

Maoist discourse in workers' political positions or the political significance of the current regime's stated adherence to some kind of Marxist language.

But this is a relatively minor criticism of what is a cogent, well-argued, clearly written volume, a much-needed scholarly and political intervention.

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ABLOVATSKI, ELIZA. *Revolution and Political Violence in Central Europe. The Deluge of 1919. [Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare.]* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2021. xii, 302 pp. Ill. £75.00. (Paper: £29.99; E-book: \$44.99.)

As World War I came to an end, Europe seemed to be gripped by revolutionary unrest, leading contemporaries to fear that the Russian Revolution of 1917 would spread to become a "world revolution" (p. 2). Council republics were proclaimed in Budapest and Munich. The Hungarian Soviet Republic, proclaimed on 21 March 1919, lasted four months. The Bavarian Council Republic was short-lived, lasting from 7 April to 1 May 1919. In this chaotic moment, where traditional social norms no longer seemed to hold sway, revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries each strove to impose their ideal of the new social order to come. Eliza Ablovatski shows how anti-Semitism and gender shaped counter-revolutionary violence and, more generally, contemporaries' interpretation of revolution.

Ablovatski begins by setting the scene, tracing the history of the two protagonist cities, Munich and Budapest, since the mid-nineteenth century. Both cities experienced rapid industrialization and cultural modernization. Whereas at the turn of the century they had been provincial cities, by World War I they had become cosmopolitan urban centres. The two cities were faced with the issue of assimilating growing Jewish communities, increasingly visible working-class political movements, and a cosmopolitanism that nationalist elites firmly rejected.

Chapter Two describes the political situation in Germany and Hungary during the revolution, showing its peaceful nature in contrast to the counter-revolution, which was responsible for the worst acts of political violence of the period (p. 45). Ablovatski pays little attention to World War I: the strike movements of the last years of the war are only briefly mentioned. Giving it more weight, however, might have helped to understand better what drove men and women to join the revolution, as well as the gender chaos against which counterrevolutionaries were fighting, as she brilliantly shows in Chapter Five.

The following three chapters form the core of the book, detailing the various forms of counter-revolutionary violence. Eliza Ablovatski is less interested in the two revolutions than in their repression by the Right. Chapter Three focuses on the

revolutionary scripts that contemporaries used to make sense of their lives. Four years of censorship and propaganda had left people in Munich and Budapest ready to believe the wildest rumours. These developed both from pre-existing scripts about other revolutions, such as the French Revolution of 1789 or the Russian Revolution of 1917, and from racial and gendered stereotypes, which they also reinforced (p. 82). Rumours of Leftist barbarity thus spread rapidly in 1919, creating an atmosphere of fear and helping legitimize the extreme violence of the counterrevolutionary “Terror” in both cities.

Building on the third chapter, Chapters Four and Five look at the legal proceedings against revolutionary men and women. They explain how these trials helped to fix the narrative on the revolution and the place Jews had held in it. In Munich, where the courts were more lenient, the Right saw the revolution as the work of foreigners and Jews who corrupted the population to their ideas. In Budapest, however, it was the city itself that was seen as Jewish. As a result, sentences were longer and more numerous, given that the enemy was from within. This equation of Jew with revolutionary is at the heart of the Judeo-Bolshevik myth, which was to have a significant impact on the Weimar Republic.

The post-revolutionary period focuses on re-establishing the traditional hierarchical order between the sexes. The fifth chapter demonstrates the “close link between antisemitism and anti-feminism” in the way people remembered this revolution that had challenged social norms (p. 169). Ablovatski highlights the way revolutionary women were either hypersexualized or deemed unwomanly. The interweaving of anti-Semitic and gendered stereotypes means that Jewish women were portrayed as revolutionaries regardless of their political convictions, while women involved in the revolution were described as Jewish, even if they were not. This chapter shows the complex situation of women in the post-revolutionary period, and the specific nature of the violence they experienced at the crossroads of gender and racial stereotypes. Women were at the centre of “an ideology of gender struggle [informing] much conservative and right-wing writing” (p. 181). It would have been interesting here to explore the role of women during the revolution in greater depth, in order to better understand the place they acquired during the revolution, which also explains why they were at the heart of the discourse on a post-revolutionary crisis of gender norms.

The sixth and final chapter looks at the memory of the revolution that has emerged on both the Right and the Left. Two “constellations of memory” (p. 209) clashed during the interwar period. The Right centred its discourse on the defence of the nation, justifying all political measures and violence against the Left. The brand-new field of psychiatry was used to “hysterize” revolutionaries, who were portrayed as mentally ill (p. 213). The prominence of this Right discourse during the interwar period had real consequences for those with a revolutionary past, who risked exile and had to fight for many years to obtain compensation when they had been victims of counter-revolutionary troops. The Left used the memory of the revolution as a banner for its cause to recruit new members. While the long-awaited revolution may not have been victorious, it was essential for the Left to keep its memory alive. Martyrs to the cause were quickly identified and celebrated, such as Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, and Eugen Leviné.

Drawing on an extensive corpus of sources, including trial records, press articles, memoirs, and more, this book shows how the revolutions in Germany and Hungary were part of a world revolution at the end of World War I. Ablovatski brilliantly shows how anti-Semitic and gender stereotypes intertwine in the discourse of the contemporaries, trying to make sense of what they lived and legitimize the violence they committed. One of the most compelling aspects of her book is the comparative approach she consistently takes between the cities of Munich and Budapest, and the fresh look she takes at revolutions rarely studied in their European context. In doing so, Ablovatski offers one of the great recent studies of the revolutionary period in Europe.

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FLEISCHMAN, THOMAS. *Communist Pigs. An Animal History of East Germany's Rise and Fall*. University of Washington Press, Seattle (WA) 2020. xviii, 268 pp. Ill. \$40.00.

Thomas Fleischman's *Communist Pigs. An Animal History of East Germany's Rise and Fall* makes a powerful case that the achievements and failures of East German agriculture had little to do with communist economic principles. Rather, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) built an agricultural system thoroughly entangled with global finance and fundamentally shaped by capitalist values. According to Fleischman, it was no accident that farms in East Germany came to resemble so closely those in Iowa. This argument challenges narratives about German history that hold up West Germany (and its "green capitalism") as an environmental role model while offering East Germany's environmental collapse as evidence that communism became an existential threat to nature and humans. Fleischman contends instead that East Germany's environmental woes had roots in the capitalist West.

The book is remarkably well-written and accessible to a variety of audiences. Fleischman adeptly uses *Animal Farm* as a framing device and writes in such a way as to ensure that his audience is not limited to East Germanists or even just Germanists. Readers interested in environmental studies or global Cold War history will find much of value here. Fleischman achieves this, in part, by not letting the archives dictate the structure of his narrative. The archives of the former East Germany can often overwhelm historians with piles of bureaucratic reports. Rather than organizing chapters around bureaucratic structures and organizations, as often happens in monographs on East Germany, he instead lets pigs and pig tenders take center stage and contextualizes regime policy within wider agricultural and Cold War history. Most stirring (and probably surprising for many readers) is the book's warning that East German history has profound implications for our capitalist future.