. Es wurde staatsübergreifend stetig erinnerungskulturellen Konjunkturen angepasst und mit dem Anfang des Zweiten Weltkriegs so umgegangen, wie der jeweilige Deutungswille es nötig erschienen ließ. In Volkspolen und der DDR wurde das Gedenken zur Legitimation der staatssozialistischen Diktaturen und im