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Orlov, I. B., and A. D. Popov. *Olimpiiskii perepolokh: Zabytaia sovetskaia modernizatsiia*. Moscow: Izdatel'skii dom Vysshei shkoly ekonomiki, 2020. 480 pp. R396.00 (e-book). ISBN 978-5-7598-2165-6.

This book succeeds on many fronts. It is a deeply researched, theoretically sophisticated, highly professional, and various history of one of the pivotal moments in the history of sport—the 1980 Moscow Olympics boycotted by sixty-one nations after the USSR invaded Afghanistan. This cultural mega-event became a central part of the Second Cold War. Yet Igor' Orlov and Aleksi Popov have gone beyond these international concerns to produce a profound meditation on the nature of late Soviet society. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union had based its legitimacy, for better or worse, on its success in modernizing a backward peasant country, but by the 1970s and 1980s modernity meant a great deal more than swift industrialization and urbanization. Many more giant steel plants did not make the USSR "normal and civilized," and Cold War competition with capitalism involved more than geopolitics and economics. Culture, elite and popular, was the contested terrain on which the superpowers also struggled, and the modern activity of sport was a way for the dueling globalization projects of capitalism and communism to assert their superiority as a path forward for humanity.

It was unlikely that Olympism, an elitist, misogynist, colonialist ideology with roots in the high capitalism of Victorian Britain, would find common cause with Soviet communism. The Bolsheviks initially wanted no part of the Olympics, and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) wanted no part of the Bolsheviks. Yet these two movements had found much in common by 1974 when the IOC, in the spirit of détente, awarded the Games to Moscow. As it turned out, Olympism and communism were both internationalist, and both believed in social improvement.

Producing such a mega-event was an opportunity for the USSR to show off its own modernity, win allies among nation states, and generate prestige with international public opinion. Orlov and Popov have produced a heroically granular history of a highly complicated event with a considerable number of moving parts, all of which are covered by deploying a broad range of methodologies and categories. In the process, they demonstrate the capacity of post-Soviet historians to operate on a level that meets the best standards of the profession. To recreate the Games they have ventured into a wide range of Moscow archives along with repositories outside the capital.

Published sources, Eastern, Western, and Olympic, are exhaustively mined. Interviews with ordinary citizens are combined with analysis of visual materials. The authors' knowledge of the existing Western historiography on Soviet sport is virtually complete, and they also show an awareness of the most influential current theoretical thinking about cultural diplomacy. Viewing the Moscow Games as a state exercise of soft power, they understand the Olympics, following Nye and Bourdieu, as a way to go beyond the vertical relations of states to include horizontal connections among non-governmental actors. A foreign policy

minefield faced the Soviets even before the boycott was declared. There were difficult questions of admitting athletes from nations with which the USSR had no diplomatic relations. The IOC's perverse apoliticism created both hurdles and opportunities for Moscow in the struggle to convince national Olympic Committees and their governments to participate, only eighty, the fewest since Melbourne, actually came.

Much attention is devoted to other aspects of the Olympic project. Construction of venues, hotels, restaurants, airports, and transport had to be funded and carried out. Much of this activity involved extensive work with capitalist businesses. Three hundred thousand tourists were expected, but the facilities for accommodating them were famously insufficient. Service was the great Soviet weakness, and much energy went into training salespeople, guides, waiters, and transport and hotel workers. As it turned out only thirty thousand foreigners showed up, and they were not treated to a "revolution" in Soviet tourism. Many construction projects turned out to be incomplete. There was much corruption in the availability of tickets; embezzlement was considerable At the same time, the competition on the field and in the arenas was sufficiently intense and entertaining to be a proper sporting spectacle. Yet this of history Moscow-1980 goes beyond the material and objective aspects of this enormous project. In the end, we are treated to a range of the emotional and subjective depictions of this most unusual Olympic Games. Going beyond medal counts, we are given jokes, stories, remembrances, poems, and pictures to learn the necessary human aspect of this most ambiguous project of "Soviet modernization." Finally, following Alexei Yurchak, Orlov and Popov leave us with a liminal understanding of late Soviet socialism that is much more than a struggle between the official and the dissident. It is perhaps fitting that they end their account with the funeral of the great bard Vladimir Vysotsky, who died during the Games, to be praised by Andropov and Sakharov alike.

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