

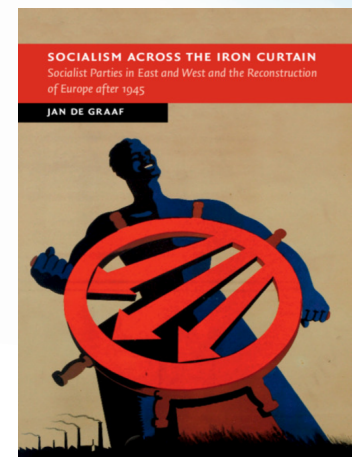
Socialism across the Iron Curtain

Socialist Parties in East and West and the Reconstruction of Europe after 1945

Jan De Graaf (*Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium*)

This innovative pan-European history of post-war socialism challenges the East-West paradigm that still dominates accounts of post-war Europe. Jan De Graaf offers a comparative study of the ways in which the French, Italian and Polish socialist parties and the Czechoslovakian Social Democratic Party dealt with the problems of socio-economic and political reconstruction. Drawing on archival documents in seven languages, De Graaf reveals the profound divide which existed in all four countries between socialist elites and their grassroots as workers reacted hostilely to calls for industrial discipline and for further sacrifices towards the reconstruction effort. He also provides a fresh interpretation of the political weaknesses of socialist parties in post-war continental Europe by stressing the importance of political history and social structure. By placing the attitudes of the continental socialist parties in their proper socio-historical context he highlights the many similarities across and divergences within the two putative blocs.

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