

Overall, this is a fascinating but uneven book. The parts dealing with the two districts before and immediately after the wall are less weighty but more evocative. Hochmuth's local study problematizes and complexifies the simple binary of East and West, dictatorship vs. democracy. He diligently explores public and private spheres, but his sources for these make the discussion quite episodic, uneven and variable. In part, he was hampered by different collecting policies of the local museums and different rules on access to official sources in East and West. Using interviews and photographs as well as written documents, his microhistory can zero in on individual housing blocks, pubs, churches, and pastors but sometimes gets lost in the detail. He chose not to explore employment, welfare provision, migration, or media provision, each of which could have been an interesting object of comparison. Although mentioned, Turkish residents of Kreuzberg get relatively little attention. With "backhoes" and "streetcars," David Burnett translates some of Hochmuth's poignant and symbolically important details into a – further removed, and for my taste less vivid – American idiom (285). Nevertheless, the unique historical experiment created by separating these municipal twins is fascinating.

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“Polen geben wir nicht Preis”. Der Kampf der DDR-Führung gegen die Solidarność 1980/81

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Annika Frieberg

San Diego State University

When *Solidarność* (Solidarity) emerged on August 31, 1980 as the first non-communist trade union in Eastern Europe, it immediately made headlines worldwide. When martial law was introduced in December 1981, the same thing occurred. Polish scholarship has centered on *Solidarność* as an aspect of Polish history of protest and revolution, while scholars of communism have considered it within the context of the weakening and eventual fall of communist regimes. In recent years, however, there is also a growing scholarship considering its history within an international, even global, context. Scholars such as Idesbald Goddeeris have looked at the international connections of the Solidarity movement. Now Filip Gańczak contributes to this body of work with his close study and analysis of the decision-making process in the leadership circles in the German Democratic Republic during the critical time of the existence of *Solidarność* between 1980 and 1981. His analysis contributes to an understanding of the impact this perceived threat to the communist order in Eastern Europe had on its neighbors, thereby linking it to the larger discussion about the role *Solidarność* played in international politics and as a catalyst to crisis in the Eastern Block.

As Gańczak points out, the emergence of and the crisis surrounding *Solidarność* presented a very serious issue for the leadership of the GDR on multiple levels. Drawing on rational actor theories in political science and history by, among others, Ziemowit Jacek Pietraś, Graham Allison, and Philip Zelikow, Gańczak engages with concerns about decision-making processes, considering both the decisive inflow of information as well as the determining personalities involved in the decision making during this brief but tense time period.

While earlier literature has addressed the response of the GDR to the emergence of *Solidarność*, Gańczak's book merges Polish and German sources and secondary literature to a greater extent. His analysis also benefits from access to a larger source base in the 2010s. Internal GDR documentation from the state and party level constitutes the bulk of his primary sources. He draws particularly on the documents from the meetings of the Central Committee in the SAPMO (Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR), held in Bundesarchiv Berlin. He also draws from Erich Honecker's personal documents. He describes Honecker as ultimately the decisive personality in determining the GDR's response to the Polish developments.

The book consists of six chapters. The first chapter, "Entscheidungszentrum und ausführender Apparat" discusses the decision-making instances at play in the GDR in 1980, beginning with the general secretary and leader of the GDR, Erich Honecker. The chapter proceeds to discuss the role of advisors and inner circles as well as sources of information, including Polish communist conversation partners, on the decision making. Chapter two, "Die Entscheidungssituation" discusses the issues at play in the East German response to *Solidarność*. Determining factors included Poland's geographic situation as a bridge or barrier between the Soviet Union and the GDR; the existing policy of *détente* with the German Federal Republic, which was threatened by the Polish situation; the worries about a domino effect reaching into East Germany; and finally the resulting economic consequences for the GDR, in terms of the request to assist Poland financially but also of disrupted logistics flows. The following four chapters discuss the emergence within the East German leadership of a series of decisions and interventions in response to the growth of and disruption caused by *Solidarność*. The measures included what Gańczak calls a "Cordon Sanitaire" (90), limiting travels between GDR and Poland, controlling Polish workers in the GDR, and imposing stricter controls on students traveling between the two countries. In addition, however, the GDR also supported Poland with food and credit lines during the ongoing economic crisis. The GDR leadership eventually arrived at the opinion that an external military intervention was needed to end the Polish "counter-revolution" (169). When that recommendation gained limited traction with their partners in the Warsaw Pact, they instead insisted to their Polish conversation partners on the necessity of a domestic military intervention. When the intervention came, they greeted it with relief.

Gańczak's study, translated into German by Saskia Herklotz, is quite dense and partially written in list form. Consequently, it is not the easiest or most accessible read. One might also have wished for the analysis to be slightly more integrated into a larger overview of the 1970s and 1980s in Poland and the German Democratic Republic. The study does have a background section, but the analysis falls a bit short of drawing conclusions concerning the legacies of the 1970s on the decision making, nor does it engage fully with the effects on the GDR-Poland relationship into the 1980s. I believe that the author could have used some of his findings to enhance the larger narratives and our understanding of both those eras without overextending the evidence or succumbing to overgeneralizations. Nevertheless, the analysis and conclusion greatly contribute to our deeper understanding of the *Solidarność* era as well as to our understanding of decision making, cross-border influences, and the permeability of leadership structures in the communist German Democratic Republic in the 1980s. The book is a valuable tool to anyone who wishes to understand the international reverberations of *Solidarność* or the anatomy of foreign-policy decision making during a crisis in the late German Democratic Republic.

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