

REVIEWS

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ŁUPIENKO, ALEKSANDER. *ORDER IN THE STREETS: THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF WARSAW'S PUBLIC SPACE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY*. BERLIN: PETER LANG, 2019, 269 PP. ISBN 978-3-631-80070-6

Aleksander Łupienko's book (originally published in Polish), combines multiple domains of historical research (urban history, cultural history, public history) in a complex picture of how Warsaw transformed into a monumental capital during the first half of the nineteenth century. The author, who worked as a researcher at the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, achieved this by looking for particular examples of the functioning of public spaces in the nineteenth-century city and by analysing various sources, from the preserved manuscripts of official institutions which took part in this transformation through the press and maps to fascinating contemporary guides and memoirs. What should be specifically highlighted is the author's ability to frame the actual development of the city in the symbolic and mental mapping of governmental elites. Thanks to this, a reader can easily see all the different dimensions that projects such as the building, reconstruction or modification of public gardens or road surfaces fulfilled. Urban history, even though the book itself oversteps this category, is probably one of the most progressive kinds of historical research nowadays. It allows complex multidisciplinary and leads historians to projects that looked unimaginable a few decades ago. However, for various reasons, most of these works are related to the twentieth century, making Łupienko's book quite a vital contribution (especially in the Central European context).

For the benefit of the reader, Łupienko does not start his work in medias res, but provides introductory chapters to all three crucial parts of the research. Therefore, he begins with the theoretical approach, the methodology he decides to apply and how he understands its essential points. Then he continues with a short overview of the history of public space and concludes this entree with an explanation of the most important political upheavals and events which occurred in the territories which once were the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth with Warsaw

as its capital. The last-mentioned part is valuable not only because of the historical context but mainly because it also points to the variability of the external and internal factors that played a crucial role during the later development of the city. The second part of the book consists of the principal analysis, therefore looking for the answers about how public spaces functioned in nineteenth century Warsaw and what role they played (or if any) in the city's transformation. The author demonstrates that during the studied period, Warsaw transformed into a metropole like its counterparts in Western Europe. Toll houses, representative city squares, theatres, banks and monumental buildings of the central state institutions, but also new pavements changed the face of the city and improved the lives of its inhabitants. It is fascinating and, thanks to the reader-friendly style of writing, also relatively easy to see in front of one's eyes, metaphorically speaking, how Warsaw as a city changed during the studied period.

Most probably, the analysis of the factual transformation of Warsaw would be enough. Yet, as was mentioned, for Łupienko, this is only a starting point from which to study how all this was used on different levels of social reality. And this is not only interesting as a research problem but also looking at Łupienko's conclusions. Even though Warsaw developed during the studied period, the functioning of these modifications of Warsaw's new public spaces was improper – at least according to the goals public spaces should serve as presented in the book's first part. The author states that the city was functioning: "it was developing demographically, and life revolved around day-to-day matters, holidays and Imperial visits" (p. 222). However, at the same time, a degree of cultural stagnation was induced from the fact that the actual improvement of society-administration relationships in Warsaw, ruled by the Russian tsar, proved impossible. "The history of Warsaw's public space after 1831 is a story of improperly-functioning public space", concludes Łupienko (p. 221).

The proper methodological background, the vast number of studied sources and the realization of analytical work do not leave many spaces for criticism. One could think

about what might be included in the book that is not (e.g., the question of the availability of drinking water or water in general), but what one would like to see is not something which ought to serve as a valid point of criticism.

In conclusion, Łupienko's book is a pretty valuable contribution to all the above-mentioned fields of historical research. On the one hand, it offers readers an exciting story about how Warsaw was modified during the first half of the nineteenth century. Still, at the same time, it also shows the inspiring nature of historians' work, when all this empirical knowledge about city planning and city building is used to produce relevant knowledge about human society.

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DURČO, MICHAL. *CESTY A DIAL'NICE NA SLOVENSKU V MEDZIVOJNOVOM OBDOBÍ* [ROADS AND MOTORWAYS IN SLOVAKIA IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD]. BRATISLAVA: VEDA VYDAVATELSTVO SAV; HISTORICKÝ ÚSTAV SAV, 2020, 230 PP. ISBN 978-80-2241868-3

This monograph, authored by Michal Ďurčo, a researcher at the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, offers the reader a hitherto unprocessed part of the economic history of Slovakia, which can contextually complement the history of not only the region generally, but also the city specifically. The author has embarked on the difficult task of mapping the construction of the road network, which, although temporally defined by the interwar period, does not avoid earlier or later periods thanks to the effort to capture the continuity of development. The rather difficult task of understanding the basic features of the road transformation in Slovakia, also taking into account the state, nature and diversity of primary and secondary sources, has been translated by the author into a dense publication consisting of five separate, logically arranged chapters on the background of the political and economic changes of the interwar period.

Readers who may be distant from Czechoslovak realities but interested in the determinant processes of the genesis and transformation of road infrastructure will be inspired by the chapter devoted to the theoretical and methodological concepts underlying the work. Considering the state of economic history research in Slovakia, this partly interdisciplinary passage of the thesis can be considered as extremely successful and innovative. The chosen concept is based on the LTH (Large Technical Systems) theory of the American historian of technology Thomas Hughes, and the author has skilfully, considering the primary period in which the issue is set, used the fact that this theory is also about the structure of relationships and systems with specific meanings, overcoming different types of barriers that decide whether or not cities and other places will be connected, but also covering the approach of so-called system creators on the ideological level.¹ From a historian's perspective, however, I found the section on the geographical location, relief and elevation of the different parts of Slovakia rather lengthy in this chapter, although the author's intention to portray the bedrock with which Slovakia was, and still is, actually struggling cannot be denied.

For researchers dealing with the urban or regional history, the very first part of the opening chapter, devoted to the connection of the Slovak and Moravian borderlands, is interesting. The author has managed to portray the development of the interconnection of the territory both in space and in a relatively broad time frame dating from the eighteenth century to the interwar period. All the aspects of the development of the road network taken into account are also supported by clear maps. At the same time, it is also possible to follow the ideological dimension of infrastructure construction traced by the author in this example, the borderlands after 1918 also representing a symbolic plane in the form of a permanent link in the newly established Czechoslovak nation. The defined theoretical

¹ In English, see for example the study: ĎURČO, Michal. The shift in Slovak road planning from Austria-Hungary to Czechoslovakia. In: *Encyclopédie pour une histoire nouvelle de l'Europe* [online], 2020, Accessed 21 June 2022, <https://ehne.fr/en/node/21300>.

concept is followed by an extremely beneficial subchapter mapping the construction of the so-called Masaryk Road. The road connecting Pohronská Polhora and Tisovec, which served as a case study for the author, at the same time documents not only the problematic and economic disproportion between Slovakia and the Czech lands, but also reflects the economic, administrative and legal changes in the country on the hitherto little-explored phenomenon of the implementation of the new road vision of connecting the individual republics in reality.

In addition to a general analysis of the economic situation in Slovakia, the period of the so-called crisis 30s is supported by several extremely successful subchapters, the linking element of which is a description of the activities of the regionalist movement in Slovakia, which brought together experts at the time with the aim of strengthening and economically uplifting the individual regions of Slovakia. According to the author, one of the priorities of the movement was the effort to develop tourism (including individual car tourism) in Slovakia, especially in the still popular tourist locations around Central Slovakia or the Low and High Tatras. A necessary step in this area was, above all, the building of transport infrastructure and the interconnection of the individual (car) tourist centres of Slovakia. At the same time, in this chapter the author works with a rather unusual and interesting source in the form of a travelogue, which he partly uses as a contrast and filter against the official institutional positions, and with the help of which it is possible to demonstrate, through the subjective prism of the author of the travelogue, the constant difficulties associated with travelling at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s. Ďurčo goes on to give several other examples or unrealised plans for the development of tourism (including, for example, through bus transport), mainly focused on the area of Central and Eastern Slovakia. Nevertheless, according to the author, the opening up of initially inaccessible places such as Demänovská dolina, Štrbské Pleso and Donovaly to motor vehicles was a catalyst for the launch of tourism as we know it today.

The last chapter of the publication focuses on the issue of the plans for the construction

of the Czechoslovak motorway between 1935 and 1939. It forms a fitting conclusion to the whole thesis, at the end of which the author opens up possible scope for further research. In the context of the complexity of the international political tensions at the end of the 1930s, it completes the overall picture of the complexity of the period in question, but also of the still persistent economic underdevelopment of the Slovak territory; unlike the Czech countries, Slovakia was still waiting almost three decades later for the first sections of motorway to be built. The genesis of the development of motorways in the world, the international transfer of theoretical concepts of their construction or their abuse by totalitarian regimes to consolidate power are quite interesting refreshments to the whole chapter.

However, Michal Ďurčo's monograph offers much more. In addition to a wealth of supporting materials, illustrative examples and detailed characterization and pitfalls in the economic and legal spheres, it looks at the construction of transport infrastructure in a truly colourful, original way. The author has thus managed to handle the multifaceted issue sensitively, such that the reader does not get lost in the multitude of political, economic, social, administrative and legal problems. The work thus represents a hitherto missing piece in the economic history of Slovakia in the twentieth century. At the same time, it has the potential, especially on the theoretical level, to offer something to foreign researchers as well. For this reason, it will be a great plus if the author continues the trend and publishes his partial results of the work in English.

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GRULICH, JOSEF. *MIGRAČNÍ STRATEGIE: MĚSTO, PŘEDMĚSTÍ A VESNICE NA PANSTVÍ ČESKÉ BUDĚJOVICE VE DRUHÉ POLOVINĚ 18. STOLETÍ* [MIGRATION STRATEGIES: A TOWN, SUBURBS AND A VILLAGE IN THE ESTATE OF ČESKÉ BUDĚJOVICE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY]. ČESKÉ BUDĚJOVICE: NOVÁ TISKÁRNA PELHŘÍMOV, 2018, 286 PP. ISBN 978-80-7394-703-3

This book by Josef Grulich is possible to read in two ways: as an individual piece of work dealing with an interesting phenomenon of migrations in rural and urban environments but also as a methodological disputation that needs to be put into a greater context of studies about early modern-period rural areas. The following text tries to take both views into consideration.

Primarily, on the basis of research of more than a thousand so-called release letters, the book introduces the manner of the migration of subjects that took place in the microregion of the České Budějovice estate. Thanks to the description of the differing migration strategies of subjects in which Grulich accents fittingly also a gender aspect of migration strategies (in the research period, women mostly migrated for marriage, men for work or providing for life tenants, or more precisely for farmland; with men we can also then identify a specific gender component of migration connected to military service), he disproves a long-repeated statement about the firm ties of subjects to their noble lords' estates. Besides the release letters, the author does not omit the role of letters that guaranteed subjects short-term movement without releasing them from servitude to specific noble lords (so-called "fedrovní listy") – although release letters applied with the moving of subjects to a new estate. Grulich also pays attention to a very common reciprocity of such acts ("exchange of subjects"). Particular cases then tend to overlap into other fields of research and open new avenues of exploration both for "disability studies", often ignored by Czech historiography of the early modern period – migration strategies of physically and mentally disabled – and for military history – the aforementioned migration related to military service, either in efforts to get enlisted or, on the contrary, to avoid

military service. The research based on release letters is then properly complemented by a supporting file agenda (transfer letters, requests for release), church registers and town books. The author also does not omit the influence of suburbs on the settlement of subjects near České Budějovice and he states that migration was always going on both from the country to the town and from the town to the country.

If we look at Grulich's book as a polemical work we will notice two main goals of his: Primarily, to defend the position of quantitative methods in confrontation to "the latest" historiographic movements; Secondly, to show that a micro-historical method is also possible to apply, with an appropriate result, to an individual that does not exceed the common perception of individuals of the era. In both cases, Grulich stands against a heavyweight, the most significant present Czech representative of microhistory.¹ It is a credit to Grulich that during the defence of his own methodological procedures he does not veer towards the personal level, his discussion remaining factual, based on sources, and he refers to opponents' works only twice in the whole text.

In the first part is visible his orientation in present trends of qualitative research, including reference to major world demographic databases. He supports his research with his database of the parish of České Budějovice. By that he shows that without the proper founding on a quantitative basis, the information contained in other researched sources would disintegrate into particular descriptions of personal story fragments. Even though this procedure is interesting and readable it has already been held against Čeněk Zíbrt. Nevertheless, Grulich does not reject a qualitative procedure, complementing his "hard" data properly by that. In my opinion, it's the fusion of qualitative and quantitative methods where he justly sees a desirable trend of other research. In the second case he shows, by using the case of Alžběta Greisshuber, that it is possible to create an amazing micro-historic sondage by combining sources of municipal and noble lords' provenance (market books,

1 Jaroslav Čechura, Accessed 14 February 2022, jaroslav-cechura.cz

release letters, orphan lists etc) also for a person that was not criminalized and did not stand outside the society in any way attracting great attention, e.g. in a court agenda.

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