

Zitierhinweis

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damit neu datiert (S. 203). Heute gilt der flämische Humanist und Dichter Charles Utenhove (S. 207), dem Kochanowskis Elegie gewidmet ist, mit ziemlicher Sicherheit als eben jener „Carolus“, der Kochanowski auf seiner Reise begleitet hatte. Dieser Reise durch Westeuropa kommt, gerade was die vielfältigen Kontakte mit europäischen Humanisten betrifft, eine besondere Bedeutung zu. Die Recherchen und Analysen von Jörg Schulte haben in einigen Punkten zu Hypothesen geführt, die sich anhand der heute bekannten Quellen (noch) nicht eindeutig beweisen lassen. Sie werden aber dennoch vorgeführt in der Hoffnung, dass sie einen Beitrag zur künftigen Forschung, zu weiteren Einsichten, unter Berücksichtigung heute noch unbekannter Materialien, leisten mögen. Die abschließende achte Studie „Obliviosum odi magis“ – Jan Kochanowski und Desiderius Erasmus“ (S. 230-245) bezieht sich auf den weitgehend erforschten Einfluss von Erasmus auf den polnischen Humanismus allgemein und auf Kochanowski speziell. Allerdings gelang es in der Forschung bisher nur, einige wenige unmittelbare textuelle Einflüsse wie auch Parallelen nachzuweisen. Jörg Schulte stellt mehrere dieser historischen und geistesgeschichtlichen Verbindungen vor, die zeigen, dass „nicht nur einzelne Motive der *Fraszki* und der *Foricoenia* eng mit den [...] Gastmählern sowie mit jenen Sprichwörtern verwandt sind, die aus dem Kontext antiker Symposien hervorgegangen sind“ (S. 230).

Der interessanten und aufschlussreichen Publikation von Jörg Schulte sind Diagramme (S. 247-249), eine umfangreiche Auswahlbibliografie zum Werk von Jan Kochanowski (S. 251-258) und ein Namensindex (S. 259-263) angefügt.

Hans-Christian Trepte, Leipzig

Alfred Erich Senn: Lithuania 1940: Revolution from Above, Amsterdam u.a.: Rodopi 2007, 290 pp.

Just before midnight on June 14, 1940 Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Vyacheslav Molotov, called Lithuania's Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys to the Kremlin to deliver a three-part ultimatum: arrest the country's top security officials, Kazys Skučas and Augustinas Povilaitis, form a new government friendly to Moscow and, most ominously, permit the entrance of additional Soviet forces to assure compliance with the mutual security pact Lithuania had signed with the Soviet Union the previous October. On the next day, after killing a border guard, an army of over 200,000 troops and some 1,500 tanks swept into the country. Within a few days a half-million Soviet troops were in firm control of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Surely this constituted an act of aggression. Or did it? The history of the summer of 1940 in the Baltics has been the object of a struggle between incompatible historiographies. Today these events still produce conflicting narratives which continue to bedevil the relations between the Baltic States and Russia.

Alfred Erich Senn is the most prolific Western historian of twentieth-century Lithuania. In addition to his record of publication and teaching, Senn's unique background is noteworthy. His father, a prominent Swiss philologist, taught at the University of Kaunas during the 1920s, then moved to the United States where Alfred was born in 1932. Senn's scholarly debut took place more than half a century ago with his "Emergence of Modern Lithuania" (1959). Since then he has covered the most important milestones of Lithuania's recent history, written several monographs on the relationship of the Russian revolutionary movement

and Switzerland, and even a few studies in the history of sport. During the 1990s Prof. Senn published two monographs recounting Lithuania's struggle for independence from the Soviet Union. His latest work describes the dramatic final act of the interwar republic which culminated in the country's annexation by the USSR: "Lithuania 1940: Revolution from Above."

The body of literature dealing with this critical period has grown exponentially during the past two decades. The opening of the Baltic archives since the late 1980s has made available countless documents for extensive studies of the first year of Soviet rule. The three Baltic governments have established international historical commissions charged with collecting materials and evaluating the Soviet and Nazi occupations. Readers have been inundated with numerous works and polemical tracts on Soviet rule. Most of the studies, however, including the best academic works, have been issued in the languages of the Baltic States, as well as Russian. There are few reliable surveys in Western languages dealing with the tragedy of 1940. "Lithuania 1940" is thus a much needed contribution. It should be emphasized that Senn's erudite narrative and insightful historical analysis could only have been produced by someone with access to the archival sources, as well as a command of the primary and secondary literature in the appropriate languages.

The events from the invasion of June 15, 1940 to the formal incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR seven weeks later form the heart of the book. As the Red Army approached, President Antanas Smetona fled across the border to Germany. A new "People's Government" was formed with leftist journalist Justas Paleckis at its head. The security services were quickly taken over by Antanas Sniečkus, the leader of Lithuania's newly legalized Communist Party. Within a month, blatantly fraudulent elections were held for a "People's Diet." Voters "chose" 79 candidates for 79 seats to the only permitted political grouping, the "Union of Working People," which appeared out of nowhere a few days before the balloting on July 14–15. Because of a mix-up in printing the ballots, one name on the Union list was that of a non-existent candidate. Naturally, the workers' front won with 99.2 percent of the vote. On July 22–23 a raucous session of this "parliament" voted to petition for admission into the USSR, a request formally granted in a farcical session of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow on August 3, 1940. Senn's narrative exposes the Kremlin's skillful manipulation of the levers of power at its command in the face of a confused and dispirited post-Smetona Lithuanian political leadership. The author succeeds in his stated two-fold purpose: to explain the collapse of the authoritarian regime and then to examine the process by which Soviet officials carried out the incorporation of Lithuania. The emphasis is on political transformations. Although there is considerable discussion on the social context, notably the conflicts among Lithuania's nationalities, there is much less on the economic developments of the period.

Senn lays the groundwork for understanding the collapse of 1940 by devoting the first four chapters to the events which preceded the invasion, beginning with the infamous territorial arrangements of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty of August 23, 1939, commonly known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. These were revised in a secret protocol to the friendship treaty between Germany and the USSR on September 28, 1939. The latter was particularly critical for Lithuania since it assigned the country, formerly in the German "sphere of influence," to the Soviet side. One of the provisions envisioned the transfer of a corner of southwestern Lithuania to Germany once the Soviets had moved to "protect

their interests.” Senn describes in some detail how Stalin outmaneuvered the Germans and persuaded Berlin to accept Soviet control of this sliver of land in exchange for a payment of gold valued at \$7.5 million dollars. The deal was confirmed in a secret protocol to the German-Soviet commercial and border treaty of January 10, 1941, the last major installment in the series of agreements which constituted the Nazi-Soviet partnership (some would say alliance) of 1939–1941.

The outbreak of war in September 1939 plunged Lithuania into a crisis which would define the last months of her existence as an independent state. Lithuania bordered both Poland and Germany, exposing her to an influx of Polish refugees, both civilians and soldiers, and, for a brief time, the government came under pressure to exploit the situation and regain Vilnius by force, thus in effect allying itself with Nazi Germany. Smetona wisely chose neutrality, but the irrelevance of this policy became clear when Stalin, having been given the green light by the agreement of September 28, imposed treaties of mutual assistance on the Baltic States in October 1939. In the Lithuanian case, the treaty stipulated the return of Vilnius, arguably the nation’s most cherished goal during the interwar period. The offer of Vilnius served to sweeten the bitter pill of having to accept a Soviet garrison numbering some 20,000 troops. The near universal joy of acquiring Vilnius was tempered by two sobering realities: Lithuania had now become a *de facto* protectorate of the USSR, while the integration of the Vilnius region, where Polish speakers constituted the vast majority of the population, proved a daunting and expensive project complicating not only internal politics but the country’s diplomatic relations with Poland’s allies. The behavior of the Soviet troops, confined to their bases, was generally unobtrusive and the Kremlin carefully avoided overt interference in the country’s internal affairs.

This all changed in the spring of 1940. The Soviet government’s previously friendly attitude toward Kaunas cooled. German successes in Denmark and Norway dismayed much of the Lithuanian elite which had hoped for a quick British-French victory. While the Soviet invasion of the Baltic States in June 1940 coincided with the entry of German troops into Paris, Senn cautions against any causal relationship. Military preparations had been underway since at least early spring of 1940. The Soviets took seriously the possibility of resistance: POW camps were prepared as well as hospitals for the wounded. The military plans were followed by the Kremlin’s ludicrous charges that Lithuanian authorities were kidnapping Soviet soldiers. Molotov voiced further suspicions about the ostensibly pro-Western orientation of the Baltic States and their discussions concerning military cooperation which he interpreted as an attempt to set up an anti-Soviet alliance. Securing the Baltic States via military occupation in June 1940 was, for Moscow, the logical solution to Soviet concerns. As Senn points out, this also re-established Russia’s historic preeminence in the Baltic.

The imposition of the Soviet “party-state,” which laid the basis for the country’s later Sovietization, was accompanied by intense political, social, and ethnic fissures. Much of society rejoiced at the fall of the Smetona regime, but this did not necessarily imply a desire to join the USSR. Senn directly confronts the vexing issue of Jewish-Lithuanian relations which reached new levels of animosity as a result of the invasion (pp. 190-203). By all accounts there was a palpable rise in anti-Semitism, but this was not the whole story. The author notes that the “specter of the Holocaust” has “deeply affected the judgments of all historians who have described the relations between Jews and Lithuanians before that time.” (p. 60) Senn cites Israeli historian Dov Levin’s inexplicable assertion that the

Soviet takeover “put off the Holocaust for a year and a week,” a notion which would make sense only if Lithuanians themselves had moved to initiate the mass murder of the Jews in June 1940. The real story involved a complex struggle among Lithuanians, Jews, Poles and Russians. Regardless of the ethnic composition of the Party, Russian-speaking apparatchiks from the USSR, that is, the occupiers, exercised the dominant role above the fray. But the more nuanced picture emerges only if one has utilized the vast array of Russian and Lithuanian-language records of the Party and the security services as has been done by historians Liudas Truska and Nijolė Masliauskienė in their comprehensive studies of ethnic politics during 1940–1941.¹

Aside from effectively narrating independent Lithuania’s demise, Senn provides extended commentary on a number of issues, some more important than others. For example, he deals with the problem of reading history from a postwar Western perspective. Senn notes that “the events of 1941–1945 so colored the historical memory” of the period before the Nazi invasion (p. 66), that the 1939–1941 Soviet-German “axis” is often viewed in an ahistorical manner. He points out the often-forgotten fact that, following the Nazi-Soviet treaties, much of Western opinion regarded the Kremlin as a “virtual ally of Nazi Germany.” (p. 69) At the time the Kremlin accused Baltic leaders of a “pro-Western” orientation, not of Nazi sympathies as it tends to do today. The fact is that Baltic leaders favored the western Allies, while Stalin detested the British.

Senn justifiably adopts a critical approach to influential postwar memoirs of major actors, especially Kazys Škirpa, Lithuania’s pro-German envoy in Berlin, and the noted writer Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, who served in the People’s Government. Senn refutes, perhaps, in greater detail than necessary, the main tenets of Soviet historiography concerning the “revolutionary nature” of the regime change in 1940. On the other hand, it is important to note that this history is still politically contentious, given the continued efforts of the Russian government to justify both the Nazi-Soviet pact and the invasion of the Baltic States. Here and elsewhere, Senn has criticized the “what if” approach to the past, or what he terms “counterhistory”, as unhelpful, but then goes on to discuss at length Škirpa’s version of what could have happened if the Lithuanian army had moved into Vilnius in September 1939, or if the Germans had brought Lithuania into their “sphere of interest.” The dictionary-style discussions of basic concepts, such as “ultimatum,” “aggression” or what constitutes a “Trojan horse,” do not contribute much to the history and may read to some like a primer. The 10-hour deadline given in the Soviet note of June 14 to accept the Kremlin’s demands and to “immediately” allow the entry of a huge contingent of the

1 See Liudas Truska: Lietuvos valdžios įstaigų rusifikavimas 1940–1941 m. [Russification of Lithuania’s political institutions 1940/41], in: Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo institutas. Darbai 1 (1996), pp. 3-28, and Nijolė Masliauskienė: Lietuvos komunistų tautinė ir socialinė sudėtis 1939 m. pabaigoje – 1940 m. rugsėjo mėn. [The national and social composition of Lithuanian communists from the end of 1939 until September 1940], in: Genocidas ir rezistencija 1 (1999), No. 5, pp. 77-104, and her sequel Lietuvos komunistų sudėtis 1940 spalio – 1941 birželio mėn. [The composition of Lithuanian communists from August 1940 until June 1941], in: Genocidas ir rezistencija 2 (1999), No. 6, pp. 20-46. Truska’s and Masliauskienė’s data confirm what other authors have found in their own search of the same archives, for example, see Saulius Sužiedėlis: Thoughts on Lithuania’s Shadows of the Past: A Historical Essay on the Legacy of War, in: Vilnius (Summer 1998), pp. 142-144.

Red Army meets any common sense understanding of an ultimatum. In March 1939 Hitler “persuaded” Czech President Emil Hácha to place his country under German “protection,” an event universally considered an act of aggression even as the occupation went forth without resistance. What Stalin did in June 1940 in Moscow was in the same spirit. How seriously then should we take the current position of the Russian foreign ministry that the invasion of 1940 took place “within the framework of international law as practiced at the time”? (p. 250)

In one of his speculative conclusions, Senn theorizes that the occupation of the Baltic States in 1940 constituted “a step in the direction of the disintegration of the Soviet Union a half-century later.” (p. 254) A more easily provable conclusion is simply that history still exercises great power in this region. Soviet authorities fiercely defended their “revolutionary” narrative since they understood that the legitimizing rationale for the very existence of the Lithuanian SSR depended on evading any genuine investigation into the events of 1940. As long as access to the archives was strictly controlled, the assaults on Marxist mythology could be dismissed as anecdotal evidence or deceptions manufactured by émigré and other anti-communist circles. Whatever their other faults, these hardliners proved to be prescient censors: their fears that serious scrutiny of Lithuania’s annexation would be politically catastrophic were amply vindicated by the crisis of the late 1980s.

Senn’s portrayal of Smetona is a trifle harsh. One should not take at face value the notion by the American journalist John Gunther that Smetona’s wife and sister “ran the country.” (p. 31). Whatever his faults, and they were many, Smetona’s biographers have given the dictator some credit for his relative restraint, erudition, imperviousness to financial corruption, and his grasp of the dangers of Nazi racism. Thus the image of his security detail speeding through the streets of Kaunas (p. 111) is based on a 1969 Soviet tract which seems exaggerated when compared to other contemporary accounts. Readers will be disappointed by the lack of a bibliography which would have been of great help to readers looking for more sources. Better editing would have eliminated some typos and repetitions. But these remain minor quibbles: for a guide to what happened in the summer of 1940, no other work in a Western language comes close.

Saulius Sužiedėlis, Millersville

Anne Sommerlat : La Courlande et les Lumières, Paris : Belin 2010, 304 pp.

Cet ouvrage d’histoire culturelle présente de manière à la fois synthétique et approfondie le développement des Lumières à la fin du XVIII^e siècle dans le duché de Courlande-Sémigalle, au sud de l’actuelle Lettonie. Il analyse d’une part les circonstances dans lesquelles les derniers ducs de la famille Biron essayèrent de faire de leur capitale Mitau (aujourd’hui Jelgava) un centre de rayonnement intellectuel, d’autre part les réseaux et les moyens par lesquels les *Aufklärer* réunis dans ce but tentèrent de mobiliser les esprits « éclairés » de la région.

La démonstration proprement dite s’articule autour de 6 chapitres de 30 à 40 pages chacun. Le premier s’intéresse à « La formation des réseaux savants ». L’auteur y montre d’abord l’importance du rôle des libraires dans la structuration d’une opinion éclairée ; grâce à leurs liaisons avec Königsberg puis Berlin, leurs établissements de Libau (aujourd’hui