

**Wawrzyniak, Joanna. [2009]. *ZBoWiD i pamięć drugiej wojny światowej 1949–1969*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo TRIO, 2009, 354 stran.**

Hartley's 1950s novel "The Go-Between" starts with a famous quote "The past is a foreign country". That is very much the case with the post-war period in Central and Eastern Europe. Not so distant past, being used as a topic and an argument in the current political debates, becomes more and more alien, and more so for the presentist and instrumental usage than for the simple change of circumstances or cultural transformation, normally associated with the passage of time.

Warsaw Wydawnictwo TRIO has been successfully exploring that foreign land for the past nine years, with more than sixty books published to date, many authored by former students of professor Marcin Kula, loyal to his trademark genre of social history. Written mostly by historians, they never remain in purely historical milieu. The sources, mostly archived official documents, might be primarily a historian's domain, but the methodology applied and theoretical context less so. Wawrzyniak's latest book is a perfect case in point. Her description of the theme of the book is as proper as in any good historical monograph, but the dynamical approach and incorporation of other social science's apparatus sets it apart. The author goes beyond the totalitarian paradigm, hardly appropriate for its simplistic view of a society in a totalitarian state, where any organisation is being viewed simply as a tool of control and a loudspeaker for the state ideology. Recognizing the political-machine nature of the post-thaw system, she applies other relevant approaches, like organization theories and social constructionism of Luck-

mann and Berger. The topic of the work is apparent from the title "ZBoWiD and the Remembrance of World War Two. 1949–1969.", ZBoWiD being the communist dominated – and the only one allowed to operate – veteran's association, or "Association of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy" – ironically inappropriate name, rebranding Poland's war struggle as "fight for Freedom and Democracy", and at the same excluding from the struggle those not fighting for "Freedom and Democracy", both terms having a rather twisted meaning in the Polish official post-war discourse and political practice.

Wawrzyniak justly reminds us of the discrepancy between the importance the war had in legitimizing the post-war order, and the actual understanding of the way that legitimizing vision of war was institutionalized in post-war social order. The case study analysis of ZBoWiD serves to narrow that gap. What follows is a history of the association, with the group seen not merely as another social organization, part of the ever-weak civil society under communist rule, but rather as an important agent of social memory during the crucial moments of creation of the new social order after the catastrophe of 1939–1945.

The book in fact is a social history analysis of the post war period, bordering the political topics of exclusion of system's opponents, and the more sociological issues of legitimacy, or rather the lack of it. Focusing on the veterans-related remembrance politics and officially sanctioned visions of history enables the author to take the middle ground between historian's focus on pure facts, or the sociological (durkheimist) tendency to concentrate on the social consciousness. The time frame 1949–1969 is chosen to highlight the dramatic transition from the revolutionary ide-

ology to its national-communist reincarnation. The years include three particularly significant periods, the death of Stalin, the thaw of 1956 and nationalist outburst of the late sixties.

The author is guided by three principal questions: What were the collective representations of war, how did those representations influence ZBoWiD and its actions, and how did the authorities and different social groups interact in the framework of the association. Her consequently pursued argument states that the meaning and the actions of ZBoWiD are best described by introduction of three crucial myths: the victory over fascism, the unity of the resistance movement and the victims' innocence, with the first bearing absolute primacy, and the two latter appearing as a consequence of authorities seeking wider social legitimacy. While the two latter aided social inclusion and integration, the first primarily allowed exclusion of those defined as enemies, and explained the sources and international context of the new order.

During the Stalinist period, the past appears in disguise of "victory over fascism". This allowed teleological vision of history, in line with Marxist principles. Moreover, the political opponents, both foreign and domestic, defined as fascist allies, clearly had a place in this mythical order. Thus the victory over fascism became sort of obligation to the perpetual "fight for peace". This was no longer the vision of the past, but a mobilizing call of the present. Thus ZBoWiD had in its name "fighter" – so, a current actor – rather than "veteran" – a hero of the past. The myth explaining the past served both to mobilize the audience, and to exclude the "fascist" enemies.

ZBoWiD showcased one of the important dimensions of the 1956 thaw – the administered logic of the communist state

clashing with a genuine popular movement. Wawrzyniak follows the case of one local branch of the veterans' union, where the not-so-long-ago persecuted anticommunist guerrillas practically took over local ZBoWiD organisation, if just for a brief period.

The grass-roots mobilization was in just a few months time stopped and dismissed by the central authorities. That, however, did not automatically lead to the exclusion of masses of non-communist guerrillas. On the contrary, since 1956 the authorities' policy changed to that of relatively wide social inclusion, if only nominal. In the veteran's association, that brought about the new prevailing doctrine that Wawrzyniak calls the myth of "unity of the resistance". That new socially inclusive myth, together with use of anti-German sentiment, replaced the anti-imperialist optics of the Stalinist years and was meant to help the permanently lacking legitimacy of the system. ZBoWiD helped that case also by switching from being a political propaganda tool of the early fifties to more of a welfare provider. Patronage replaced repression, and prestige and social benefits were traded for recognition and legitimacy.

The widening social participation was sometimes just appearances – author notes that the actual percentage of fighters of the non-communist Home Army in the veterans' association decreased throughout the sixties. The inclusion seemed more of a verbal nature, or possibly was aimed at the outside audience rather than the veterans' constituency. One should remember that starting from these years, the authorities were dealing with generations that did not experience the war firsthand.

ZBoWiD played great part in disseminating the last of the three myths highlighted by the author – one of "the inno-

cent victims". That idea was directly connected to the anti-German flavour of the official policy. Questions of Polish war guilt and responsibility or Soviet war crimes thus disappeared. It successfully appealed to wider audience, preferring the comfort of "innocent victim" or outrage of unjustly accused (by people or countries accused in the official propaganda of collaborating with or personifying ex-Nazis). During the late sixties, remembrance of war-time civilian suffering started being more prominent in the public space, with both its physical and ideological manifestations.

ZBoWiD gained in importance towards the end of the researched period. Then the urge to secure popular support lead to, as the author calls it, "particular kind of freedom" that manifested itself in the anti-Semitic campaign of the late sixties, with the association being one of the principal vehicles of this ugly phenomenon. ZBoWiD played major role in the case of war-related Great Polish Encyclopaedia entries, that revealed greatly increased role of the nationalist discourse and pictured conflicting Jewish and Polish war suffering.

The book follows more than just the appearance of the three war-related myths organizing vision of the past. First, we shall remember that, as the author puts it, the myths were not only shaping historical narrative, but also creating rules of behaviour, relations and social categories. That underlines the importance of ZBoWiD, as a way of institutionalizing the above. Surely ZBoWiD's played far greater role in supplying the communist system with the much needed legitimacy, rather than being just a political machine for the vaguely defined veterans.

But the work also aims to enhance our understanding of the way social movements functioned under the communist

regime. We may see how the association had been almost dissolved in the early fifties. The totalitarian explanatory model, a bit underestimated in the introduction to the book, does serve well to explain the "drying-out" of ZBoWiD in the Stalinist period. The system favoured atomizing the population, instead of binding individuals together, thus all the particular associations were first unified, and then stripped of the local branches. Its local and welfare activity has dwindled to next to none, removing any fields of possible independence or autonomy. With the thaw, the local organisational structure reappeared, but creation of former unit-specific structure was forbidden – the veterans were only allowed to unite in geographically arranged branches. Membership control was of course aided by secret police vetting. But the ideology played rather insignificant role, especially compared with the past. Welfare became the principal focus. Schmitter's corporatism, chosen by the author, appears to be a useful paradigm in describing communist society, with their mixture of obligatory participation and certain autonomy of expression. Especially adequate after the thaw, when the state tried to compensate systemic lack of pluralist communication and to enable circulation of information.

From a historian's perspective, one might argue with the limited pool of sources, in particular its geographical focus, but one should recognize the difficulties in dealing with poorly organized huge quantity of archived documents of any popular organization from the communist era. The author rightfully notes problematic nature of secret police sources, but those are still employed in the analysis, if just for lack of alternative. In the police files, enemies of the current system are the principal subjects. This goes in line with the

author's aim of showing post-1956 inclusive dynamic of the political system, seeking legitimacy from groups opposed to it. But representation becomes less accurate, drifting towards chosen theoretical perspective. Also, focusing on the incorporative, we see less the totalitarian – we see less the minority discourse affecting the incommunicado society. Thus we are risking omitting one of the chief characteristics of the post-war Poland, with its lack of civil society and the strengthened role of the elite discourse, with the elite governed by set of new rules, incorporating many newcomers, and excluding even more.

The three myths are supposed to deal with the past, but the author convinces us how in fact they stem from the current systemic needs, or from the way those are defined by the political system at any given time. This rule of present-over-the-past, we might add, is perhaps true not just in case of the analyzed two decades, and is not limited to politics of remembrance in a communist system.

Michal Kielak

**Emanuel Pecka: *Sociologie politiky*.  
Praha: Grada Publishing, 2010,  
240 stran.**

„Sociologie má krátké dějiny, ale dlouhou minulost.“ Tuto větu slyšela z úst současného nejvýznamnějšího českého znalce sociologie politiky prof. PhDr. Emanuela Pecky, CSc. již nejedna generace studentů. Nejen oni, ale nyní i široká odborná a laická veřejnost, mají šanci seznámit se s myšlenkami Emanuela Pecky v knize *Sociologie politiky*, právě vydané nakladatelstvím Grada Publishing. Kniha je koncipována především jako učebnice – stejnojmenný předmět autor vyučuje na kolínské Vysoké

škole politických a společenských věd již od jejího vzniku.

Úvodem se může čtenář seznámit se začleněním sociologie politiky do společenskovědních disciplín a hned poté s jedním z nejzajímavějších sociologických a politologických témat – politickou kulturou. Tento pojem bývá veřejností, podpořenou sdělovacími prostředky, často vnímán pouze jako kulturnost chování politických reprezentantů. Autor nám přibližuje nejen klasické výzkumy Gabriela Almonda i dalších autorů, ale zabývá se i typologií politické kultury a jejím dalším výzkumem. Velmi zajímavou – pro studenty, vědce i politiky – je nesporně i kapitola „Proměny české politické kultury v 60. a 70. letech“ (myšleno ve 20. století), kde se Emanuel Pecka pouští do rozboru sovětizace československé společnosti po 2. světové válce či normalizace v sedmdesátých letech. Pozornost je věnována i důsledkům okupace roku 1968. Jak autor uvádí: „*Každé poznání má emocionální přívuk. Poznatky, které občanům českého státu přinesly události v noci na 21. srpen 1968, nikterak nevedly k apatické emocionalitě. Prokázala to celá řada reakcí, které ve svém souhrnu představovaly celonárodní hnutí.*“ Pecka využil nepochybně při výzkumu politické kultury i výsledky práce svého bratra Jindřicha Pecky, historika, který patřil k nejlepším českým znalcům spontánních forem odporu proti okupaci roku 1968.

Kapitola „Národní identita a sociální chování“ nabízí pohled na stále aktuální a sledované téma národa a uvědomování si národní identity. I zde osvědčuje autor své vynikající znalosti, a to nejen českého prostředí, ale i mentalit jiných národů světa. Moderní společnosti „západního“ světa jsou demokratické a pluralitní, což umožňuje, jak autor uvádí na s. 108, „*působení plurality zájmových skupin, a tudíž je otevřená množství specifických identit, at*