***The 1905 Revolution and the Origins of Modern Polish Politics*.** By Wiktor Marzec. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 2020. xv, 291 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photos. $50.00, hard bound.
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In this thought-provoking book, Wiktor Marzec addresses the rise of mass politics in Russian Poland during the 1905 revolution, claiming that they emerged from the political assertiveness of workers. He traces how workers came to perceive themselves as political subjects, how they utilized socialist discourses to claim a role in the general Polish public sphere, and how briefly they convinced the intelligentsia and the middle classes to accept their political voice as legitimate. Their separate "socialist public sphere," dominated by workers, Marzec asserts, had the potential to transform Polish society. The growing influence exercised by the working classes over the public sphere, however, sparked fear among the Polish intelligentsia and the middle classes. Consequently, a coalition developed between the liberal intelligentsia, the middle classes, and the extreme right that undermined the emerging workers' socialist public sphere.

The author explains the emergence of the socialist public sphere as a reaction to the 1904–05 economic crisis and the 1905 revolution. When the state blocked the Polish intelligentsia from participating in popular politics, a leadership vacuum developed in the public sphere that workers, assisted by socialist discourses, attempted to fill. The intelligentsia, believing workers claimed what they saw as their legitimate role, reacted with fear and rejection.

Marzec notes that workers, by necessity, changed the nature of the public sphere when they entered it. Since workers' primary means of acquiring education was through socialist study circles, socialist discourse was the one with which workers were familiar. Moreover, unlike other contemporary discourses, socialist discourse assigned workers the dominant role in political debates. Lacking access to the physical spaces in which political debates commonly occurred, workers located the socialist public sphere where they were present—the factory and the street. The disagreements between various socialist parties in these spaces forced workers to take a stand and thus to perceive themselves as political subjects. Socialist ideas, worker-dominated spaces, and the multiethnic working class as political subject briefly achieved legitimacy in the eyes of the Polish public.

This legitimacy, however, encountered much resentment. Marzec utilizes the local press in Łódź, a major Polish industrial center, to analyze this resentment. He argues that, while the liberal and educated journalists largely sympathized with the plight of the workers, they rejected workers' political assertiveness. In their view, workers lacked the education and political savvy necessary to participate in political debates. The fact that workers utilized physical violence in their struggles against employers, the police, and their political antagonists convinced many journalists that workers were politically incompetent and dangerous. Although some liberal journalists criticized employers for mistreating workers, they never embraced workers' political rights. In fact, many journalists accepted the employers' view that workers were intellectually ill-equipped for self-assertion and were led by foreign anti-Polish forces, which they frequently identified as Jewish.

While the liberal intelligentsia was incapable of imposing its views on the socialist public sphere, the Polish extreme right was able to do so. The National Democrats, a conservative and xenophobic political party, modernized in reaction to the emergence of the socialist public sphere. The author notes that while its educated members never addressed workers as equals, the party adopted socialist mechanisms for mobilizing workers. Marzec utilizes the leaflets and memoirs of National Democrats to show how

they convinced workers to abandon the socialist public sphere in favor of one that rallied Poles against a foreign, especially Jewish, threat. In Russian Poland, where Poles strove for national independence and the intelligentsia felt threated by workers' assertiveness, the National Democrats' ethnicity-based discourse quickly gained popularity, undermining the multiethnic socialist public sphere.

Although the book's main argument is convincing, I have two small concerns. First, in comparing the socialist and National Democratic mass movements, the author is not always clear why workers opted for one over the other. While it is true, as the author notes, that ordinary workers seldom wrote memoirs, making it difficult to assess the prevalence of the trend of workers moving from the far left to the far right, Marzec could have provided a clearer analysis of available cases. My second concern is that the author may have overstated the socialist public sphere's level of masculinization, which he blames on the importance of "heroic violence" during street fights and strikes. Based on the provided data, we simply do not know how women felt about participating in such violence.

Still, this book offers an innovating and convincing analysis of the dominant role workers played in the emergence of mass politics in Poland.

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Spartakiads: The Politics of Physical Culture in Communist Czechoslovakia. By Petr Roubal. Vaclav Havel Series. Prague: Karolinum Press/Institute of Contemporary History, 2019. 425 pp. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Plates. Photos. Figures. $23.00, paper.
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In this extensively researched book, Petr Roubal does much more than provide a history of Spartakiads in communist Czechoslovakia; he lays the foundation for a deep analysis of his subject by helping the reader to understand the historical context. As such, we learn as much about early mass gymnastics in Germany, the Sokol Slets, and Strahov Stadium as we do about Spartakiads.

The author sets out to address the origins of the Spartakiads, the messages they conveyed, their logistics, and public reception. He succeeds in doing this. Roubal also tracks very well the continuities over time. Indeed, the Spartakiads present an interesting case study in measuring the changes in Czechoslovak society. This includes shifts in gender dynamics and the feminization of the Spartakiads after 1955.

Much of the opening section is devoted to examining the origins of the Spartakiad, going back to Turner exercises and the Sokol movement. The rich detail on gymnastics in the first section sets the scene for Roubal to compare the content, style, and politics of the 1955 Spartakiad with the kind of mass gymnastics that preceded it. In the second section on symbolism, we learn about the various exercises on the grounds of Strahov Stadium and their visualization of themes on labor, war, and international solidarity in the 1955 and 1960 Spartakiads. One of the most fascinating aspects of the Czechoslovak Spartakiads was their scale, which Roubal reminds us of. The sheer number of participants (some 40,000), as well as the choreographic and logistical complexity of the exercise routines comes to the fore in the section "A New Shift Begins"—a chapter enhanced with some wonderful photographs. This chapter discusses a new shift literally, in the sense of the exercise routine, but also more symbolically, in terms of the broader social, cultural, and political changes taking place. As Roubal notes, "the Sokol gender model" did not reflect the "social