

with the issue of aggression. Historical sources depict knights who spent their lives plundering, destroying, looting, killing, mutilating and torturing innocent people. This was one of the accepted standards of the society of warriors. The stronger affections in behaviour, and spontaneous, affection-driven aggression, corresponded to a society with a low level of order and integration, in which threats, raids, robbery and murders occurred daily. In a pacified society, by contrast, the individual has enough certainty to renounce violence itself. Social regulation is exercised in the form of a state monopoly on the performance of violence. This creates, on the individual level, a presumption for mental regulation, for the control of affections and the blocking of aggressive impulses.

Much of the second volume of the work *The Civilizing Process* deals extensively with developments that, after a long series of competitive elimination struggles, resulted in the emergence of powerful centralized states in Western Europe. The consolidation and monopolization of the hitherto highly volatile power of the rulers became possible through centralized military force – an army financed through taxes. The exaction of taxes, on the other hand, presupposed militaristic power and, at the same time, also a stable, functioning economy. Only when the domination of a certain territory, a monopoly of land, was stabilized by the monopoly of power and the monopoly of taxes, was it possible to talk about the state in the modern sense of the word. In the interest of dispositional power over these monopolies, the monarch was forced to establish an administrative apparatus. This originated and developed in the court.

The control of affection, coupled with a code of conduct, there reached its peak, and formerly free warriors were transformed into cultivated courtiers. At the court, as if in a modelling workshop, new standards of behaviour, feelings and thinking were created. The process of civilization initially affected a narrow upper class but spread further to the whole society.

Adrian Jitschin concludes his 600-page book by giving an account of the life story of Norbert Elias at the time when he completed and published his masterpiece, *The Civilizing Process*. Let

us add that Elias had to wait until the mid-1970s for the appreciation and fame associated with it.

On the whole, Jitschin has managed to use a huge number of sources and often completely new knowledge and information in the pages of his book. His work is characterized by precision and scrupulousness, but does not lack attractiveness and appeal, thanks to which it can be read almost like a biographical novel. In its chapters, the author brings out vividly not only the character of Elias himself, but the vanished world of the bourgeois life, academic circles and intellectual environment of the first half of the twentieth century with its striving and controversies, clashes and defeats. In short, Jitschin has presented himself in a truly exemplary way as a man of science in his first great work; we can only anticipate how he can similarly enrich us in his future books.

Jiří Šubrt

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Nicolas Maslowski – Kinga Torbicka (eds.).
Contested Legacies of 1989. Geopolitics, Memories and Societies in Central and Eastern Europe.
Berlin: Peter Lang, 2022, 228 pp.

The book under review is from the series *Studies in Sociology: Symbols, Theory and Society*. It is already Volume 12 and the editors of this book are Professor Nicolas Maslowski and Kinga Torbicka. The studies presented in the book are of a high standard, and although the subject matter is wide ranging, the individual articles are carefully selected to cover the whole subject.

The aim of the volume is to analyse the contemporary changes and challenges associated with the events since 1989. Like the previous volumes in this series, this book focuses on Central and Eastern Europe and the dilemmas of modern history and modernity that have affected the region for thirty years.

In particular, the book focuses on the socio-cultural, institutional and strategic transformations that the revolutionary transition has

brought to Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, the articles in the book draw attention to the fact that the geopolitical aspects of the transformation, the politics of collective memory and intra-societal issues in particular challenge the legacy of the revolution itself. The task of the authors of this book is to assess whether Central and Eastern Europe is nearing the end of the cycle of transformation.

The volume consists of three parts, *Contesting the Post-Soviet Geopolitical Order*, *Contesting the Memory of the Democratic Revolution*, and *Contesting the Social Order*, with the second part on Memory receiving the most attention.

In this volume, I particularly appreciate that the authors avoided commonly known facts and did not digress to other topics. Thus, in order to meet the scope of the book, the reader receives clearly comprehensive studies referring to a number of useful sources. Even more, however, the volume deserves praise for its reflection on the attitudes and events of the past few years that have crystallized into war in the last few months. In the opening chapter, *The End of a Historical Sequence*, Nicolas Maslowski first analyses, using the concept of post-communism, the main characterising factors that have accompanied the post-communist period for thirty years. The chapter also examines the role of former dissidents from three different perspectives: memory, the political scene and political debate. Maslowski refers to two controversial concepts in political sociology – democratic transition and post-communism. Even though Maslowski recognizes that these are problematic variants, he works with them because they allow us to frame two types of realities, two phases of history, in a macro perspective. According to Maslowski, the concept of transitions allows us to analyze the transformation of societies from authoritarianism to a world of liberal democracies and market democracies. The concept of post-communism is supposed to represent the specifics that were meant to explain and justify the incompleteness of this transformation. “These two concepts were defining an historical sequence determined by two turning points of history, with a relatively consensual start date and an end at an uncertain date” (p. 21).

This chapter is more a form of reflection and does not bring any new insights, but it is a brilliant introduction containing the key elements and concepts of the topics on which the following contributions are based.

As written above, the first part focuses on Post-Soviet Geopolitical Order, in which two contributions are presented. The first is by Anaïs Marin and is entitled *Spreading the Seed of Doubt: The Divisive Effect of Russia*. This paper discusses one type of authoritarian power, “Sharp Power”, which relies on two main tactical tools: disinformation and exacerbating the internal vulnerability of the target. Marin applies the analysis of this type of power to Russia and, with reference to the existing literature, continues the tradition of two key questions in Russian influence research. “1) What is the rationale of Russian sharp power? Why and how is it being deployed? 2) What are the operational features of Russian sharp power tactics? How efficient are they?” (p. 34).

Marin then provides an assessment of the impact of Russian “sharp power” and additionally makes recommendations for democratic societies to strengthen their resilience to Russian malign interference. This chapter will certainly meet the reader’s expectations. An even more engaging and certainly more topical topic is addressed by Kinga Torbicka in her contribution in the same section. The chapter entitled *Unpredictable Security: US and Russian Games on NATO’s Eastern Flank: The Example of Poland* addresses the question of the real importance of NATO’s eastern flank for Poland’s security level. The author focuses on the cooperation of the Visegrad Group and on the possible strengthening of NATO’s eastern flank. In line with the current situation in Eastern Europe, this is the key theme of the whole book.

Torbicka focuses on the annexation of Crimea, and was obviously written before February 24, 2022, when Russia invaded Ukraine. However, the author’s analysis of particular events and phenomena, the situation in Crimea, and the importance of NATO are mirrored in current events. The author’s scholarly analysis and familiarity with security studies is further enhanced by the conclusion of the chapter.

“In December 2019, the NATO summit was an opportunity to decide on strengthening the readiness of the entire Alliance. This is a favorable solution from the Polish point of view, but one should not forget about building one’s own defense capabilities or trying to transform the rotational US presence into a permanent one, which may eventually equalize the security status of Eastern Flank and Western Europe. Many questions remain unanswered, such as the one concerning American leadership proving irreplaceable, as Henry Kissinger once asked” (p. 69).

The second part of the book presents studies on memory in the democratic revolution. This part is the most comprehensive in terms of contributions. Since the first part consists of two chapters and the third part consists of three chapters, the focus on memory is crucial in the book. And it is not just the scope of the sections, but the overall emphasis on the role of memory in post-communist regimes is greater than that of the other sections. Already in his introductory essay, Masłowski draws attention to the influence of memory, which he sees as central to research on democratic transitions occurring in political debates and the humanities. I certainly do not want to contradict the importance of memory in historical-sociological research, let alone the importance of collective memory; on the other hand, it is not appropriate to neglect geopolitical and social issues in the context of the legacy of transition in Central and Eastern Europe.

Let us now turn our attention to M. Rakus-Suszczewski’s chapter entitled *Constructing Memory: the Polish Church and the Round Table Agreement of 1989*, which dominates this section. Here the author considers the extent to which the attitude of the Catholic Church in Poland has changed, with an emphasis on the memories of individual actors. Rakus-Suszczewski acknowledges that the attitude of the Catholic Church towards democratic changes and systemic transformations has been the subject of many studies, both Polish and foreign. However, she adds that most of the analysis describes the attitude at the Round Table mainly as part of a complex political game that led to the decisive events of 1989 and gave birth to the Third Polish

Republic. For this reason, the author emphasizes the narratives and recollections of church dignitaries. The chapter is written in an engaging manner and deals with arguments and facts that are suitable for other authors who would like to work with this topic and develop it further. Rakus-Suszczewski raises interesting questions and hypotheses, but does not always find answers. The main result of the whole study is an analysis of the Church’s attitude towards democracy, which the author distinguishes into three basic stages of the development of the contemporary history of the Polish Church – *the phase of scepticism and disappointment*; *the phase of criticism in the first decade of the new millennium* and *the phase of politicization* – and which can serve as a theoretical starting point for a number of scholarly works.

In this section I would also like to highlight the chapter *The Present’s Ever-Changing Past: Post-1989 Memory of the “Rescue of the Bulgarian Jews”* by Nadège Ragaru. This is a very compelling topic, and the focus of the chapter is on exploring the changes in the memories and narratives of the “Rescue of the Bulgarian Jews” after the fall of socialism in Bulgaria, which was an ally of Nazi Germany during World War II. Ragaru’s research addresses the social and political dynamics of the promotion of the “Kyustendil delegation”. This chapter is particularly interesting because it is written through a dual lens, namely, historiography and historical sociology tracing the historical period of World War II, while at the same time the chapter has a certain retrospective feel, with the author addressing the modern challenges and implications of a still untold history. This approach is very useful for a study of this nature and I must highlight that the author has managed to incorporate both components clearly and clearly.

The third part is devoted to social order and organization. The very first chapter, entitled *Three Responses to the Rise of National Conservatism in Central and Eastern Europe of the 2010s and the Legacy of 1989* by Pavel Barša, draws a lot of attention to itself for its broad scope. Here, the author compares three diagnoses that were formulated in response to the rise of national conservatism in Eastern and Central Europe and

the new geopolitical assertiveness of Russia and China in the 2010s. The first, paradigmatically represented by Timothy Snyder, unreservedly claims the legacy of 1989 and perceives a confrontation with the domestic enemies of liberal democracy. The second view, represented by Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes, sees this legacy as one of the main sources of the crisis. The third account rejects the idea of a gradual rise of mutually exclusive ideological alternatives. The author refers to a number of authors and theoretical and historical backgrounds from which he concludes that “The comparison of the three positions can be summarized according to how they answer four questions: 1) was the legacy of 1989 monolithic and homogenous, or mixed and composed of heterogeneous elements; 2) was the crisis of the 2010s a consequence of the fact the post-1989 transformation of East Central Europe had been completed, or, rather, that it could not be completed and, if the latter, what was the reason for its incompleteness; 3) was the anti-liberal turn in East Central Europe part of the crisis of the global order established on the ruins of the Soviet bloc, or was it rather (one of) its source(s); 4) does history move within a linear time frame either forwards (making progress) or backwards (making regress) or does it consist of a series of discontinuous eras? Both the first and the second account see the legacy of 1989 as monolithically liberal: for the former account, its homogeneity is linked to its opposition to totalitarianism, while the latter sees this legacy as composed of both globalist and liberal and nationalist and conservative elements, even if the general balance has favoured the former elements, such as individual rights and constitutional procedures, over the latter, such as national sovereignty and the rule of the majority” (pp. 181–182). Barša, however, further disputes this conclusion and presents new considerations that could enrich the comparative picture of the three diagnoses with new insights.

The last chapter in the volume is *Contest over EU Values: Poland and the Rule of Law Crisis* by Camille Dobler, which takes a hermeneutical approach to the issue of EU values. On the basis of new interpretations, the author tries to explain neoliberal democracy in connection

with institutional changes in the European Union. The author seeks to highlight the violation of the rule of law in Poland and seeks to answer the question of how long this status quo is sustainable for the European Union. Dobler takes a very critical approach to both the issue of Poland and the European institutions, where she concludes that the illiberal political discourse coming out of Poland is more “tolerant” and better represented than in other institutions of the European Union.

Although the book is meant to address the contested legacies in Central and Eastern Europe, the situation in Poland is the one most emphasised. Most of the contributions are strictly focused on this country, which is a pity, because some of the topics discussed could very well be applied to other countries in the region and would certainly bring new insights from a completely new perspective. Nevertheless, the book certainly delivers on the idea it sets out to do. In particular, I appreciate the authors’ insight and the timeliness of the chapters. For this reason, this volume is suitable both for the academic community, to whom the book will provide a number of suggestions and theoretical starting points, but it is also suitable for the general public who want to learn more about the issues in the historical-sociological society after 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe.

Markéta Minářová

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Alexander Onufrák: *Vznik a vývoj britskej sociálnej politiky*. Košice: Vydavateľstvo ŠafárikPress, 2021, 240 s.

V slovenskom akademickom diskurze sa často pri problémoch demokracie poukazuje na tzv. dimenzie občianstva vymedzené Thomasom Humphreym Marshallom v diele *Občianstvo a sociálna trieda a ďalšie eseje*. Autor v ňom hovorí o troch prvkoch/úrovniach občianstva – občianskom, politickom a sociálnom. Sice tieto dimenzie Marshall vymedzil na základe analýzy historického vývoja práv na území súčasného