

convincingly shows that the NKVD was unprepared for such massive repressions as well as was the system of gulags and penitentiaries. He describes the problems of both institutions and especially of its personnel. The fifth chapter by Melanie Ilic concentrates on the gender aspect of the purges. The author presents a thorough study of the initiation, circumstances and repercussions of the NKVD operational order No. 00486 from August 15, 1937, marking a beginning of mass repressions of wives of the enemies of the people and “traitors of Motherland”.

Regional studies form the bulk of the remaining sections. Valerii Vasiliev from Ukrainian Academy of Sciences focuses on the impact of the extremely brutal terror on Ukraine. Based on his archival research on the documents of NKVD from Vinnytsia and Poltava, the author confirms the assumption that confidential police lists of *kulaki* and other “anti-Soviet elements” and criminals were used during the mass repressions. Vasiliev also had a very close look at the consequences of the purges on mining and agriculture in the republic.

Melanie Ilic in her second study in this volume makes use of the lists of victims, the martyrologies from Mordovia in order to visually depict the chronology of the repressions in this region. Her socio-demographic analysis of the victims of the purges also includes a detailed account of life stories of the affected women. The last study by Christopher Joyce uses the same methodological approach. The author presents a social profile of thousands of people that suffered from the repressions in the Komi territory. Apart from that, Joyce examines the social interaction between groups of free workers and gulag prisoners in the region as the boundaries between these two worlds were hardly recognizable.

There is no salient link between the studies in the anthology *Stalin's Terror Revisited*. The authors come from different generations of scholars, institutions and countries (and united their forces – not physically – at the premises of the University of Birmingham). The chapters have very similar date of origin and some of them are case studies. The apparent heterogeneity of this volume serves as a good example of the state of current research on Stalinism: there is no ideology left, schools and groups have also disappeared and the entire research field is very diverse.

*Mikuláš Černý*

Jarosz Darius, Pasztor Maria, *Stosunki polsko-francuskie 1944–1980*. Warszawa: Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2008, 480 pp. ISBN 978-83-89607-42-3.

*Stosunki polsko-francuskie 1944–1980*, a monograph written by Polish historians Dariusz Jarosz and Maria Pasztor, is the outcome of a many years long research on French-Polish relations in the twentieth century. Maria Pasztor has been especially renowned for the numerous works she has published on the topic so far, some even in French.

In this book on the French-Polish relations in 1944–1980, the authors present a chronological account of the topic divided into four chapters, whereby the introduction also includes a brief description of the development in 1918–1943 and the conclusion summarises the post-1980 period until the fall of communism in Poland. The first chapter analyses French-Polish relations in 1944–1947, the period of the re-establishment of Poland within new borders, and the time of cultivation of scholarly and cultural cooperation between Paris and Warsaw on the one hand but worsening of economic ties due to nationalisation policies in Poland on the other. The following chapter on the period of 1948 to 1953 focuses on the deterioration in cultural and economic bonds that had been caused by the growing tensions between the two countries and a series of repression (roundups and expulsions). The third part deals with the period of 1953 to 1970, i.e. the time of *détente*. The general political relaxation at the international level facilitated a resumption of the political dialogue between Paris and Warsaw and cultural, scholarly and even economic ties once again intensified. In the mid-1960s, mutual cooperation even deepened due to Charles de Gaulle's policies of rapprochement with the Eastern bloc. The study is concluded by an analysis of French-Polish relations in 1970–1980, the period of abundant diplomatic activities such as mutual official state visits of Poland under Edward Gierek and France under Presidents Pompidou and Giscard d'Estaing. At this time, mutual trade relations strengthened, whereby Paris became one of the main creditors of Poland.

The authors worked on the assumption that under the conditions of a bipolar division of the world, the role of politics at the international level was very limited. Therefore, priority is given to economic, cultural, educational and scholarly relations between the two countries. Likewise, chapters on the mutual relationships between their two communist parties are included. However, the international aspect of the subject had not been left out: French-Polish relations are also depicted in the broader context of European and world politics (especially regarding the German question) and in respect to relations with other countries (mostly addressing the role of Moscow and Bonn).

The book relies mainly on French and Polish archives and contemporary media, less so on secondary sources. The authors also used parts of their previous publications that are incorporated into their new monograph. Bibliography and index are also included.

Statistical data and the usage of tables (chiefly of economic data or even of statistics of literary translations) create a substantial part of the book. Very frequent are also various enumerations and listings of e.g. French soloists performing in Poland. In fact, the book is a dense composition of many previous studies and a long-term research that occasionally gives away the key problem the authors faced: the limits on the length of the book. As a way of overcoming this problem, the authors included an abundance of bibliographical references in the footnotes. However, the

quantity and concentration of the information offered in some passages negatively affected readability.

At any rate, the salience of the book lies in the plenitude of information acquired mainly from the primary (archival) resources. The profoundness of this study on French-Polish relations in 1944–1980 offered in this monograph thus cannot be disputed.

*Michaela Káželová*

Jeff Johnson, *The New Theatre of the Baltics, From Soviet to Western Influence in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*. Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2007, 222 pp. ISBN 978-0-7864-2992-9.

Theatre in the Baltic state seems very remote not only for Central Europeans but for many others. Jeff Johnson's book is an attempt to introduce this quite unknown realm of European cultural heritage to a broad spectrum of readers. The author himself in the preface admits that he does not speak any of the Baltic languages and that he is not an expert on this area. He grew interested to this topic through an experience with Lithuanian dramatic art that later led him into the study of drama in the other two republics.

First chapter, "Crisis of Relevance", does justice to the pivotal theme of all three national theatres: after the acquisition of independence, actors, directors and playwrights have been searching for their place in the post-Soviet society. The three Baltic republics suffer from the same problems as theatres of the other countries with a similar historical experience such as insufficient financial resources, decrease in spectators and commercialization. The author outlines possible solutions that the individual theatres and theatre companies implemented. First and foremost, it is a contemplation over the function of theatre in current times where theatre does not serve as a disguised critic of the regime and that does not serve as the only means of entertainment anymore. The contemporary world has brought a wider scale of opportunities and theatres need to deal with them as best as they can. Just like small nations search for their place in the new Europe, theatres confront the issue of how to establish themselves as small and in terms of language inaccessible theatres in the globalized world.

Next three chapters are devoted to the individual national theatres. As Jeff Johnson recognized in the introduction, his journey started with Lithuanian drama, which is also the first one he deals with, followed by the Estonian and Latvian dramatic production. Each chapter starts with an introductory historical overview that enables the reader to understand the used terms and the background of