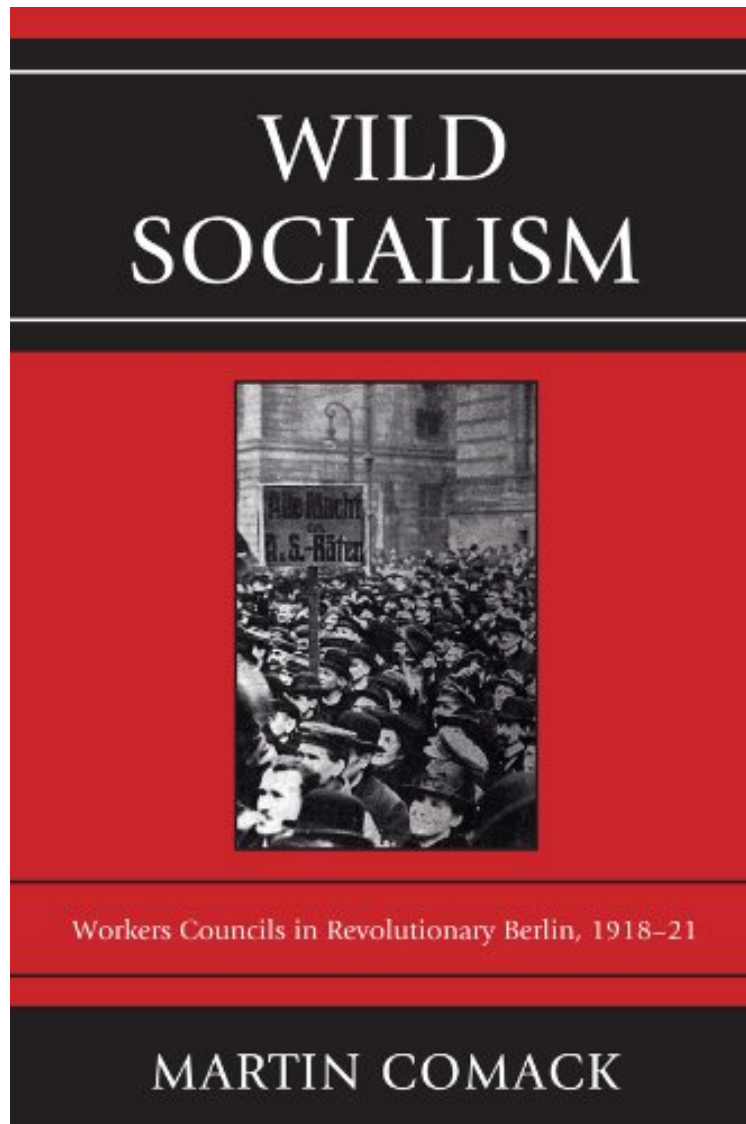


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Wild Socialism: Workers Councils in Revolutionary Berlin, 1918-21

Martin Comack

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Martin Comack : Wild Socialism: Workers Councils in Revolutionary Berlin, 1918-21 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wild Socialism: Workers Councils in Revolutionary Berlin, 1918-21:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. When workers took control, sort of By Drake Donegal Somewhat dry and containing a few typographical errors, this short pamphlet nonetheless gives detailed coverage of the workers councils that arose in Germany around the time of the first world war. Such information can be gleaned from other sources but this book gives a concise overview that is easy to read and digest in one sitting. Recommended for those who look to the past in order to find a way forward.

Wild Socialism examines the rise, development, and decline of revolutionary councils of industrial workers in Berlin at the end of the First World War. This popular movement spread throughout Germany, and was without precedent in either the theory or practice of the Social Democratic party and the trade unions allied to it. These workers councils were most highly developed in Berlin, within its particular industrial, political, and cultural milieu. The Berlin Shop Stewards group provided a hard core of militant revolutionaries within the movement, many of whose adherents were more moderate or ambiguous in their views. Externally, the councilists faced a hostile Social Democratic-trade union bureaucracy who characterized council rule as "wilde Sozialismus"; a reconstituted and repressive state power, and a revolutionary rival in the rise of German Bolshevism. This work considers the experience of the Berlin councils as alternative institutions outside of traditional union, party, and governmental structures.

[This book is] a valuable contribution to the understanding of Germany social history that carries important implications for the situation of labor until today. (Journal of Social History) How relevant is Wild Socialism for today? One only needs to think of the Arab Spring, anti-austerity debt riots in Greece, spontaneous mass strikes of workers in China, or mass labor protests in Wisconsin — to appreciate Comack's history of a revolutionary moment in troubling times. (Elaine Bernard, executive director, Labor and Worklife Program, Harvard Law School)...Scrupulously researched with prose as clear as a bell, he takes us through the twists and turns of German social democracy and trade unions before, during, and after World War I with great clarity in this very readable volume. Wild Socialism is must-read for not only historians of the period, but for those interested in the working class and labor activism. (Thomas Juravich, Labor Center / Sociology) A welcome addition to the literature on post-World War I Germany. He skillfully delineates the bureaucratic degeneration of the German Social Democratic Party and trade unions during the previous thirty years which led them to become complicity with the Imperial regime and its war. Comack writes with remarkable clarity and is able to describe the complex situations in an accessible manner. Comack is to be commended. (Steve Kellerman, delegate, Boston Branch, Industrial Workers of the World) About the Author Martin Comack has been employed as a soldier, merchant seaman, civil servant, and university lecturer. He received a doctorate in political science from Northeastern University, holds graduate degrees from Harvard and the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and attended the Academy of Labor and Social Relations (Moscow) as well as the Fundacion para la Educacion de Trabajadores (Mexico).