

and impulses of the Comintern into the present day. Bo Zheng's presentation of contemporary Chinese theater leaves the reader with a pressing, actionable question in the face of global capitalism: "Can socially engaged art bring about significant social change without being situated in a sustained, intense, and widespread cultural-social movement?" (524).

This impressive volume leaves us with any number of roadmaps to understand the history and implications of that question in the twentieth century, while at once also presenting a model global community of scholars that actively shapes the face of humanities in the twenty-first. This volume will certainly appeal to as diverse a group of scholars and readers as is represented on its pages: historians of Russia and the Soviet Union, world literature, art and media. The paratextual elements of the volume only further add to the collection's value, including Dominick Lawton's chronology of the Third International's institutional history (1914–47), which clearly demarcates and aligns moments of political and cultural significance. The volume is also well illustrated to reinforce the material and visual manifestations of the Comintern across early Soviet archival documents, architectural designs, agitational Spanish posters, and contemporary art installations.

The lasting picture is not of the Comintern as monolith (as Katerina Clark notes in her chapter), nor does it, as Lee argues from the outset, have a true center. At least in scholarly practices, the spiraled, tilted foundation of Tatlin's Monument has realized a powerful step that signals progress, but reminds us that it too is founded on unrealized progressive failures. That, however, is not a place of despair even in marking an end, but rather, of that "sustained effort to think, feel, organize, and create on an international scale against historical catastrophe" (534).

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Pussy Riot: Speaking Punk to Power. By Eliot Borenstein. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. xii, 135 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$61.00, hard bound; \$17.95, paper; \$16.15, eBook.
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In this short book, Eliot Borenstein tackles the history and significance of Pussy Riot, the punk group whose rebellious acts and videos from the 2010s were meant to shock Russians out of their political complacency and went on to make headlines around the world. In the preface, Borenstein states the premises that unapologetically run through the ensuing chapters: "that art is political, that dissent is patriotic, that church and state should be separate, and that authoritarian rule is worth opposing" (x).

The book begins with a solid introduction describing Pussy Riot's most well-known act (the "Punk Prayer" performed in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior), the trial of three of the group's members (Mariia Alyokhina, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, and Yekaterina Samutsevich, usually referred to as Masha, Nadya and Katya respectively), and the ways in which this challenge to Vladimir Putin's authority was received in Russia. Two chapters offering a

wealth of background information follow. The first shows how Pussy Riot's acts continued traditions established by post-modernist artistic movements such as Actionism, which in the 1980s playfully used art to express political dissatisfaction but, as Borenstein notes, Pussy Riot obviously rejected the male-dominated hierarchies of these earlier groups. The next chapter outlines Pussy Riot's activities prior to 2012, so that readers gain a sense of how the group evolved as well as of the ideas that underscored their protests.

The three chapters that follow analyze the religious elements of "Punk Prayer" episode, with Borenstein arguing that the venue for the performance, which was meant to highlight the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in maintaining the Putin political system, proved to be provocative and divisive. By first tracing the history of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Borenstein shows how the site itself has an unstable meaning—something which makes it the perfect place for an act of conceptual art. Then he analyzes the contents of the song the women played. Performed in a pseudo-liturgical fashion, it called on the Virgin Mary to become a feminist and cast Vladimir Putin out. "The Punk Prayer is both a set of political demands in the form of a prayer," Borenstein writes, "and a plea for exorcism in the realm of politics" (31). Finally, in Chapter 5, the book addresses the way in which blasphemy became the central issue in Masha, Nadya, and Katya's trial, as the state argued that it was illegal to offend the religious sensibilities of believers. Apologies by the women were deemed insufficiently penitent so they did not garner any sympathy in the media. Borenstein rounds out this chapter by connecting Pussy Riot with the concept of Holy Foolery.

Subsequent chapters of the book address such topics as the women's last statements to the court that convicted them; the tensions that exist between Pussy Riot and other Putin protestors, notably FEMEN and Pyotr Pavlensky; the problematic notion that Pussy Riot somehow represents all of Russia's feminist movement; and the ways in which the unmasked members of Pussy Riot were recast as celebrities. In the book's final chapter, Borenstein outlines what happened once the women were released from prison. Katya, who lives under the threat of a suspended sentence that could be reinstated at any moment, has removed herself from public view. Masha and Nadya, on the other hand, set up *Zona Prava*, an organization devoted to prisoners' rights, followed in September 2014 by *MediaZona*, an internet news outlet devoted to civil and human rights. Both women published books and the pair have released a number of video clips, using Pussy Riot's moniker. Interestingly, this has led to some harsh criticism and pushback from the members of the group who have remained anonymous all these years. Still, as Borenstein argues: "Without their balaclavas to disguise them, Nadya and Masha had no choice but to find another way to pursue their activist agendas," even if that meant alienating people they had been allied with in the past or running the risk of being labelled as sellouts (107).

Pussy Riot: Speaking Punk to Power offers a broad and thorough analysis despite being packed into only a small number of pages. Borenstein's engaging writing also makes this book perfect for classroom use.

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