

buildings. Here, the chapter goes beyond 1968, explaining changing social relations under the influence of the housing policies. The increasing number of construction projects enabled people to regain intimacy, and therefore, bourgeois values, in the 1970s (83–87).

The last chapter, presenting the celebrations of May 1, focuses on a central element of Soviet political anthropology. The author presents an analysis of generational changes through the shape of the processions and the festive nature of the event, which, depending on the ideological evolution of the regime, created new sacred places. The author considers this ritual in two periods, first the foundation of the regime (1948–55), and then the time to attempt a new contract (1969–75), which the author considers unsuccessful. Krakovsky argues that this was the ritual that created the link between society and ideology.

This book is disturbing. The concepts are not always elaborated upon or are poorly explained, such as the *Rational-Charismatic Time Frame* (62) or the *Proletarian Public Opinion* (Chapter 3). The book represents, at the same time, a break with explanations based solely on repression and fear. Finally, it is an important and interesting work from an archival perspective. This is an author who has the advantage of thinking for himself and the confidence to leave the beaten path, opening up new paths for the history of communism in central Europe.

NICOLAS MASLOWSKI
Charles University in Prague

Die Geglückte Revolution: Das Politische und der Umbruch in Polen 1976–1997.

By Agnieszka Zagańczyk-Neufeld. Paderborn, Germany: Verlag Fredinand Schöningh, 2014. 454 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. €44.90, hard bound.

In 2015, the German historian Anna Veronika Wendland published a scathing article (“Hilfflos im Dunkeln “Experten” in der Ukraine-Krise: eine Polemik,” *Eurozine*, January 28, 2015) in which she linked the absence of scholarly knowledge about Ukraine in Germany to the dearth of nuanced analyses of the unfolding crisis. In her opinion, German “Ost-experten” were not well-versed in specifically Ukrainian realities, which, all too often, resulted in an uncritical acceptance of the Kremlin’s narrative. Fortunately, given increasing political tensions between the two countries, German scholarship on Poland is more voluminous and indeed embedded in a shared, even institutionalized, “Kommunikationsraum,” as Agnieszka Zagańczyk-Neufeld’s acknowledgements to both German and Polish scholars, and her own intellectual trajectory linking Poland and Germany, demonstrate. Her work itself is a comprehensive, exhaustively detailed and thoroughly documented study of Poland’s political history from 1976–1997 that will doubtlessly contribute to the German scholarly canon on Poland. With her use of Carl Schmitt’s view of the political as revised by Chantal Mouffe, Zagańczyk-Neufeld has also chosen a heuristic approach familiar to her German audience (the “Friend-Enemy” distinction) with which to illuminate the specificities of Poland’s successful revolution. Namely, she explores how “us versus them” divisions can remain deeply embedded in Polish political discourse to this day without, however, having impeded progress in the country’s democratic transformation.

Briefly summarized, her interpretation of Polish political discourse depicts an evolution from a Schmittian understanding of the political as characterized by mutually exclusive antagonisms to a Mouffian framing of political conflict as agonistic. While Mouffe retains Schmitt’s “we/they” adversarial relationship as central to

political life, she divests the ensuing conflicts of any existential implications and maintains that they can in fact be routinized in a democratic institutional framework. Political life in a democracy is still adversarial and conflictual, not just technical and procedural, but, in a pluralist setting, destructive antagonism is re-shaped into constructive agonism. In the case of Poland, political enemies (the Polish Communist Party and the Solidarity opposition) came to see each other not as adversaries to be eliminated as existential threats, but as legitimate opponents with whom negotiation and compromise were possible. This re-framing of the “we/they” relationship from antagonism to agonism enabled Polish elites to move rapidly from political stalemate and socioeconomic stagnation to a transformatory political, social and economic reform agenda via a negotiated settlement.

Three insights are central to Zagańczyk -Neufeld’s analysis of this remarkable evolution. First, changes in political discourse precede actual politics; hence, one can discern the attitudinal changes in regime and opposition texts that eventually facilitated the Round Table negotiations already taking shape in the martial law years even as the regime pursued repressive policies. Second, the turn toward agonistic relations (the transformation of implacable foes into legitimate opponents that share a political vocabulary and a sense of responsibility for the political community) can take place in non-democratic settings without the disciplining constraints of liberal democratic institutions, if certain facilitating conditions are present. In post-totalitarian Poland, there were clear structural constraints (economic, geostrategic, political) that limited options on both sides. Even as the opposition had to recognize the political centrality of the Communist Party and the geostrategic realities of the Soviet bloc, the regime had to recognize the political inevitability of the opposition given the country’s dire economic conditions and indebtedness to the west. While conducive to co-existence, the presence of these constraints did not automatically result in negotiations, however. Enemies still had to be re-imagined, if not as friends then as viable interlocutors, to enable and legitimate compromise. Here, Zagańczyk -Neufeld points to the role of Polish intellectual traditions, specifically positivism, as central in this process of re-imagining “the other” and in facilitating the development of a shared political vocabulary that privileged restraint, responsibility, pragmatism and realism.

Third, the transformation of one “we/they” relationship (between reform communists and the left-liberal opposition) into a shared commitment to realism (and later liberalism), while providing the ideational underpinnings of a successful reform process culminating in the 1997 Constitution, also reinforced another “we/they” distinction (between a liberal-cosmopolitan elite comprising both post-communists and the former left-liberal opposition and a conservative Catholic-nationalist counter-elite) that remains salient in Polish politics. While hegemonic for a time, the re-imagined relationship between Solidarity elites and communist regime reformers was not all-encompassing nor universally accepted, and so agonistic conflict, often deeply personalized as opponents are demonized, remains central to Polish political life. Zagańczyk -Neufeld thus sheds light on the complexities of contemporary Poland while also analyzing the discursive distance travelled in the political realm from 1976 to 1997 in clear and compelling prose. For these reasons, although the length of the work makes it somewhat difficult to read and digest, it is highly recommended.

ARISTA MARIA CIRTAUTAS
University of Washington