

an invaluable addition to the literature of German radicalism by detailing the life of one of the key leaders of the Revolutionary Shop Stewards. Müller and his comrades provide an interesting contrast to more well known supporters of Social Democracy and Communism within the German workers' movement. As the author suggests, Müller may have been the Sisyphus of the Revolution (221), but his was also a very real human story. This work fills an important gap by bringing to life an indigenous German radicalism that briefly, many might say all too briefly, played a vital role in revolutionary politics.

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Lewis H. Siegelbaum, ed., *The Socialist Car: Automobility in the Eastern Bloc* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

The subject of automobility has developed quickly in American history, but its growth elsewhere has been slower. Given the lack of cars of any quality in the Soviet sphere, it should also not surprise us that it has taken so long for studies of automobility—the broad study of all aspects of social, political, and economic life that surrounds driving culture and the systems of which it is a part—to reach Eastern Europe. *The Socialist Car* is the broadest introduction to automobility in Eastern Europe, edited by the scholar who raised the issue in Soviet history.

This volume developed from a 2008 Berlin conference. Its eleven chapters are divided into three thematic sections: production, distribution, and consumption; urban planning; and a catch-all chapter on car cultures.

Three chapters deal with the ways in which automobiles intersect with political power in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. Valentina Fava explores how the quest for a car for the people in Czechoslovakia failed to return to Bohemian technological success. The promises of socialist efficiency continued to pale in the face of nearby western engineering and marketing and left Škoda without a widespread world market. Mariusz Jastrząb investigates vehicle distribution in Poland and finds that cars as favours in the socialist period developed from interwar behaviours. Jastrząb describes this authority of favours as personal rather than administrative. The reasons why the state distributed cars changed over time from, for example, clientele building to loyalty prizes for union activism as the regime grew increasingly unpopular in the 1980s. György Péteri explains how Hungary chose to ignore Nikita Khrushchev's car sharing. As the state apparatus used cars as a form of status and mobility, it catalyzed the movement for private ownership in the general population, often to the detriment of communal transport. The "convergence of socialism with capitalism" started in

the 1960s as the state failed to “emancipate modern social and economic development from capitalist patterns” (68). These three chapters show socialist states struggling to negotiate a way between their new socialist values that supplied public transport with the desire for personal cars.

The second section of the volume is the strongest because the chapters are much more unified in their vision and engage in the wider scholarship on urban development outside the Soviet sphere as car culture increased. The new mobility brought by increased car ownership created a need to rethink streets, sidewalks, residential areas, and public transportation. Elke Beyer takes a comparative approach in investigating the development of city centres in the 1960s in the Soviet Union and GDR. The socialist system allowed for progressive and rational planning of cities, but as Beyer correctly notes, many of the plans from the 1960s failed to take root in the 1970s as architects and planners ran into the limitations of funding, political support, and construction methods and materials. Brigitte Le Normand’s research on Belgrade in the thirty years after World War II shows the struggle between planners who sought to maximize public transport options and the public’s desire to own their own cars and take advantage of the market mechanisms that Yugoslavia, unlike the other countries under investigation in this volume, promoted. Esther Meier reflects on the construction of the Soviet city Naberezhnye Chelny. She concludes that there was no automobility in this new linear city because there were few private cars and no developed city centre to which to drive because of the development of self-contained neighbourhoods. The wide, straight streets and underground pedestrian crossings made travel by car much faster in the city, but planners promoted public transit in the absence of access to cars, which Meier notes were reserved as a way of rewarding and disciplining workers. In the chapters by Meier and Le Normand we have the most direct discussion of what makes for a *socialist* city and car. Most readers would probably have preferred that the book’s introduction address these issues more directly. Along with Eli Rubin’s chapter on the Trabant in the GDR, this section shows many good intentions not realized by lack of will or materials.

The final section is the least cohesive with chapters on auto repair, Soviet truck drivers, Soviet women’s relationships to cars, and a chapter comparing car culture in the USSR, GDR, and Romania. The vast boundaries of automobility as a term lead to a collection that lacks internal dialogue. Specialists on automobility will find much of interest, but other readers likely will find only individual chapters or sections of use. In general, *The Socialist Car* suffers from a lack of unified focus as much because of the expansive nature of the term automobility as from the lack of internal dialogue among contributors.

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