

energy and urgency with which some workers engaged in the political arena at this critical juncture. To be sure, Pirani's narrative of worker-party dynamics is not for the politically faint of heart: indeed, he deliberately charts a complex path of actions and reactions, and spins a tangled web of competing interests and actors, whose views and agenda are shaped by a shifting confluence of ideological, political, and material considerations. Nonetheless, the complexity of his analysis reflects the intense challenges of the political moment, and should inspire others to seek the same level of engagement at different times and places.

In addition, Pirani's prodigious research offers new material and perspectives on many issues central to the workers' movement, including gender conflicts, workerist tendencies, party purging, "spets-baiting", and the challenges inherent to "workerizing" the party apparatus. Although unfortunately the archival citations are not always clearly presented (with several compressed into a single footnote), the book also offers a useful bibliography and index, as well as rich appendices, including almost thirty socio-political biographies of lesser known (and often non-party) worker activists, communists, and factory managers. For all these reasons, it seems likely that Pirani's book will go far in reinvigorating discussion of the "traditional" topic of working-class politics during the first decade of Soviet rule.

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KEMP-WELCH, A. *Poland under Communism. A Cold War History*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2008. xii, 444 pp. £50.00; \$99.00. (Paper: £19.99; \$39.99.); doi:10.1017/S0020859009000091

The long narrative of Poland's history contains, in most tellings, an implicit argument about cultural survival and national values. In that argument, the communist era (1944–1989) is but a detour from Poland's true path. Recent histories of Poland, such as those by Norman Davies, Jerzy Lukowski, and Herbert Zawadzki, tend to be tone-deaf when it comes to this period. Historians need to take the communist era on its own terms, as an integral part of the Polish experience. Anthony Kemp-Welch's *Poland under Communism: A Cold War History* partially fills this need. It is a compelling, well-written narrative of contestation between regime and society in the PRL (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa, the Polish People's Republic), and is only the second monograph in English devoted entirely to postwar Poland and the first written in English. (Andrzej Paczkowski's *The Spring Will Be Ours: Poland and the Poles from Occupation to Freedom* (University Park, PA, 2003) was first published in Polish in 1996.)

Poland under Communism has two particular strengths. First, Kemp-Welch integrates Poland into an international context. In this telling, Poland does not disappear into Cold-War storage after a brief appearance on stage at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences of 1945. At every juncture, Kemp-Welch grounds Polish events and trends in transnational or international history. Each is not merely a backdrop, but a shadow (or, occasionally, the puppet-master) to the events in Poland. Kemp-Welch shows how the Polish case diverged from and yet paralleled changes in the communist world, and how decisions or perceptions in the Kremlin or the White House shaped Polish events. Particularly interesting are the discussion of the Titoist deviation in Yugoslavia and its echo in Władysław Gomułka's downfall in 1948; of student unrest in 1968 in the context of protests in Prague, Berlin, and Paris; and of the policy debates in Washington and Moscow regarding the emergence of Solidarity and the imposition of martial law. It cannot be said that there is anything new here, but the non-specialist will find it easier to place Polish experiences into a European narrative.

Second, Kemp-Welch provides the first concise history of Solidarity in English. Nearly three decades after the emergence of what became not only the most significant peaceful challenge to communist authority, but also the largest oppositional social movement in world history, Solidarity still lacks a full history. In Poland, the topic is perhaps too ensnared by contemporary politics, while attentions in the West have since been turned elsewhere; still, the lacuna is surprising. *Poland under Communism* comes close to filling this gap: roughly a quarter of the book covers the period from 1979 to 1982. Solidarity was the subject of Kemp-Welch's first book, and remains close to his heart. With documentation from the Warsaw Politbiuro, the Carter White House, and Leonid Brezhnev's minions, Kemp-Welch is able to explore the trade union's improbable birth in the Gdańsk shipyard in the summer of 1980; its unlikely survival through nearly a year and a half, while the Soviets and their Polish colleagues debated what to do; and its demise at the hands of Polish forces in December 1981. Kemp-Welch is no romantic; while his love for those exhilarating months that he himself witnessed shines through, he shows clearly that the Solidarity experiment could not survive at that stage of the Cold War. While we wait for a history of Solidarity, this will be a fine substitute.

Poland under Communism is thus a valuable book, both for those who already know much of the story as for those encountering Polish history afresh. But it is not a comprehensive history of the period by any means. Three vast silences weaken the book's narrative.

First, though Kemp-Welch is entirely justified in beginning his narrative in 1945, World War II hung heavily over the entire communist era, even when it was barely acknowledged. Recent work by Jonathan Huener, Michael Steinlauf, Jan Gross, and others leave no doubt that the war was ever-present in Polish politics. Contestation between regime and opposition, or relations between Poland and its neighbors, as well as domestic politics, are difficult to understand without reference to ideas about the war. For example, both Gomułka and his long-serving prime minister Józef Cyrankiewicz, had experienced the Nazi occupation (Cyrankiewicz in Auschwitz and Mauthausen); their every encounter with opposition was suffused with conclusions drawn from their experiences. Or to take a more prosaic example: for the first two decades of communist rule, Poles could see the ruins of war on a regular basis; did this not have any impact on the way they thought about their place in history? Finally, it is difficult to think of many significant books or films from at least the period before 1980 that do not relate in some way to the war experience. Kemp-Welch's neglect of the topic is thus unfortunate.

The second silence concerns the expulsion of the Germans. The forced removal of several million residents of the lands annexed to Poland by the Potsdam agreement surely transformed Poland as much as did the imposition of communism (with which it is closely intertwined). To this one can add the resettlement of Ukrainians following a civil war, and the difficult relations with those Jews who survived the Holocaust. Poland's postwar homogeneity was not an act of nature. The scars of ethnic cleansing, though not talked about, were nonetheless central features of communist Poland – and of post-communist Poland, too. More generally, one would want some exploration of Polish nationalism. Kemp-Welch does not cite Marcin Zaremba's important monograph on the topic: *Komunizm, legitymacja, nacjonalizm. Nacjonalistyczna legitymacja władzy komunistycznej w Polsce* (Warsaw, 2001). The entire communist period could be characterized as a struggle over conflicting ideas of nation, in which the positions adopted by each side also shifted. In the early PRL, the communists advocated a relatively weak internationalism against what they saw as a backward, exclusivist nationalism (for which they often used the shorthand term "fascist"). Later, the communists moved toward a more strident nationalism, even as some in the opposition began to articulate a civic nationalism. Kemp-Welch highlights some moments in this drama; he is particularly good on the anti-semitic campaign of 1968, and on Solidarity's appeal to the peoples of eastern Europe in 1981. But the narrative lacks coherence on this point.

The final silence is the most surprising. Kemp-Welch promises a social history, and one of the best features of the book is his frequent use of demands articulated by workers, peasants, or students at political meetings or in letters to the authorities. Yet Polish society remains entirely one-dimensional, and the reader will not gain perspective on what it meant to live in the PRL. From the very beginning, we see only resistance to the communist state. Every voice that is not from the communist leadership expresses opposition, or at least poses questions to power. That Polish society staged more acts of resistance to communist rule than did the citizens of any other such state is undeniable, and is one of the key distinguishing features of the PRL. At the same time, though, the Polish United Workers' Party maintained its rule not only through bloodshed. Historians of communism, who once saw every action of the state as repressive and found resistance in every corner, are now more attentive to popular accommodation to, or even support for, these regimes.

Three factors in this ambiguous relationship are worth exploring. First, as noted above, nationalism played an ambiguous role in the PRL, legitimating power as well as undermining it. Second, probably one-quarter to one-third of the population consisted of party members, police officers, other representatives of the regime, and their families. Many of these people surely wrestled with their feelings about the regime, even as they represented the regime to their co-workers and neighbors. Their voices are largely missing here. And finally, it is odd to see a book on communist Poland that does not examine the largely successful efforts to buy peace through consumer goods and comforts. There is no discussion of the "little stabilization", as the Gomułka era became known. Nor would readers be able to understand, having read this book, why Edward Gierek, deposed in 1980 as Solidarity emerged, today enjoys a posthumous cult. The communist regime itself appears only in repressive and/or deceptive modes. This is a weak conception of state-society dynamics under communism which can no longer pass muster.

Even in his study of Solidarity, and especially in his examination of communism's fall, Kemp-Welch privileges the role of elites, whether they be party leaders or prominent oppositionists. This makes *Poland under Communism* a most welcome survey of opposition and regime in the country where the contest between the two was the most intense and colorful. A social history of the Polish People's Republic, however, remains to be written.

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LENDVAI, PAUL. *One Day That Shook the Communist World. The 1956 Hungarian Uprising and Its Legacy*. Princeton University Press, Princeton [etc.] 2008. 297 pp. Ill. £16.95; doi:10.1017/S0020859009000108

The fiftieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in October 2006 unfolded against the background of a political crisis in the country, sparked by revelations that the socialist Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány, had lied to the public in order to win parliamentary elections during the spring. Many of the radical-right protestors who took to the streets in response appropriated the memory of the 1956 Revolution to advance their cause, using it as a rhetorical stick to beat Gyurcsány, the effective leader of the party that is the legal successor to the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party that ruled the country for just over thirty-three years following the defeat of the Revolution.

As the political polarization in evidence on the streets revealed the troubled and contested legacy of 1956, the Hungarian state celebrated an official view of the Revolution as sowing the seeds of Hungary's successful transition from state socialism to liberal democracy in 1989 and 1990. The contrast of the celebratory tone of official commemoration with the bitter atmosphere generated by the political crisis created a surreal