

schildert, wurden als Bestandteil des polnischen Unabhängigkeitskampfes wahrgenommen. Das widerspricht nicht nur den Thesen von einem allgemeinen polnischen Antisemitismus, sondern verstärkt auch die Zweifel daran, ob es 1968 ohne Parteiimpulse in der polnischen Gesellschaft wirklich zu dieser Antisemitismuswelle gekommen wäre. War das vielleicht die eigentliche Frage des Vf.?

Dresden

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Eastern Europe. Continuity and Change (1987-1995). Hrsg. von Irena Grudzińska-Gross und Andrzej W. Tymowski. (Eastern European Culture, Politics and Societies, Bd. 5.) Lang-Ed. Frankfurt am Main 2014. 302 S. ISBN 978-3-631-64700-4. (€ 47,95.)

Not surprisingly, the 25th anniversary of the year 1989 was widely commemorated in the mass media with historical footage of the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, sometimes accompanied by footage from the Polish elections of 4 June 1989 or the street riots and staged Nicolae Ceaușescu trial in Romania. One of the unexpected witnesses to the dismantling of the Eastern Bloc was the scientific journal *Eastern European Politics and Societies*, established in 1987 to publish academic papers that would shed more light on internal currents in politics and societies of the countries of the Eastern Bloc. To celebrate the anniversary of 1989, journal editors Irena Grudzińska-Gross and Andrzej W. Tymowski edited the volume under review here, which includes a selection of thirteen papers published in *Eastern European Politics and Societies* during the time of the system transition. The aim of editors is to remind how scholars from both Western and Eastern Europe witnessed and reflected upon the on-going political, economic and cultural changes, including papers from prominent scholars and intellectuals such as Zygmunt Bauman, Tony Judt, Ernest Gellner, Katherine Verdery, and Maria Todorova.

The volume is divided in three parts: 'Before the Change', 'Alternative Futures', and 'The Legacies of the Past'. Articles in the first part show how intellectuals in the late 1980s, before the first clear signs of the system collapse could be identified, attempted to imagine the near future of the socialist states. Papers written by Bauman and Judt reveal a world in which intellectuals would have to live in the current political system for an indefinite period of time without any hopes for a change. Bauman outlines their state of mind as an 'inner ambiguity, the irremovable contradictions, and the dialectical interplay of opposition and mutual dependency, in the love-hate relationship between intellectuals and communist rule' (p. 30). Similarly, Vesna Pusić shows that in year 1987 the future was imagined as a continuation of the current state with the 'consensus, that the regime had exhausted all its potentials' (p. 159). As she discusses, at that time the denizens of the socialist countries being easily able to observe in their everyday lives that communism had failed to deliver on the promised bright future.

Papers in the second part remind us about the omnipresent feeling of uncertainty after the collapse of the communist regimes. Now, after a large part of Eastern Europe joined the European Union and NATO, we know that they for the most part succeeded in strengthening political, economic and cultural ties with Western Europe. However, in the early 1990s there existed not only a feeling of an uncertain future; several imageries of potentially bright or bleak futures circulated in public discourse. The editors outline excellently the general conviction among the authors that 'politics, economics, and societies were now free to reinvent themselves' (p. 7). However, as essays in this part show, it was unclear what this re-invention would bring.

Papers in 'The Legacies of the Past'-section discuss the re-emergence of historical narratives and mythologies after 1989. Such mythologies, which mostly referred to idealized national historiographies, contributed significantly to the rise of nationalism and strong right-wing political mobilization. Authors of essays in this part discuss the controversial roles of intellectuals, who played a substantial role in bringing back memories about the glorious past after several decades in which the communist regimes practiced extensive

policies of, as Vladimir Tismaneanu and Dan Pavel put out, 'suppression and manipulation of memory' (p. 249). The aforementioned authors discuss the re-emergence of spiritualistic 'Romanian ideology' disseminated by nationalistic intellectuals who had a significant impact on the re-definition of the notion of nation during the system transition.

The thirteen essays collected in this volume focus primarily on East European intellectuals who were at the same time agents of change in the year 1989 and who played an important and controversial role as custodians of the imaginary past in post-communist Eastern Europe. The practice of this volume, a reprint of carefully selected academic papers, is useful for scholars interested in studying the cultural aspect of the system transition. The papers are definitely relevant for the themes of the three sections and provide readers with multifaceted insights into three significant aspects of recent history. This practice of reprinting papers helps to bring back important academic voices, and reading them together helps to better understand on-going public debates and *zeitgeist* of the system transition.

This volume is recommended to a wide range of historians, sociologists and political scientists interested in the history of system transition in Eastern Europe. Papers in the volume could be also be used by academic teachers as a relatively accessible source of material for students. The only drawback of the book is the lack of an elaborate introduction in which the historical background for the particular topics discussed by authors might have been summarized. The volume includes only a short one-page introduction with several interesting, although brief, remarks for reinterpreting papers by contemporary readers, for instance the aforementioned remark on the popular belief in the reinvention of politics, economics and societies in the context of democracy and a free market. A lengthier introduction would have definitely helped encourage scholars and students to explore intellectual debates discussed in reprinted papers. Despite this minor drawback, this collection of essays can definitely be recommended to scholars interested in further studies of the system transition. I can only hope that this volume will stimulate new research on the cultural history of the system transition, a field that definitely remains understudied.

Wrocław

Patryk Wasiak

Felicitas Söhner: Vom Konflikttherd zur Modellregion. Selbst- und Fremdbilder entlang der Hohen Straße in Schlesien. (Dresdener wissenschaftliche Bibliothek, Bd. 4.) Neisse-Verl. Dresden 2013. 526 S. ISBN 978-3-86276-069-5 (€ 28,-)

Das vor rund 25 Jahren aufgeschlagene neue Kapitel in der Geschichte der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen wirkt sich auch auf die Welt der Vorstellungen und Bilder aus. Felicitas Söhner unternimmt in ihrer Arbeit, der eine Doktorarbeit an der Universität Hagen zugrunde liegt, den Versuch einer dynamischen Analyse gegenseitiger Stereotype und verfolgt dabei eine klare These: Schlesien sei eine wichtige und positive Brücke in den deutsch-polnischen Verhältnissen.

Das Buch ist das Ergebnis interdisziplinärer Forschungen über Auto- und Heterostereotype innerhalb dreier Generationen von Menschen, die mit Schlesien verbunden sind, in der Region zur Welt kamen und dort leben oder beruflich in Schlesien tätig sind. Solche Vorstellungen bilden für den Historiker eine schwierige Materie, denn auf diese Weise kolportiertes Wissen über die Vergangenheit ist für Forschungen am wenigsten wertvoll. Als viel wichtiger gilt die mentale Welt, die manifestierte Identität und das Verhältnis zu den „Anderen“. Dieser Komplex zeigt sich oft im alltäglichen Leben. Die im Titel genannte Hohe Straße ist eine alte Handelsroute, die von Frankfurt am Main über Schlesien nach Krakau führte und von Kaufleuten und Pilgern benutzt wurde, die das Bild des damaligen Europa maßgeblich prägten. Im Fokus der Autorin steht der Transfer von Ideen und kulturellen Werten, der im letzten Vierteljahrhundert entlang dieser alten Straße erfolgt ist.

Das Ziel der Arbeit besteht darin, den Einfluss der kulturellen/gesellschaftlichen/ethnischen Vielfalt auf die Kontakte zwischen den einzelnen Altersgruppen darzustellen. Mit