

Leninism has been effective precisely in places where the anger of impoverished peasants could be combined with a struggle for national freedom.

Ezergailis attributes the failure of Latvian Menshevism to what he terms the "fetish of unity," that is, the refusal of the "unionist" elements of the Latvian Social Democratic Party to understand that there was no way to coexist with Bolshevism. The author's almost mathematical proof of this weak unionist position reminds us of the extent to which the same mistake cost Menshevism so dearly throughout the Russian empire. Ezergailis's use of Latvian materials provides a rich lode for non-Latvian historians. He could, however, have made greater use of sources in Russian and German. He might also have revised more thoroughly the previously written or published materials included here—particularly the chapter on "The Nationality Question in Bolshevik Ideology." The subtle difference in the views of Stučka and Lenin regarding the nationality question are of such universal importance that the earlier-vintage Ezergailis should have been refined to reflect his advancing maturity.

This book also makes a valuable contribution by highlighting the importance, in the shaping of events in 1917, of the Thirteenth Conference of the Latvian Social Democratic Party, held in Moscow, May 2–5, and in detailing the world's first Bolshevik takeover, as it occurred in unoccupied Latvia four months before the Petrograd coup. And since it has recently been discovered that it was not only "three who made a revolution," we should be thankful to Ezergailis for reminding us of the decisive parts played by Stučka and Danisevskis, among many others.

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AN ECONOMIC BACKGROUND TO MUNICH: INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 1918–1938. By *Alice Teichova*. Soviet and East European Studies. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1974. xx, 422 pp. \$27.50.

This study investigates primarily the microeconomic and institutional aspects of Czechoslovak international economic activity during the interwar period. The focus is upon industrial and commercial enterprises that relied on foreign technology, investment capital, and financing, in the manner of multinational corporations today. Such systematized business history illuminates the economic environment in which Germany pursued her aggressive designs while diplomats gambled with the fate of an industrious small country.

Relying on Czechoslovak and other archives, the author disentangles the multinational patterns of ownership, finance, management, and marketing in such key sectors as mining and metallurgy (chapter 3), mechanical and electrical engineering (chapter 4), and chemical industry (chapter 5). Teichova demonstrates that although it was the French, British, and U.S. interests that held the largest shares in various industries, the Germans gained considerable influence over Czechoslovak business enterprise through international marketing cartels. This type of study could well be pursued further on the basis of business records and archives in Western countries.

This reviewer would have liked to find greater attention given to governmental policies related to international business. Teichova discusses mainly the

policies concerned with extensive cartelization of industries and the regulation of the type and nationality of incoming capital, particularly in banking. Yet the costs and benefits of multinational schemes are also dependent on the country's monetary, fiscal, and growth policies. Although the book contains pertinent empirical and bibliographical pointers, the analysis of the macroeconomic setting is scant.

Understandably, several aspects of the political economy of international business activity are controversial in East European historiography. For instance, Teichova is obliged to contest the view that Czechoslovakia was vulnerable to foreign domination in accordance with the neo-Marxist theory of imperialism. Nonetheless, the book conveys the wrong impression that the country was just another debtor. Actually, the years 1929–37, presented in her table 19, and even more so the years omitted by it, 1925–28 and 1938, recorded sizable trade surpluses and, hence, net capital outflows and/or accumulations of reserves. My own study (1968) of the East European experience revealed Czechoslovakia as a dynamic trader with a capacity to act as a creditor, while the evidence in the present book shows the country as a strong and respected partner in spite of considerable foreign indebtedness. In that perspective one can better understand Teichova's assertion that "foreign investment supported Czech efforts towards greater economic independence, and also towards increasing the profitability of the domestic economy" (p. 341). However, the author overlooks another kind of vulnerability—the burden of unemployment and underproduction during the depressed 1930s, which the country bore as a result of conservative fiscal and monetary policies that were thought proper for an honorable creditor country with simultaneous external debt obligations.

Alternative interpretations could also be offered of the broader geopolitical issues in the introductory and concluding chapters. Thus the economic cohesiveness of the Little Entente seems exaggerated, while the lack of substantive cooperation among the new states is overlooked. Similarly, Teichova's disregard of the international presence of the three Baltic states (which together with Western Ukraine later fell under direct Russian control) reflects current political bias and distorts interwar history.

As a researcher respectful of the evidence, Teichova is far from claiming that German aggression against Czechoslovak statehood had primarily an economic cause. One would have to agree with the balanced interpretation of Germany's displeasure with policies limiting her share of direct investment and finance, but perhaps greater attention should have been paid to German concern about Czechoslovak competition in third countries. Such geopolitical issues certainly merit further study if we are to comprehend the road to Munich, the infamous "Drang nach Osten," and the present patterns of expansion and domination. Teichova's scholarly study, with its extensive bibliography and good index, should enhance the coverage of this and related aspects of interwar economic history in textbooks and university courses.

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