

The role of the Soviet-influenced Polish government in all this is one of the most interesting parts of the story. Kornbluth argues that the Polish government was dissatisfied with the leniency of the verdicts in these cases, but that its response was shaped by its goal of maintaining power. The new state's "weakness, lack of popularity, and dependence on prewar technocrats" (104) greatly limited its room to act. Rather than risk further alienating the ethnically Polish population (the overwhelming majority), it conspired in the cover-up of Polish responsibility for the murder of Jews. The heroic narrative about Polish resistance during World War II became a part "of the compact between the communist state and citizens" (227). Poles could be martyrs and heroes, but not perpetrators of genocide.

Kornbluth's book deserves a wide readership. Its information and insights about the Holocaust in Poland will be of interest to historians, students, and general readers. Its details about the August Trials and the Polish judiciary make it an invaluable resource for scholars of European and international law. Its discussion of memory laws and the politics of history could not be more timely—and gives us much to think about in the current political environment.

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Reassessing Communism: Concepts, Culture, and Society in Poland, 1944–1989.

Ed. Katarzyna Chmielewska, Agnieszka Mrozik, and Grzegorz Wołowicz. Central European University Press: Budapest, 2021. vii, 418 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$105.00, hard bound.
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This book stems from a seven-year project at the Centre for Cultural and Literary Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences on "Communism—History of the Concept in Poland in the Years 1944–1989." Thirteen participants, a majority of them women, challenge the post-communist political claim that everything in the previous period was evil. They seek a perspective for communist studies of central and eastern Europe wider than the "neoliberal" consensus—particularly prominent in Poland—that the whole project was doomed to fail. Instead, they reconstruct and critically dissect the period through cultural studies, discourse analysis, and memory studies. Political power is analyzed from a "Foucauldian approach" according to which inherited tradition is "gradually transformed under the influence of new currents or sentiments" (7).

Though lasting less than two generations, Polish "communism"—a word not used by the political authorities—had dramatically different stages. The editor Katarzyna Chmielewska focusses on the Stalinist years. Though often equated simply with totalitarian violence, as an era of terror, lawlessness, and repression, or more recently as a transgression of the official national-Catholic paradigm, Stalinism is shown to have varied functions. Beyond the defeat of fascism and recovery of western territories, post-war communism was presented as the heir to European humanism and culture and dressed in the patriotic language of liberation and national independence. The author emphasizes progressive (or "disruptive") policies in which traditional "high-low" and "rural-urban" hierarchies were replaced by a new official consensus, based on reconciliation, community, and "equalization" of status.

A key element of the "proletarian turn" from late 1948 was women's liberation. As Agnieszka Mrozik shows, this involved the professional training of women and their promotion into professional positions. It also gave women a greater place in public

life, participating in educational campaigns, the popularization of culture and social media. To enable this there had to be social facilities—nurseries, kindergartens, cafeterias, and laundries—releasing women from household duties in order to engage in public activities. Promotion of women from previously unprivileged classes encountered strong resistance from traditionally privileged groups “such as landowners, the bourgeoisie and the Catholic Church” (172). In order to become practical reality, rather than just a political catchphrase, emancipation of women required significant changes in public life.

Post-Stalinism, predicated by Nikita Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” (March 1956), was particularly dramatic in Poland, leading to the notion of “revisionism” as a key tenet in Władysław Gomułka’s twelve-year leadership. This proposed a reinvigorated intellectual environment, restoring the “left” to the complexities that Stalinism had eliminated, and a workers’ impulse towards self-management and participation in direct democracy. The chapter by Bartłomiej Starnowski discusses Jacek Kuroń and Karol Modzelewski’s “Open Letter to the Party” (1966) as the leading manifesto of opposition to communist monopoly and advocacy of a social-democratic vision of economic recovery and a socially-supported state. The author acknowledges that this was a “definitely left-wing” (236) form of political resistance but concludes—with Modzelewski himself—that it soon became dated. He identifies this with a post-communist “ritual of penance” in which such a historical narrative was not deemed to be helpful any more.

The book’s final part is focused on the waning of Polish communism during its final decades. Anna Zawadzka traces the wilting of its idea to deprive the intelligentsia of elite status and to promote instead workers and the peasantry. Rather than achieving this “revolutionary project of shifting social relations” (314), she sees a slow return of the ethos of the old intelligentsia during and after the post-Stalinist “thaw.” This demonstrated a failure of the transformation of social structure which had been eagerly undertaken at the outset of the communist era. Its reinstatement was symbolic of old-rooted class distinctions, in which an elite of those with the “authority of the highbred” was restored.

Much of interest is proposed in this extensive volume, which draws attention to notions of continuing intellectual and perhaps practical importance. Given the mode of research—only one author of the thirteen uses archives—their findings cannot be deemed conclusive. A positive function of academic research is to raise further questions.

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Ukrainian-English Collocation Dictionary. By Yuri I. Shevchuk. New York: Hippocrene Books, 2021. xxxvi, 970 pp. \$59.95, paper.
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The publication of this *Ukrainian-English Collocation Dictionary* (further to be referenced as UECD) comprises a monumental event in Ukrainian lexicology. It is described as six dictionaries in one: translation, collocation, learner’s, thesaurus, phraseological, and encyclopedic. It hits the mark on each of those categories with copiously detailed entries, which exhibit the compiler’s in-depth knowledge of both Ukrainian and English. Yuri Shevchuk navigates back and forth seamlessly between the two languages and presents consistently suitable versions of Ukrainian words and phrases in English.