

Abstracts

■ *Zoja G. Licholobova: Der Bergmann in der Historiographie (1920–2000)*

The history of the economic development of the coal mining industry was among the main topics of Soviet historiography. Following the ideological requirements of the communist party, it was presented as the success story of the “great socialist construction project”. Economic buildup and technical progress were the main identification points for the Soviet state. Under the dictatorship of the communist party, Soviet historians for a long time could not deal with many aspects of the political, economic, social and cultural history of this field. Only in recent times, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of the former Soviet archives, historians started to examine many of the former “blank spots” of history. The article provides a survey of the historiography on Soviet-Ukrainian miners and mining industry from the 1920s until postsoviet times.

■ *Jörn Grünwald: Die Ethnisierung des Proletariats. Arbeiter in der Ölindustrie Bakus im ersten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts*

Revolutions are turning points of political development. However, they do not completely turn upside down all existing social practices in a society. Nor can they interrupt cultural traditions and memories. Yet, after 1917 the victorious Bolsheviks set out to do just that: they sought to create a “new man”, a person completely divided from the cultural past of Russia and the Russian Empire. But they sought to make people undergo a “double assimilation” (Francine Hirsch), as the population of the former Tsarist Empire was not only forced to adopt to the revolutionary new ways of the first socialist country in the world. Most people, especially those living outside the core of Russia, were forced to perceive of themselves as members of a modern nation. The European concept of nationhood was transferred by force to contexts where it had not existed before. The city of Baku’s oil industry is an example of how this “nationalising” of identities lead to problematic results. The Bolsheviks’ nation building drive was based on a pre-revolutionary tradition of perceiving ethnic differences as markers of civilizational development. This eurocentric approach resulted in loading ethnic and cultural differences with additional potential for conflict.

■ *Julia Landau: “Šachterka” – Der Arbeitsalltag von Frauen und Mädchen in der sowjetischen Industrieprovinz Kusnezker Becken in den 1930er Jahren*

During the First Five-Year-Plan, women were recruited in large numbers for building up heavy industry. The Kuzbas mining region was no exception. Here, with a predominantly young and male population, many of whom were deported and forced to work in the mines, the recruitment of women was perceived as a disciplinarian policy. The recruitment policy was quite successful: During the First Five-Year-Plan, the percentage of women working in the Siberian mining industry climbed from 5,9% 1928 to 23,4% 1932. Especially the group

of younger workers, the 18–23 years-old so-called ‘podrostki’, was approaching sexual equality, with 25 % young women in this age group and even 37 % girls among the youngest workers (under 18 years of age). The efforts of making miners out of girls and women, undertaken mostly by union organisations, were accompanied by the image of the strong and self-confident ‘šachterka’ (female miner), working underground on machines. In opposition to official propaganda, women in the male dominated mining business had the lowest status, lowest earnings, and worst working conditions.

■ *Tanja Pentter: Der „neue sozialistische Donbass“ und der Aufstieg des Bergmanns zur kulturellen Leitfigur*

One of the most striking and discussed contradictions of Stalinist rule seems to be the fact that it was based not only on violence and terror, but also represented a specific system of values, which had a certain integrating impact, succeeded to mobilize the masses by means of propaganda, and engendered hopes for a better future. The miners of the Donbass during the 1930s on the one hand suffered from extremely hard working and living conditions, but on the other hand because of their significance for socialist construction held an especially high status in Stalinist society. The article shows how the coal mining region of the Donbass during the Five-Year-Plans increased its cultural importance as a “window of socialism” while the miners were stylized (f. e. in new cinema productions) as personification of the “new man” and cultural role-model for the whole Soviet Union.

■ *Wladislaw Hedeler: Das Bergwerk Dubovskaja Šachta – Produktionsstätte und Strafsolator des Karlag*

The article examines the forced labour of prisoners of the Karlag labour camp in Karaganda/Kazachstan over the time period from 1929 to 1960. On the basis of new archival material from the archive of the Karlag camp new light is shed on the forced labour of prisoners in the coal mines, which belonged to the camp. Most evident is the growing economic significance of forced labour: while at the beginning the punishment and reeducation of the prisoners who worked under extremely hard conditions in the coal mines stood in the foreground later on, in connection with an increasing demand for coal the economic aspects of forced labour became more and more important. The growing interest of the state in the coal production of the prisoners also led to a general improvement of their working and living conditions and health care.

■ *Olaf Mertelsmann: Die Arbeiter des estnischen Ölschieferbeckens – eine Industrieregion des Stalinismus*

The article deals with the Estonian oil shale region Ida-Virumaa and how it turned into a Stalinist industrial area. Oil shale mining started already in 1916, mining and processing of oil shale expanded largely during the period of Estonian independence due to state protection and subsidies. After the Soviet occupation and annexation of the country in 1940, plans to extend mining and processing developed, but were not fulfilled because of the outbreak of war. Under German occupation the oil shale industry was at first neglected, but beginning

with 1943 work intensified with the help of slave labor of Soviet POW's and Jewish concentration camp inmates. Soviet reconstruction projected a steep increase of mining and processing. Ida-Virumaa became one major target of industrial investment in the post-war decade, a large "building site of Socialism". The aims were the provision of energy and the support of Soviet armaments, because uranium could be found in the area and oil and special fuels were desperately needed by the Soviet forces. Like under Nazi occupation, slave labor of POW's and camp inmates played an important role until 1949. Because war damages had been the largest in the entire Estonian SSR and living and working conditions were the worst in the republic, there existed an extreme shortage of workers. Campaigns to mobilize Estonians to work there utterly failed. The only way to solve the problem was to hire migrants from other regions of the Soviet Union, where conditions were even worse. The migration led to the Russification of the region, but this development was not intended by the regime. Only in the second half of the 1950s life turned normal and the conditions became bearable.

■ *Lewis H. Siegelbaum: The Donbas Miners' Movement in the Very Late Soviet Era: An Historical Perspective*

Beginning with some recollections about my own involvement with the miners' movement in Ukraine's Donbas basin, this essay critically reconsiders the analyses of the movement that I and others made in the late 1980s and for a number of years after the Soviet Union's collapse. It argues that the movement was a "transitional" phenomenon, asserting itself at a time when labor and its representation were no longer under Communist control but when the rule of capital had yet to assert itself. The strategic alliance that the movement made with enterprise directors grew out of the paternalistic nature of the Soviet enterprise and, after the collapse of the Soviet system, the intensification of dependency relations within it. The remainder of the essay engages with two analyses of the nature of the transition – Burawoy and Krotov's notion of the rise of merchant capital, and Kideckel's concept of "neo-capitalism" – in the light of post-independence Ukrainian politics and the progressive weakening of the miners' movement. It concludes that the shrinkage of tactical space for the insertion of mineworkers' objectives into national politics made it extremely unlikely that the movement could sustain its efforts on behalf of a „normal life“ for the dwindling number of miners and their families.

■ *Kerstin Zimmer: Die Bergarbeitergewerkschaften im Donbass zwischen ukrainischer Unabhängigkeit, Regionalismus und sowjetischem Erbe*

After more than ten years of political and economic transformation in Ukraine, trade unions are among the marginalized and peripheral actors. This also applies to the miners' unions in the Donbass, the formerly relevant coal mining area of the Soviet Union and the showcase of socialism. This diagnosis might come as a surprise because one might assume that trade unions play an important role in the transformation of an old industrial region. This contribution strives to prove the contrary and provides explanations for this contra intuitive phenomenon. It is led by the thesis that the powerlessness of the trade unions is an expression

of the Soviet legacy of a “weak” society and owes to the predominance and structural and symbolic control strategies of powerful regional actors. The continuing cooptation by the political and economic establishment prevents social interests from taking effect.