



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.

The book begins by introducing readers to the East German regime's embrace of factory farming in the 1960s at a new facility in Eberswalde. Drawing from animal studies, Fleischman establishes here the malleability of a pig's physical structure, revealing how different farming systems literally produce very different pigs. The specialized factory farm depended upon new hybrid pigs that tolerated disease in confined production facilities and better digested grain fodder produced at mechanized grain farms. These industrial hogs gained weight faster and produced larger litters in a shorter reproduction cycle. The greatest revelation of this first chapter is about the origins of this new meat production model. The East Germans essentially purchased a turnkey facility complete with hybrid pigs from the Yugoslavians, which in turn, had depended upon Western capital and models to develop the technology in the first place. Eberswalde differed little from other cutting-edge facilities across the Cold War world.

In Chapter Two, Fleischman reveals East Germany's rapid integration into a global trading system shaped by Western capitalism. Meat production in East Germany and the Soviet Union depended upon massive imports of grain and oil seed from the United States and Canada, as hybrid pigs had protein and calorie requirements that could not be met through domestic production. In their internationalizing of fodder supplies, the Eastern Bloc was not unique. Across the globe, pig tenders moved away from breeds adapted to local ecologies and food markets. The modern industrial hog was disconnected from local food systems due to the unprecedented amounts of grain needed to provision fast-growing pigs. Even more critical for Fleischman's analysis is the financial networks East Germany entered. Planners intended an increase in meat production to be sold abroad to earn hard currency for the regime. Essentially, East Germany borrowed money from Western banks to buy grain to raise pigs that could be transformed into pork for export to Western Europe. Pork exports paid for loans from the West to subsidize imports of consumer goods, housing construction, and social programs to ensure political stability and avoid popular uprisings.

The remainder of the book outlines the fallout of this integration into global markets. Chapter Three tells the story of the 1976 Grueneberg Plan, which took the Eberswalde model and applied it to all collective farms throughout the GDR. The widespread separation of plant and animal farming meant greater reliance on grain imports. When cheap grain became scarce on global markets, the consequences rippled through the East German food system, resulting in disease outbreaks at pig facilities and, ultimately, shortages in grocery stores. While mechanized collective farms reliant on chemical inputs struggled to meet domestic demand, those difficulties stemmed as much or more from global structures as they did from the inherent strengths or weaknesses of socialist agriculture. Chapter Four explores another unpleasant consequence of industrial hog raising. Literal mountains of manure began appearing across the countryside, ultimately resulting in shockingly widespread nitrate poisoning of drinking water. Manure pollution and East Germany's growing debt crisis, Fleischman argues, had the same cause: loans from the West to buy cheap grain to raise more meat for export. The byproduct of that system was manure, and facilities and farms in East Germany could not keep up, leading to unregulated dumping and water pollution. Chapter Five explains how

community gardens and small-scale producers stepped in to solve domestic food shortages resulting from the above-described system. Garden colonies and small-scale family production had been vilified as “bourgeois” by the regime but, as meat production reoriented toward export, the state came to tolerate “garden pigs” as a necessary evil for feeding its own population. All of this was reinforced by Honecker’s desire to improve living standards by providing more leisure time in green spaces such as garden colonies. A fascinating Chapter Six then explains how the transformation of the East German landscape into a mix of green leisure spaces, industrial animal facilities, and collective farms specializing in grain monocultures created a perfect edge habitat and migration network for wild boars, many of which descended from escapees from factory farms. By the 1980s, East Germany had endured a plague of wild boar. Fleischman makes innovative use of Landsat satellite imagery to help develop his argument here. Finally, Chapter Seven explores in more detail the state’s dependence on exports in the 1980s. Fears of popular uprisings came into conflict with the harsh economic realities. Some planners demanded adjustments to reduce grain dependence, better supply domestic food needs, and reduce foreign debt, but worries about insolvency led the government to take out more loans to prop up meat exports and to subsidize domestic social programs.

In his Afterword, Fleischman reminds readers that the environmental movement of the 1980s in East Germany was as much a protest of the global capitalist food system as it was a rejection of socialist agriculture. Activists complained that the East had become the garbage dump of the West as the production of pork exports left lakes of manure behind in the East. Those same activists in 1990 imagined fixing this unsustainable global system on *both* sides of the collapsing Iron Curtain. Instead, the new Berlin Republic doubled down on the model the West had exported to Eberswalde several decades earlier. Unified Germany continued its trajectory as a net exporter of meat, only increasing its dependence on chemical fertilizer, monocultures, and immense fields, producing even today mountains of manure.

While the book benefits from its global perspective, there are some trade offs that come with its narrative choices. Most notably, there is little room for microhistories of state and society in East Germany that can help us better understand the intricacies of everyday resistance, accommodation, and conformity in the agricultural sector. For example, the fascinating chapter on garden pigs points to how East Germans pushed the regime to expand the definition of socialist rights to include the right to recreate in green spaces. The structure of the book, however, provides little room to explore such interactions between state and society in any depth. My guess is that Fleischman may have (and, in the end, probably rightly) sacrificed such detail to focus his book’s argument on how the GDR’s pork production entangled it within global capitalist networks.

Overall, Fleischman’s monograph makes a highly original and much-needed contribution not only to the field of environmental history, but also to the history of East Germany, communism and the Cold War. When read alongside recent studies of “capitalist pigs” in the United States and “fascist pigs” in Europe, we now have a fuller picture of how political economy physically

transformed hogs, landscapes, and (ultimately) people across much of the twentieth-century world.

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Providing for the Poor: The Old Poor Law, 1750–1834. Ed. by Peter Collinge and Louise Falcini. [New Historical Perspectives.] University of London Press, London 2022. xxii, 239 pp. Ill. £75.00; \$100.00. (Paper: £24.99; \$34.99; Open Access.)

In 1597, the Elizabethan Parliament passed an Act that laid the foundations of what became known, subsequently, as the Old Poor Law in England and Wales. The Act entitled the overseers and churchwardens of each parish to levy a local tax, or rate, for the purposes of “setting the poor on work”, maintaining those who were unable to work, and boarding out pauper children as apprentices. The Act established the basic framework for the provision of poor relief until the passage of the Poor Law Amendment Act and the inauguration of the “New Poor Law” in 1834.

Over the last four decades, historians have become increasingly interested in the lives that lay behind the operation of the Old Poor Law. As Alannah Tomkins notes, much of this work has focused on the records generated by investigations into the question of whether or not particular individuals had a “settlement” in the parish where they were seeking relief, and on the letters they wrote in pursuit of their claims (p. 219). This innovative and richly detailed volume builds on these foundations by using a new source – the vouchers or “small bills” that were used to record everyday poor law transactions – to shed new light on the role that the Poor Law played in supporting both claimants and the communities in which they lived.

As Collinge and Falcini explain, the Poor Law was not simply a mechanism for relieving destitute claimants, it was also an integral part of the local economy. The small bills record the payments that were made to claimants for the purchase of specific items, together with payments made to local tradespeople, for the provisioning of workhouses, and to Poor Law officials, either in the form of salaries or for expenses. As a result, they provide rich and detailed information about the experiences of all those who came into contact with the Poor Law, whether as suppliers, claimants, or employees. They also provide a kind of test case for the potentialities of “public history”, since most of the information that has been obtained from the small bills was transcribed by a small army of volunteers.

The book itself begins with a short preface, in which the editors explain the background to the project on which the book is based. This is followed by a more substantial introduction, which summarises the history of the Old Poor Law, and six individual chapters, each focusing on a different aspect of the Poor Law “system”. Each of these chapters is followed by a short “interlude” in which one of