

Dabei erfolgt eine gelungene Mischung aus Originaltexten und gut verständlichen Erläuterungen sowie in der Regel nachvollziehbaren Interpretationen. Wiederholungen ließen sich allerdings nicht ganz vermeiden.

In seiner Einleitung betont Sch.-K., dass die wirtschaftlichen Ausgleichsverhandlungen zwar den Gegenstand seiner Untersuchungen bilden, jedoch wirtschaftshistorische Zusammenhänge oder auch nur die wirtschaftspolitischen Konsequenzen nicht „im Mittelpunkt des Interesses“ stehen würden (S. 16 f.). Die Legitimität dieser Vorgehensweise ist durchaus fraglich, denn das Agieren von Ministern, Regierungsbeamten und Parlamentariern in Verhandlungen über Konsumsteuern, Zollpolitik oder die Kompetenzen einer zentralen Notenbank wurde durchaus auch von ökonomischen Interessen und Zielen, Lobbyismus, der Wahrnehmung sich verändernder weltwirtschaftlicher Rahmenbedingungen usw. beeinflusst. Dieser Umstand wird von Sch.-K. zwar generell beachtet, aber nicht annähernd so detailliert untersucht wie die macht-, verfassungs-, partei- und nationalitätenpolitischen Implikationen. Es wird nur am Rande diskutiert, in welchem Maße das Scheitern der Ausgleichsverhandlungen von 1897 nicht nur auf politische Konstellationen, sondern auch auf das Nachlassen der Überzeugung von der Nützlichkeit des Zoll- und Handelsbündnisses zurückgeführt werden kann. Wenn man aber die These vertritt, dass „die Deutschen Cisleithaniens [...] ihre nationalen über die wirtschaftlichen Interessen“ stellten (S. 313), und konstatiert, dass beide Seiten bereit waren, „für kleine Vorteile oder nationale Fragen die Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft in Gefahr zu bringen“ (S. 315), dann muss man auch die Wahrnehmung von Wirtschaftsinteressen und Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft in die Betrachtung einbeziehen.

Im Anhang finden sich einige interessante Quellen zum Thema. Kritisch muss jedoch angemerkt werden, dass Sch.-K. – mit Ausnahme von drei eigenen Aufsätzen – die nach 2000 erschienene Literatur, also etwa die Studie von György Kövér und Ágnes Pogány über die Österreichisch-Ungarische Bank aus dem Jahre 2002<sup>1</sup>, nicht berücksichtigt hat.

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<sup>1</sup> GYÖRGY KÖVÉR, ÁGNES POGÁNY: Die binationale Bank einer multinationalen Monarchie. Die Österreichisch-Ungarische Bank (1878-1922), Stuttgart 2002.

**A Pragmatic Alliance.** Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Hrsg. von Vladas Sirutavičius und Darius Staliūnas. CEU Press. Budapest – New York 2011. 274 S. ISBN 978-615-5053-17-7. (€ 41,99.)

It is always difficult to discuss interethnic relations between neighbouring groups, especially when they adhere to different traditions, religions and worldviews in general. Even more complicated is to start such a discussion while trying to overcome the long-established ethnocentric historiographical traditions which more often than not tend to interpret, construct and present the past from a “nationally autistic” (in a manner of speaking) point of view: the prevalent ideologies drive the interpretations thus establishing the dominant narratives. Naturally, there are also attempts to find grounds for a common inter-historiographical discourse and the reviewed collection of articles undoubtedly serves as one of such examples.

The purpose of the book is to present political relations between the two national intelligentsias from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the mid-1920s. As Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, the editors of the collection, indicate, this is a pioneering attempt to intertwine the two – Jewish and Lithuanian – historiographical traditions. Although the book is a collection of articles, the compilation is designed with a clear-cut thematic and chronological structure, where the articles interconnect and complement each other. Moreover, the introductory chapter by the editors serves as the cornerstone for the whole narrative, thus providing well-balanced context for the less familiar readers high-

lighting the essential points that are discussed throughout the book. This in turn gives an impression of a rather organic study.

The articles establish the path towards the building of the Jewish-Lithuanian political cooperation. The imperial period contains topics, such as the place of the Lithuanians and the Jews in the Russian empire, the intentions of the Lithuanians regarding the future status of their neighbours within the projected Lithuanian autonomy, the visions of the Jewish political elites regarding the future of their own imagined multi-ethnic country, and the cooperation and confrontation that these political plans caused prior to 1914. Moreover, the importance of the “others” – the Poles or the so-called “Polish factor” and the German military administration – before and during the First World War is analysed. The final chapters cast a look into the early years of the 1920s and the collaborations and problems that the Jewish and Lithuanian politicians were facing in the newly established Lithuanian Republic as well as the specificities of political life within the Polish-controlled Vilnius region.

Among the many topics raised in the articles, one of the main threads stretching throughout the book is the territorial issue. The multiethnicity, multiculturalism and historical significance of the city of Vilnius and its region created numerous dilemmas and conflicts among the national political elites. For example, the insistence of the Lithuanians on having their national territory measured according to ethnographic rather than ethnic criteria (which made the territory bigger, but ethnically much more heterogeneous) was almost solely due to the need of having Vilnius within the projected Lithuania, even though the percentage of Lithuanian-speakers there was very low (only around 2 per cent according to the all-imperial census of 1897; the numbers did not change much until 1918). The Jews, on the other hand, had a very strong presence in the city (40 per cent in 1897), as well as in other urban (as opposed to rural) areas countrywide. During the imperial period and contrary to other nationally organised political groups, most of the Jewish political agenda did not involve the appropriation of one or another territory. They were more concerned in preserving the integrity of the multi-ethnic empire, thus defending peaceful cohabitation between different nations and cultures. From this perspective, local Jews, as the extra-territorial nation, were obvious political allies, especially the Zionists, whose focus was mainly on the emigration and support of the future Palestine. However, young Lithuanian nationalism, traditional conservatism and moderate xenophobia together with the gradually growing economic anti-Semitism hindered closer cooperation. Nevertheless, the resistance against the stronger national, cultural and political opponents such as the imperial Russian administration and nationalistically inclined Polish elites, opened doors for a broader Jewish-Lithuanian dialogue on certain issues, namely the political counterbalancing of the increasing Polish influence and in relation to that establishing stronger coalition during the elections to the imperial Dumas after 1905. As is rather convincingly demonstrated, the lack of trust between the Jewish and Lithuanian national elites was suppressed during times of need, hence the building of a variety of temporary alliances based on pragmatic reasons.

At the end of the study, one also finds several interesting translated documents from Israeli, Lithuanian and Ukrainian archives. Again the intention is to provide first hand complementary material by further exemplifying the cases that are discussed in the articles thus disclosing the dynamics of the alliance building.

This book is to be highly recommended to everyone interested in the topics of interethnic and ethno-political relations in the late Russian empire and Eastern Europe in general. In parallel, the collective study presents and discusses specific cases that demonstrate the approaches to the complex interethnic and intercultural issues as they manifested themselves in this region in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The formation of pragmatically-based alliances and the search for compromise that Jewish and Lithuanian politicians were trying to build their coexistence upon, is a reminder of the similar situations that one can observe even today.

Vilnius

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