International Review of Social History 45 (2000), pp. 487–512

BOOK REVIEWS

Consumers against Capitalism? Consumer Cooperation in Europe, North America, and Japan, 1840–1990. Ed. by Ellen Furlough and Carl Strikwerda. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham [etc.] 1999. ix, 377 pp. $63.00; £50.00. (Paper: $23.95; £19.95.)

It seldom happens that a book lives up to its grandiose promises, but this one really "fills a significant gap in the literature of labor history". Traditional research by labour historians has concentrated on labour and political relations in analysing the acquisition of power by the working class. One of the most fruitful answers to the numerous postmortems on labour history is certainly the approach that concentrates on the third source of labour power: the collective use of purchasing power. In this respect the history of consumer cooperation – broadly defined as "the provision of consumer goods through private, collectively owned institutions" – is crucial, and to this day wrongly remains "a footnote in modern history". There are several reasons for this lack of interest, one of most prominent of which is the fact that historians often fail to analyse movements that lack spectacular momentum. It is no coincidence that, unlike cooperatives, boycotts – as a collective use of consumer power – *have* attracted researchers.

This volume consists of a general introduction – "Economics, Consumer Culture, and Gender: an introduction to the politics of consumer cooperation" – by the editors, and eleven chapters that explore the successes and failures of the consumer cooperative movement in ten different national contexts. Most of them offer a brilliant summary – several contributions are based on previously published dissertations or monographs – of the organizational and cultural aspects of the consumer cooperative movement. The economic significance and membership statistics aside, one can, for example, see the power and importance of the movement in the policies of fascist governments in Germany, Italy and Japan during the 1920s and 1930s. They took control of the movement in order to assuage their lower-middle-class supporters and because of a fear that the cooperatives would prove to be a locus of working-class mobilization. Most authors indirectly argue that the history of cooperation "can be read as a form of cultural revolution, a transformation that was faltering and uneven but very different in conception and practice to ideologies that emphasized *the* revolution".

This is closely related to the argument of the editors, who "believe that capitalist and cooperative commerce represent different models of consumer culture, models that for a time exercised different appeals". Surely the cooperative republic, or cooperative commonwealth, was praised in the rhetoric of all sorts of social reformers and intellectuals, who presented it as a vehicle for a profound reorganization of the economy and society. It remains to be seen, however, whether it ever really presented "a 'middle way' between capitalism and socialism". The editors claim that cooperative consumerism was economically and culturally "a viable and strong alternative" to its capitalist counterpart. In order to uphold their argument they need to counter the main classic economic critiques of cooperation: it fails to exploit economies of scale, it lacks capital, and it is overly dependent on socialist or other ideological working-class movements. Are these really mere "misperceptions"? Unfortunately, some of the examples presented to support their case actually prove the contrary. Certain regions of Belgium and the Nord-Pas-de-Calais

in France were indeed "two of the most successful areas for cooperatives in continental Europe", but the Belgian case hardly proves that coops could achieve economies of scale and obtain sufficient capital. Already in 1910, Belgian cooperators had abandoned the cooperative form and created a limited liability company, precisely because coops did not allow them to obtain the resources necessary to expand their production facilities. Their strategy evolved into one of fighting capitalism using its own tools. Moreover, their cooperative partners in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais were very enthusiastic about the switch, but they were not strong enough to follow the Belgian lead. On top of that, socialist cooperators like Anseele and Vandervelde would never agree that cooperation was an alternative to capitalism: they used cooperation as a means – the movement's "milk cow" or money-spinner – but stressed that it was dangerous as an end.

Another question is whether cooperative commerce was as different from capitalist enterprise as it claimed to be. On paper, cooperatives were democratically run, collectively owned and returned a share of their profit to customers and members, whereby the latter decided to invest the profits for social goals. But even where this actually happened, the main problem remained that most members were fairly indifferent. Numerous coops imposed a system of penalties for nonattendance at annual meetings, otherwise hardly anybody would have turned up. Furthermore, long before the First World War their commercial strategy was not collectively inspired, but mirrored that of their capitalist competitors. "Workers love thy profit" was a very popular slogan, hush money a recurrent problem, developing advertising strategies took up a lot of cooperators' time, harsh personnel management was by no means an exception. All that this proves is that a lot of research remains to be done. Instead of starting out from the "belief" that cooperation provides an alternative to capitalism, would it not be more fruitful to consider the hypothesis that cooperatives prosper mainly in economies of scarcity and austerity, where capitalist consumerism is emergent? One thing is certain, future researchers will have to take note of the arguments put forward by Furlough and Strikwerda, and not forget what William Blake warned us of long ago: "As the eye, such the object".

Hendrik Defoort

WARD, PAUL. Red Flag and Union Jack. Englishness, Patriotism and the British Left, 1881–1924. [Studies in History New Series.] The Royal Historical Society, Woodbridge; The Boydell Press, Woodbridge [etc.] 1998. viii, 232 pp. £35.00.

Socialism and nationalism have often been regarded as mirror opposites, and there is a need to demythologize the relationship between these two great nineteenth-century ideologies. Paul Ward takes a major step in this direction by demonstrating convincingly how the British left combined the languages of nation and class. Focusing on the decades which saw the emergence of British socialism and the establishment of the Labour Party as a major player in British party politics, he carefully analyses the many twists and turns that socialists performed in positioning themselves toward the nation state. Chapter 1 consists of an excellent overview of the emergence, development and decline of "radical patriotism" since the French wars of revolution in the 1790s. Ward demonstrates how radical political demands were often couched in the language of

nationalism up to and including the early Chartist period. Thereafter, he sees the language of class increasingly replacing and marginalizing the language of nation on the British left. The Liberals and, most effectively, the Conservatives filled the vacuum by making nation their property, merging it with monarchy and imperialism and achieving hegemony over the national discourse.

Chapter 2 then investigates how the re-emerging socialism of the 1880s positioned itself towards this hegemonic discourse of the nation, arguing that socialists from the beginning developed alternative "oppositional" forms of nationalism. These included the idealization of the Middle Ages as some kind of "golden age" which was free of capitalist exploitation, the almost wholly negative perception of subsequent industrialization and urbanization, and the portrayal of rural England as the real England. These ideas are discussed in particular with reference to the Arts and Crafts movement, the garden city movement and the writings of Hyndman, Morris, Blatchford and Hardie.

The development of a national perspective among British socialists went hand in hand with the need to construct socialism as "English". Those attempts, which are analysed in detail in Chapter 3, found expression in the denunciation of violence as un-English, their unfailing belief in the constitutional, parliamentary road to socialism, their embracing of socialist reformism as an English tradition, but could also deteriorate into labour racism, especially in the context of the immigration debates of the 1900s.

The British left's reaction to the Boer War forms the focus of Chapter 4. Both the pro- and antiwar sections of the left framed their arguments with reference to their commitment to nation. Whereas the former referred to notions of "progressive imperialism", and the duty of the British to fulfil their role as bringers of civilization, the latter were often motivated by an idealized perception of the rural and "healthy" lifestyle of the Boers, as well as by notions that the war was fought not in the national interest but in the interest of cosmopolitian (Jewish) financiers.

Chapter 5 presents a wealth of evidence for the widespread acceptance among British socialists of Britain's parliamentary traditions. The existing state and nation could be accepted, above all, because of its identification with this parliamentary tradition. Anti-parliamentarians like Victor Grayson were denounced by mainstream Labour leaders, who always eyed extra-parliamentary activities with a good deal of suspicion. Time and again the British left portrayed itself as champion of English freedoms. On that basis it could condemn Russian tsarism, the treatment of South African strikers in early 1914, and the use of repression and violence by the state at home. On that same basis, however, it could also forcefully condemn syndicalism as "un-English".

Chapter 6 portrays the minority of British socialists who were in the vanguard of anti-German propaganda before 1914. Once again it was the championing of English liberties and a firm opposition to militarism which formed the basis for anti-Germanism. The necessity of national defence against militarism and the upkeep of English liberties were almost universally accepted among the British left. Sadly, Ward ignores the excellent work of Friedrich Weckerlein, who has explored in great detail the attitudes of the British left towards Germany, and whose results would have contributed to the complexity of differing attitudes presented by Ward.[1]

The First World War, unsurprisingly, brought a flowering of the national discourse on the left. As during the Boer War, large sections of the pro- and antiwar left were

1. Friedrich Weckerlein, *Streitfall Deutschland. Die britische Linke und die "Demokratisierung" des deutschen Reiches, 1900–1918* (Göttingen, 1994).

careful to link their position to notions of national interest. The former could build on prewar notions of defending English liberties against Prussian militarism, while the latter could focus on the defence of English liberties at home in their struggle against conscription. Only a tiny minority of the antiwar left actively wanted to turn the war into a civil war against the ruling classes. Mainstream British Labour was incorporated into the state, approved of the collectivist wartime ethos, and identified even more with the British state.

This had important repercussions for the positioning of the British left towards the Russian revolution, which is the topic of Chapter 8. For the prowar left, the first Russian revolution removed the stigma of fighting on the same side as tsarist Russia. For the antiwar left, the revolutions brought hope for a strengthening of the international peace movement. Hence it was not attitudes to the Russian revolution which threatened to split Labour in wartime. The real threat came from "super-patriotic" Labour leaders such as Victor Fisher and Havelock Wilson, who refused to endorse antiwar Labour candidates and sought to create a separate national socialist trade union party. Having failed to win support from the TUC, these attempts were quickly revealed as wartime phenomena with little appeal to the working class after 1918. In fact, it was in the context of the radicalization of sections of the left after 1918 that attitudes to Bolshevism would again come to the fore. As Ward shows, fear of a revolution was widespread in Britain, and mainstream Labour leaders strongly opposed industrial or political militancy. Instead they hoped for a continuation of wartime statism which they perceived as the first step on the road towards a peaceful evolutionary transition to socialism. The methods and ideologies of Bolshevism were rejected as unsuitable for English circumstances. However, the labour movement still had some vague feelings of solidarity with the socialist Soviet Union which clearly surfaced in its opposition to Allied intervention in Russia, which was widely perceived as a capitalist plot to undermine a socialist state.

The final chapter of the book concentrates on efforts of the Labour Party after 1918 to build a national party which rejected the language of class in an attempt to woo non-working-class voters. MacDonald and others adhered to a homogeneous and homogenizing view of the nation, which led to a very widespread acceptance of dominant conservative forms of nationalism, including monarchism and imperialism. In a brief epilogue Ward provides a useful outlook on the post-1923 period. The 1931 betrayal seemed to show up the limits of Labour nationalism and resulted in a short-term radicalization of the left during the 1930s, when the language of class almost eclipsed the language of nation. It was only in the context of the Second World War that Labour found its way back to its long tradition of "oppositional Englishness", which made it possible to read the Second World War as a "people's war" and to link nationalism to the idea of social progress.

As Ward successfully demonstrates with this book, the origins of such "social patriotism" were much older, and they are explored in a lucid and comprehensive manner in this volume, which must be compulsory reading for anyone interested in the history of the British left. The following criticisms are offered in a constructive spirit and are not meant to deflect from the great merits of this volume, which far outweigh any shortcomings.

First, although the intentions of this book are to demonstrate that the ideologies of socialism and nationalism have been far more intertwined than has been acknowledged in histories of the British left to date, the actual discussions in the book are still informed by a clear sense of binary opposition between the two concepts. This is already

visible in the title where "red flag" and "Union Jack" are juxtaposed. It also is present in the endorsement of the rather teleogical view that nationalism moved from being a property of the left to becoming a property of the right in the nineteenth century. This well-established view is in need of some attention, as it seems to me to be far more likely that we can talk about a plurality of national ideas in British society, the power of which are determined by specific historical conjuctions and contingencies. Once again, in his discussion of the post-1918 revolutionary atmosphere, the author argues that the language of the nation which dominated the wartime discourse on the left was replaced by the language of class thereafter. He cannot explain how this miracle happened, because he focuses too much on textual representations, without anchoring them firmly in their specific social contexts. And a final example: when discussing the attempts of the Labour Party to appeal to the nation after 1918, there is a failure to discuss rhetoric and ideas in the context of the near total failure to succeed in that ambition. Labour remained very much a class party throughout the interwar period, and it could not extend its support either to rural constituencies or to middle-class ones. Although Ward emphasizes that the relationship between these two ideologies is not static (p. 9), he too often discusses them as competing ideologies, as though one would necessarily have to marginalize, replace or somehow lessen the importance of the other. In my view, this is not helpful, as it underestimates the degree to which these two ideas were always present at one and the same time. The exact degree of their importance, the nature of the mixture in which they coexisted, depended on specific historical situations and the concrete positioning of historical actors in them. Such radical historicization is prevented by the setting up of binary concepts such as socialism versus nationalism but also "Englishness" versus "oppositional Englishness" which tend to streamline the more complex historical contingencies into stark conceptual contrasts. There is a rather vague notion in the book that over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "radical patriotism" becomes replaced by a mixture of "normal patriotism" and "social patriotism", yet once again these concepts arguably set up stark oppositions which prevent the historicization of the languages of nation and class. For example, I would argue that it goes one step too far to argue that "the majority of the British left looked at the old country and liked what they saw" (p. 189). As Ward himself points out in different passages of the book, labour rarely simply bought into the conservative forms of nationalism; it often wanted to impose its own readings and visions on those existing forms. Undoubtedly it shared aspects of the hegemonic nationalism, but wanted to extend and build on them.

And here we come to my second criticism of Ward's book: notions of nationalism in the labour movement are often discussed in a vacuum. The focus on ideas and political thought produces a kind of intellectual history which, at times, is not adequately linked to the institutional and/or personal power struggles determining the precise context for the championing or dismissal of ideas. Ideas are not free-floating entities in a universe of their own. They have to be radically historicized and put into specific historical contexts.

Thirdly, there is a peculiar absence of the discussion of "patriotism" as a conceptual tool. The other major concept which is present in the title of this book, "Englishness", gets some attention. Ward explains that his book will not deal with those on the political left who championed notions of "Scottishness", "Welshness" or "Irishness". Yet the labour movement is understood, with reference to Tom Nairn, as one of the great nationalizing institutions in the British Isles, and for many of its leading figures

(including those who were Scottish or Welsh), notions of "Englishness" became synonymous with "Britishness" in the period under discussion here. This is a useful and sensible clarification, but one wonders why no similar clarification is given for the use of "patriotism". After all, there is a considerable literature on this. Usually "patriotism" is used a positive concept of "love for one's country" which is distinguished from "nationalism" as "putting one's country above others". This reviewer, for one, does not believe in those artificial distinctions, which tend to collapse when analysing specific historical situations. Hence, I would have preferred it if Ward had "called a spade a spade" and used the term "nationalism" rather than the euphemistic "patriotism".

Finally, it is sad that Ward does not make use of the increasing body of literature which looks at the issue of labour nationalism in comparative perspective. Such attention to comparative studies might well have relativized some of his arguments and assumptions. Marcel van der Linden's seminal and wide-ranging article on the issue, as well as my own work on the British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, could have served as a powerful antidote to notions of British peculiarity which are still present in Ward's study.[2] Gerd Rainer Horn's work on European socialism in the 1930s could have further contextualized the move away from the language of nation in the 1930s.[3] The same is true of Pieter van Duin's work on Labour racism.[4] And many more examples could be added here. Ward's failure to take the results of comparative research on this topic on board does point to a wider malaise of British labour studies which are still characterized by widespread parochialism and "splendid isolation".

Stefan Berger

Radkau, Joachim. Das Zeitalter der Nervosität. Deutschland zwischen Bismarck und Hitler. Carl Hanser Verlag, München [etc.] 1998. 551 pp. DM 68.00.

It is often claimed, says Joachim Radkau in his new book, that every society has the psychological problems it tolerates and encourages, so that predominant complaints point to the basic characteristics of a society. From the 1880s on, in Germany as well as in other Western countries, *Nervosität* (nervousness, neurasthenia) was a widespread complaint: increasing numbers of people, men and women from all strata of society, came to doctors' consulting rooms with sleeping problems, irrational fears, chronic restlessness, irritability, and lack of "energy". There was a building boom in sanatoriums for nervous people, supported by local governments and insurance companies, making the spread of nervousness very visible, but also demonstrating the general support for these institutions. This support was based on the feeling that anyone could fall victim

2. Marcel van der Linden, "The National Integration of the European Working Classes, 1871–1914", *International Review of Social History*, 33 (1988), pp. 285–311; Stefan Berger, *The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900–1931* (Oxford, 1994).

3. Gerd Rainer Horn, *European Socialists Respond to Fascism: Ideology, Activism and Contingency* (Oxford, 1997).

4. Pieter van Duin, "Proletarian Prejudices: the Impact of Ethnic and Racial Antagonism on Working-Class Organisation", in W.R. Garscha and C. Schindler (eds), *Arbeiterbewegung und nationale Identität* (Vienna, 1994).

to this disease. After all, even such admired leaders as Bismarck and Kaiser Wilhelm II were well known to be neurasthenes.

Several historians have interpreted this phenomenon as a successful attempt by doctors to create a market for themselves and to exercise power over their patients. Analyses of the medical "discourse" of mental disease have often resulted in theories of medical conspiracy. Most of these studies are based upon contemporary treatises on mental illness and have ignored the massive evidence available in the patient files in the archives of sanatoriums. Radkau has gone through hundreds of these records and cites abundantly from them. They document the patients' own views of their problems and demonstrate that these were often quite independent of prevailing medical opinion: often doctors hardly knew what to make of these stories and simply tried to record them. In any case, the sufferings of these patients were much more than a construction of an ambitious group of professionals. The abundant literature that started to appear on modern nervousness was an attempt to understand a real problem, originating in real tensions in Wilhelmine society.

What were these tensions? They certainly had to do with changes we associate with "modernization", which were particularly rapid in Germany around the turn of the century. International competition grew during these decades, and this was translated into working conditions. There was, for example, a decisive increase in the speed of industrial and other operations, connected with new technologies of production and communication. Train personnel and telephone operators, as well as typesetters, were familiar victims of modern nervousness. But technological development by itself does not suffice as an explanation: it was not the machines but the hurry of telephone users and of newspaper editors that caused the stress of these workers. And this had to do with the growth of the market for consumer products and services, a concomitant of increasing prosperity. Nervousness was connected with a sense of increasing possibilities, creating wishes that could not always be satisfied. It was part and parcel of the emergence of a hedonistic society. For example, neurasthenes were often frenetic travellers, travel being a great fad at the time, and the typical sanatorium patient was an energetic person, whose nervous breakdown and "lack of energy" was simply the dark side, or the consequence, of their desire to live life to the full. The kernel of *Nervosität* was therefore a general sense of failure, of being tossed about by diffuse wishes and of being unable to make choices, to take life in one's hands. For male patients, who comprised a little over half of the sanatorium population, sexual failure was the problem they talked about most often, fears of syphilis and the consequences of masturbation being the most prominent complaints. The background to these tensions was not "Victorian prudishness" and repression, but rather a new openness about sex and a mixture of fears and expectations created by popular medical literature.

Much of the show of power and success that were the public face of Wilhelmine society – the pride in the tremendous growth of its industrial firms, its technological inventiveness, its military prowess – can be interpreted, Radkau argues, as compensation for this widespread fear of nervousness and failure. The Swiss lawyer Carl Hilty wrote in 1899 that civilized humanity in the next century would be obsessed by "power", which it would seek at any cost, in politics as well as in the arts and in education (p. 245). In the second half of his book Radkau elaborates upon this thesis. He shows that political debates became increasingly dominated by a vocabulary of "power" and "energy". German foreign policy, especially, was characterized by a nervous lack of direction and coherence very similar to that diagnosed in individual patients, and it was

often discussed in these terms. Wilhelm II and Bismarck were respected for the way they had overcome their nervous weakness by exerting their willpower. When Rathenau started his writing career, he chose as a pseudonym "Hartenau". This projection of personal insecurity upon politics, Radkau argues, severely limited the ability to analyse the real problems of international politics and to weigh different possible responses; it contributed significantly to the way Germany blundered into the First World War.

This means that the war did not break out, as Fritz Fischer claimed in his famous book, simply because the Germans wanted it. Radkau shows convincingly how leading Germans feared the war; they knew it would be more cruel and destructive than any preceding war, but they also feared being seen as weaklings. The enthusiasm of the population at the outbreak of the war can only be explained by a sense of relief: no longer was there a confusion of goals, and all kinds of personal fears disappeared now that the nation faced a common and visible threat. Nor can the outbreak of the war be traced only to the "deep structures" in German society, for example Prussian militarism or "social imperialism"; it contains, Radkau suggests, a strong element of contingency (pp. 419, 428): the coming together of a collective state of mind with an unstable international constellation.

The effect of the war was to reinforce the cult of harshness that had already been predicted by Hilty, and which culminated in the Nazi concept of the collective will. Neurasthenia became an outdated term. It was too general and too vague to be fitted into the ever more specialized disciplines of medicine and psychiatry, and the attitude of tolerance toward mental problems associated with it was no longer accepted. Only during the years of prosperity from the end of the 1950s did nervous symptoms and responses recur that were very similar to those of the Wilhelminian era. Many developments that had started around 1900 but had been broken off during the period of the two world wars were now taken up again: travel as an antidote to "stress", psychotherapy and *Kur* paid for by insurance institutions, "holistic" forms of medicine, and the search for quiet in nature and Eastern meditation techniques, among other things. Together with Radkau's proposition about contingency, this suggests that the era of the world wars was in a sense an anomaly, not a necessary result of German history. This is certainly an interesting contribution to the famous debate about the German *Sonderweg*, but it has implications for other Western countries as well.

This, in the merest of outlines, is Radkau's argument. His method is the one employed by great cultural historians such as Keith Thomas and Eugen Weber: a formidable command of the literature in many historical fields (including the history of mental health, medicine, reform movements, sexuality, travel, technology and the First World War) and a very imaginative use of a mass of primary sources, used to illustrate the main argument. The reader tends to waive objections about the representativeness of the quotations because of their overwhelming mass and the lightness, precision and charm of Radkau's presentation. Radkau is not one for strict classification and quantification. The book contains no tables and graphs, and an assertion like "the turn to willpower" is not supported by quantitative content analysis, but by a series of examples. Nor does he construct bridges in his argument by means of psychoanalytical concepts and theories, as "psychohistorians" often do: readers always feel the solid ground of archival sources under their feet, and the reasoning is "common sense". The book brings many fresh insights to well-known themes. For example, the sanatorium files show that patients were usually eager to talk about sexual problems: Freud did not need a complicated theory about the unconscious to demonstrate the central importance, especially

to male patients, of sex (p. 146). It also appears from the files that the discourse and treatment of nervous problems usually did not reinforce traditional gender distinctions, as has often been claimed, but actually stressed the equality of the sexes and even encouraged female emancipation (p. 123). Imperialism, the reform movement, the rise of modern advertising, the bicycle craze and many other developments of the era around 1900 appear in a new light in this wonderful book.

Dick van Lente

WIRSCHING, ANDREAS. Vom Weltkrieg zum Bürgerkrieg? Politischer Extremismus in Deutschland und Frankreich 1918–1933/39. Berlin und Paris im Vergleich. [Quellen und Darstellungen zur Zeitgeschichte, Band 40.] R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 1999. x, 702 pp. DM 148.00.

During the crisis that followed the First World War, the democratic constitutional state was being challenged by political extremism on the left and the right not only in Germany but also in France, although the latter situation is less well-known. This important topic is the subject of this extensive, original, and well-documented *habilitation* by Andreas Wirsching. By means of a systematically developed and empirically controlled comparative approach, he analyses the totalitarian movements in France and Germany, namely communism and fascism/national socialism, concentrating on the capital cities of both countries, Paris and Berlin. The analysis of the structural conditions, social forces, and activism exemplified by these totalitarian movements supports the working hypothesis of this study (which proves tenable during the course of the work), namely, that it is legitimate to compare the movements because – irrespective of certain individual and nationally-specific elements – they exhibited a range of structural similarities, analogous developments, and comparable trends. The comparative method, often praised as the most regal of methods but seldom used convincingly, is applied here in an exemplary manner and yields important results. Wirsching succeeds because, in addition to his keenly developed sense of methodology and knowledge of theory, he possesses an outstanding understanding of both French and German history in this period and can support his arguments with an extensive analysis of archival sources.

In his packed and highly documented, detailed and descriptive study, Wirsching sorts out the similarities and differences between the extremist movements of the left and the right in Germany and France, particularly those in the two capital cities. By presenting the material for the most part chronologically and by weaving the Berlin and Paris scenes into one another, he analyses the origins of the left and right extremist movements as influenced by the special structural conditions of the interwar period, the transformation of these movements into totalitarian organizations, and the strategies of agitation and ideological positions of the communists and right-wing extremists in each of these places.

In his analysis, Wirsching applies a modified model of totalitarianism. He borrows the characteristics that Carl Joachim Friedrich used to define a totalitarian *regime* in order to define what constitutes a totalitarian *movement:* self-contained ideology, hierarchical party structure, extensive propaganda apparatus, and the creation of paramilitary organizations. In addition to these, he identifies an unconditional friend-or-foe mindset, the reduction of all things political to a "we–they" dichotomy as a primary

phenomenon of totalitarianism (e.g. pp. 108, 269, 271, 546). All of these criteria were found in the communist and "fascist" movements in Germany and France, very clearly in the KPD and the NSPAP, and most pronouncedly in the French Communist Party, whereas the fascist movements in France (*Action Française, Jeunesses Patriotes, Faisceaux, Croix de feu*) at least come close to fitting the totalitarian model. Thus, Wirsching concludes – and this is his most important finding – that even though there are considerable similarities between the totalitarian movements in Germany and France, in Berlin and Paris, there is one specific difference: the extremist movements of both the right and left in Germany were "more extreme" than those in France, meaning specifically that they were more ideological and more violent. "They came closest to being the type of totalitarian movement that emerged from the all-European, totalitarian signature of the epoch." (p. 622).

With regard to the NSDAP, Wirsching clearly distances himself from Nolte's theory that fascism should be interpreted exclusively as anti-Marxism and should be considered solely as a reaction to a Bolshevist challenge. As Wirsching plausibly argues, there is no empirical evidence supporting the contention that popular anti-Semitism can be subsumed under a supposedly stronger anti-Bolshevism. Popular anti-Semitic thinking is an ideology of its own, "the roots of which are older than Bolshevism, emerged independently of it, and germinated primarily from the seeds of *anti-liberalism*" (p. 522).

The NSDAP combined both the "fascist" (anticommunist) and the *völkisch* anti-Semitic elements into an explosive mix: from the very beginning, this *völkisch*, anti-Semitic racism was characterized by a voluntarism that aimed to destroy politically all opposition and by a high degree of ideological integration. In light of these deductions, Wirsching prefers not to label national socialism as "fascism", "German fascism", "or even "radical fascism", because racist anti-Semitism, as the French example illustrates, was not a necessarily integrative component of fascist ideology. Instead, Wirsching contends that the term "fascism" should be applied to the extremely nationalist and paramilitary movements "subordinate to" the racist anti-Semitism of national socialism, movements for which anticommunism was the motivating impulse (p. 618).

Because of what he seeks to accomplish, Wirsching aims the spotlight of his study completely on the PCF and the fascist movements in Paris, and on the KPD and NSDAP in Berlin, leaving perforce all other political formations in the shadows. This perspective helps in no small measure to make the civil-war paradigm pervasive in Wirsching's study, because extremists on the left and right in both countries believed civil war to be inevitable. They wanted the civil war and prepared themselves for it. In addition, they constructed something that Wirsching calls "*totalitären Optionszwang*", meaning that each side believed that this was an all-or-nothing confrontation in which either they would prevail in creating the society they wanted or the other side would triumph completely. In their perception, there was no room for the permanent option of another, more democratic development. Perhaps it might be conceded that, for a while, the situations in Berlin and Paris were potentially explosive and that the threat perceived by both sides of the political fence was not completely groundless. However, civil war did not break out, neither in Berlin nor in Paris, regardless of how much the extremists on both the left and right longed and prepared for it. This fact must not be overlooked, despite the ubiquitous talk of civil war. Wirsching himself does not subscribe to the opinion that in this period there were really only two totalitarian options from which to choose. But his findings could be misinterpreted if given merely superficial consideration. Some might argue that the idea of an inevitable choice between

these two totalitarian options, as propagated by the extremists, merely reflected the political reality at the time: that in 1932, for example, Germany was faced with the choice of a seizure of power either by the national socialists or the communists: *tertium non datur*. Yet, it would be a grave mistake to so interpret the findings of Wirsching's subtle analysis. Therefore, it was very reasonable of Wirsching to punctuate the title of his book *Vom Weltkrieg zum Bürgerkrieg* with a question mark.

Eberhard Kolb

KEALEY, LINDA. Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890–1920. [Studies in Gender and History.] University of Toronto Press, Toronto [etc.] 1998. x, 335 pp. C$60.00; £40.00. (Paper: C$24.95; £16.50.)

Through a national study which covers a transformative period in north American social history, Linda Kealey has compiled a testament to Canadian women's labour and socialist activism. This is a history, however, of resistance to inequities in both capitalism and oppositional social movements. In fact, Kealey's themes "revolve around the consistent assignment of separate, supportive, and often less valued roles" to activist women (p. 14). She offers important lessons pertaining to the often narrow vision of movements for social justice, but also with regard to scholarship which seeks to document complex social contention and change.

Kealey locates herself as "a socialist-feminist historian" whose approach is informed by early social history scholarship, and by feminist work which sought to remedy the gender blindness characteristic of this field's pioneering endeavours. Augmenting a Canadian historiography which has until recently neglected "the roles played by women", she surveys an extensive range of women's activism (pp. 3, 10, 13). Rejecting "any narrow definition of what is judged political", Kealey considers women's contributions within and beyond the "public arena": in unions, parties, and workplaces, but also in homes, neighbourhoods, and communities (p. 10). She documents the resistance of unorganized workers, and married women's activism in labour auxiliaries, union label leagues, and cooperative societies. These organizations coordinated sociability and joint meetings with workers, provided insurance-like mutual aid societies, and stewarded campaigns to connect women's purchasing power with products of unionized labour (pp. 65, 79–87).

The breadth of Kealey's study is enhanced further through its "national and cross-regional perspective" (p. 11). She illuminates transnational influences, such as the impact of New York City garment trade agitation in Toronto and Montreal, and how this crossborder solidarity was cultivated by organizations like the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (pp. 66–67, 71, 179). Kealey also reveals how national characteristics, nationalism, and colonial dominion intertwined in the definition of gender and class traits and interests: when labour leaders alleged that Canadian women were timid in contrast with US activists, or when Canadian workers resisted labour recruitment from the US, but not from Britain (pp. 55, 60).

Kealey's regional comparisons illustrate the complex, changeable, and often local dynamics of women's struggles. Her 1890s survey of labour activism articulates an interplay of factors: region-specific identities and patterns of economic development; cross-city and -region strike solidarity; support for labour fostered through "community based

on region, ethnicity, class, or gender"; management's fragmentation of the labour process and workforce through gender, skill, subcontracting, and technology; the effectiveness of employers' associations; women's resistance to management manipulation, and variable solidarity across class and ethnic lines; men's definition of their own interests; and press coverage given to strikes (pp. 52–54, 68–69, 71–73, 78).

The strengths and weaknesses of Kealey's study emerge from its combination of a broad investigation of women's activism with a categorical and gender-centric analysis. Intent on refuting a construction of women as conservative, Kealey scrupulously details various activist "roles played by women" (p. 8). However, with regard to patterns in activism, Kealey asserts the primacy of a relationship between gender ideology, "a gender division of labour", and achievement in the public sphere. Masculinist categorization is refuted through her documentation of women's contributions beyond the public arena. Yet Kealey reasserts this categorization by framing her book with the assessment that only "a vocal minority" of women were able to "assume public roles similar to those of labour and socialist men". Agency was enacted by extraordinary activists, whose accomplishment was to "contest the boundary lines drawn around their gender". These women overcame a "distrust of 'bourgeois feminism'", refused "supportive and less public roles", and insisted that their "public and political work was vital" (pp. 13, 14, 260). This definition of women's activism leaves an unexamined hierarchical categorization of public and private, and of gender and the other variables informing women's struggles. It belies the possibility that resistance was differentially negotiated by all women in a private–public continuum.

Kealey argues that for most Canadian women material conditions combined with prevailing ideologies to create a division of labour centered in their families and communities. Material conditions and ideology reinforced this division of labour within social movements (pp. 10, 14, 260). She acknowledges the "family wage" as "a powerful ideal" that in reality was "often illusory". Yet her analytical emphasis on "working-class women's dependence" – typified in the masculine "breadwinner" and femininity centered in the family – conflates how gender was idealized, structured, and practised (pp. 4, 78).

Kealey defines structure as involving "material constraints", but focuses on how gender shaped the division and valuing of roles. Ideology emphasizing "marriage, motherhood, and the family wage" regulated roles and "female potential" (pp. 79, 96, 98, 144). She notes men's "appropriation of women's struggles for the cause", but does not investigate closely this basic dynamic of capitalism which has been enacted differently by capitalist and proletarian men – the appropriation and erasure of women's labour (p. 45). Women's "supportive roles" and "dependency", and the hierarchies between forms and spheres of labour are ideological and material productions specific to industrial capitalism.

The assertion of "a gender division of labour" does not delineate its particularities and interconnections in various spheres, or in the lives of different groups of women (p. 254). Kealey notes that her study was shaped by "available sources" – the press, socialist movement sources, union and government records. She was unable to rely on women's personal papers, organizational records, and oral histories, but does not explore how the prominence of documentation centered in the male-dominated public arena may have informed her account (pp. 12–13). A national study does not facilitate extended analysis of the variably constructed links between femininity, masculinity, and labour. However, localized Canadian labour histories such as those by Joy Parr (1990) and Christina Burr (1999) differ from Kealey's in more than their in-depth focus – they analyse gender as fundamentally changeable and infused by other variables. The limits

on Kealey's gender analysis are particularly revealed through the fact that the dynamic which she asserts as primary – women's familial duties determined their "class and ethnic loyalty" – is shown by her sources to have worked in reverse (p. 14). She records but does not adequately scrutinize clear cultural distinctions among groups of activist women, and forms of oppositional politics.

In Kealey's framework, ethnicity is a secondary factor affecting "ethnic women" (pp. 10, 260). She fails to analyse how ethnic, racial, and religious culture informed all gender and class identities and relations, and thus enabled, constrained, and fragmented women's activism and Canadian social movements as a whole. Kealey asserts that working-class women's socioeconomic and political awareness was "suffused by a maternalism shared by middle-class women reformers", and that their activism was hindered by broad "acceptance of the breadwinner family ideal" (pp. 222, 258–259). Despite the prominence of Anglo-Protestant women in her account, and her acknowledgement of Anglo-dominance in socialist leadership, she does not consider how movement ideologies, her sources and women subjects, and her own arguments reflect Anglo-Protestant conceptions of gender and class (p. 10).

The Christian socialist views that Kealey details, for instance, reflect a specific religious perspective (which she recognizes), and Anglo-Protestant cultural conceptions. This was expressed in a moral purity approach to sexuality, the argument that married women "should not engage in paid labour", and a maternalist project centered in "a race towering Godward" (pp. 90, 102–103, 106–107, 246–247). Kealey frames Anglo-Protestant women as representative of labour and socialist activists (pp. 98, 233–234, 246–247). Yet she neglects how relative cultural and class privilege – which allowed "light domestic duties" or the view that women were sheltered "from the 'monsters of greed and inequity'" – infused their politics (pp. 81, 105).

I was left craving analysis of the activism which Kealey implies was unrepresentative. Her sources suggest that radical segments in Canadian oppositional movements were dominated by non-Anglo-Protestants, and that Anglo-dominance of movement leadership, as well as cultural prejudice and conflict, were central to class struggle (pp. 50, 55, 69, 116–118, 149, 180). Finnish and Jewish women were particularly crucial to oppositional movements, and were perceived by their male comrades as more radical than their Anglo sisters (pp. 129, 130–132, 177–180). Kealey's evidence indicates that non-Anglo-Protestant women's politics were often nonmaternalist: advocating wages over mothers' pension, birth control, radicalism and even violence, and explicit criticism of bourgeois women's class motivations (pp. 212–213, 226–227, 231–236, 239, 246). She describes individual Jewish and Finnish activists who lived beyond the constraints which she presents as endemic to gender relations, with careers that "overshadowed" their domestic labour, and small, non-nuclear families (pp. 226–227, 231–236, 239, 246). With regard to the prominence of Finnish and Jewish activists, Kealey notes the impact of a Finnish "social democratic tradition", and an eastern European culture that did not confine women to the home, and "stressed women's strengths and a commitment to fight class oppression and anti-Semitism" (pp. 130, 132). Yet her unwavering focus on gender leads Kealey to suggest that nonmaternalist activists did not address "women's issues", and that immigrant women's radicalism was politically marginalized because of the "ideology of sex differences" and the misogyny of "male socialists" (pp. 142, 212, 251). Their cultural marginalization in Anglo-dominated oppositional movements appears equally relevant.

Val Marie Johnson

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859000030261 Published online by Cambridge University Press

JAMES, WINSTON. Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia. Caribbean Radicalism in Early Twentieth-Century America. Verso, London [etc.] 1998. x, 406 pp. Ill. £25.00.

Between 1900 and 1930, more than 100,000 Afro-Caribbeans entered the United States and – despite their accounting for less than one per cent of total immigration – they played a prominent and influential role in American radical movements. In *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia*, Winston James undertakes a thorough re-evaluation of this much commented upon phenomenon. This book improves upon earlier studies of Afro-Caribbean radicalism in the United States by departing from them in two important respects. First, the author consciously avoids committing the common error of homogenizing the Afro-Caribbean population. As well as displaying an appreciation of the Anglophone majority's heterogeneity (not to mention the small Francophone contingent that rarely receives separate acknowledgement), James highlights the important differences that existed between non-Hispanic and Hispanic immigrants. Second, he has broadened his study to include not only the contribution that Afro-Caribbeans made to black nationalism, but also their largely ignored but highly conspicuous involvement in American socialist and left-wing movements.

The structure of the book is straightforward. There are eight main chapters, a weighty postscript (although essentially a critique of Harold Cruse's 1967 book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, this is also a balanced and insightful historiographical essay on Afro-Caribbean radicalism in twentieth-century America), and a useful statistical appendix. While James generally explores issues by concentrating on a limited number of examples and case studies in each chapter, his coverage of important groups and individuals is reasonably comprehensive.

Focusing mostly upon background issues, the first four chapters examine the origins of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora, the distinctive cultural, socioeconomic, and demographic characteristics of the immigrants, and the main similarities and differences between race relations in the Caribbean and the USA. In these chapters, James is principally concerned with answering two key questions: did Afro-Caribbean immigrants deserve their reputation for being more militant and radical than their African-American contemporaries and, if so, did they bring this penchant for radicalism with them to the United States or acquire it after they arrived? The book's final four chapters examine the nature and extent of Afro-Caribbean involvement in American radical movements. Chapters 5 and 6 assess the influence of some of the most prominent Afro-Caribbean radicals – most notably, Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican-born founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) – as well as some lesser-known, yet still important groups and individuals, such as the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB) and Hubert Henry Harrison. Harrison, asserts James, was the "intellectual father" (p. 126) of both A. Philip Randolph's radical socialism and Marcus Garvey's black nationalism, while the ABB is credited with facilitating the initial recruitment of black members into the American Communist Party. These two chapters also reveal the often pivotal yet shamefully neglected role that Afro-Caribbean women played in American radical movements. In Chapters 7 and 8, the focus shifts to the Hispanic Afro-Caribbean immigrants whose history has been both overshadowed by and arbitrarily isolated from that of their non-Hispanic counterparts. Looking first at Afro-Puerto Ricans in New York and then at Afro-Cubans in Florida, James explains why Hispanic and non-Hispanic Afro-Caribbean radicals generally followed

divergent paths – the former heading in the direction of revolutionary socialism, the latter towards black nationalism.

Despite the specialized nature of its subject matter, this book will be of use to a wide range of historians, particularly those interested in how ethnicity, race, and class overlap and interact with each other. James suggests, for instance, that Afro-Caribbean radicalism was chiefly a product of ethnicity. He describes Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the United States as a "new people, an ethnic group *sui generis*", who were "radically different in their socioeconomic and cultural profile from Afro-Americans" (p. 259). Nonetheless, he takes pains to point out that their radicalism "did not issue from the migrants' Caribbeaness, per se", but from "a complex combination of inheritance and circumstance" (p. 258). Afro-Caribbean immigrants undeniably possessed traits that predisposed them towards active involvement in radical politics: many came from black societies that had a strong "cultural and historical tradition of frontal resistance to oppression" (p. 258); many were artisans or professionals and had high expectations of what opportunities should be open to them; and many were already experienced in the arts of political organization and protest. However, in order to activate this latent radicalism, a catalyst was required and that, according to James, came in the form of early twentieth-century America's uniquely oppressive pattern of race relations. Among the many unfamiliar situations that Afro-Caribbean immigrants encountered in the United States, four were particularly provocative: the binary nature of racial demarcations (especially the absence of a special status for light-skinned "blacks"); deeply entrenched, often *de jure*, racial segregation; the experience of belonging to a minority rather than the majority population; and lynching.

The ethnic distinctiveness of Afro-Caribbeans also coloured their perceptions of race and class. Compared with African Americans, observes James, Afro-Caribbean immigrants did not possess a high level of race consciousness. Indeed, the author goes so far as to say that many Afro-Caribbeans only became "self-consciously 'black' and thus 'race conscious' to a greater degree" (p. 185) through contact with America's virulent and pervasive racism. James adds that a corollary to the Afro-Caribbeans' relatively low level of race consciousness was their propensity for developing a strong class consciousness. Consequently, they were not as reluctant as African Americans to allying themselves with whites and joining one of the many left-wing movements emerging in early twentieth-century America. Nonetheless, the author rejects class, and especially "petty-bourgeois *angst*" (p. 88), as the primary cause of Afro-Caribbean radicalism. If class was the cause of radicalism, he asks, why were African Americans not similarly affected by it? Moreover, James argues that the conspicuous presence of Afro-Caribbeans in American radical movements, including leadership positions, was maintained through the active involvement of both middle- and working-class immigrants.

If it is true that they did not possess the same degree of race consciousness as African Americans, why, it might be asked, were Afro-Caribbeans so prominently, even disproportionately, represented within the ranks of Garvey's acutely race-conscious UNIA? In response to this question, James draws attention to the frequency with which Afro-Caribbean radicals who started off as class-conscious socialists ended up as race-conscious black nationalists. This disillusionment with class-based ideologies and movements – which James dubs "Garvey's Revenge" (p. 186) because it afflicted so many one-time critics of the UNIA – was a direct response to the widespread racism and discrimination that blacks encountered in America's left-wing organizations. Furthermore, James states that not all Caribbean radicals embraced black nationalism, pointing out that Afro-Hispanics – who tended to be even more class- and less race-conscious than their Anglophone

counterparts – displayed a "relative indifference, if not aversion" to it and "played almost no role in black nationalist politics during the heady days of the First World War and early 1920s" (p. 196). James is not suggesting that Hispanic Afro-Caribbean immigrants were any less prone to engaging in radical politics than their non-Hispanic counterparts, just that they preferred to channel their energies into "unhyphenated socialism" (p. 198) rather than black nationalism.

In addition to his probing analysis of Afro-Caribbean radicalism, James provides many fresh and valuable insights into the dynamics of intra- and interethnic relations. He reveals, for instance, that while African-American perceptions of immigrants (even black ones) were often heavily tinged with nativism, many immigrants – including Afro-Caribbeans – readily embraced white America's negative view of American blacks. These cleavages were most apparent in the relations between Hispanic Afro-Caribbeans and African Americans. "The characteristic behavior of Afro-Hispanic migrants", observes James, "has historically been to close ranks with fellow 'Spanish' compatriots – 'black' and 'white' together – distinguishing themselves, deliberately or otherwise, from those classified as 'Negroes' in the United States" (p. 195). Clearly, language and cultural differences played a role in creating these divisions, but, as James demonstrates with his examination of Afro-Cubans in Florida, it is important not to overlook a salient, yet frequently disregarded, feature of American ethnic relations: the worst nightmare of any ethnic group, and something that almost all of them have at some time consciously sought to avoid, was "niggerization" (p. 243) – the loss of status and privilege that invariably accompanied being too closely identified with African Americans. As the author shows, this imperative was so powerful that, even after they had been abandoned by their fairer-skinned compatriots who were busily pursuing entry into "white" society, Afro-Cubans strenuously maintained the various barriers that separated them from local African Americans.

Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia accomplishes all of the author's main objectives and looks set to become the standard work on its subject for many years to come. Not only has Winston James produced a masterful synthesis of existing scholarship, but the many new issues and debates that he introduces have totally redefined the way in which the history of Afro-Caribbean radicalism in the United States will be viewed in the future.

Jason McDonald

SCHNEIDER, MICHAEL. Unterm Hakenkreuz. Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung 1933 bis 1939. [Geschichte der Arbeiter und der Arbeiterbewegung in Deutschland seit dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, Band 12.] Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., Bonn 1999. xiii, 1184 pp. Ill. DM 98.00; S.fr. 91.00; S 715.00.

The German working class in national socialism: was it a bulwark of opposition or a pillar of support for the system? For years, this question has been one of the central themes in the research on the social history of national socialism. By focusing on various aspects, historians have repeatedly attempted to determine the degree to which workers exhibited resistance, dissent, conformity, and integration. A comparison of the studies and research topics indicates how this debate has evolved over the years. During the 1970s and in connection with the work of Timothy W. Mason, research often focused on finding insubordinate acts by workers. Then, in the 1980s, this focus shifted increasingly toward a search for signs of consent, conformity, and participation. At the same time, research began to

examine more closely the political measures and social policy of the national socialist regime and to determine the extent to which these influenced the daily life, behaviour, and sentiments of workers. The importance of studies on labour organizations in exile and on resistance thereby diminished.

Michael Schneider has written a book (in the series started by Gerhard A. Ritter on the history of workers and the labour movement in Germany since the end of the eighteenth century) in which Schneider summarizes the current state of research and presents once more answers to the question posed above. These answers, as he himself points out, are not his final word on the subject for this volume is the first of two and covers only the years 1933–1939. In his second book, Schneider plans to examine the war years 1939–1945. Aware of the fact that certain terms are historically and politically tainted, Schneider chooses not to use the term *Arbeiterklasse* (working class), but refers instead to the *Arbeiterschaft* (a term that suggests less class cohesion but implies more corporate identity than is associated with the term "labour force"), as does Heinrich August Winkler in his books on the labour movement in the Weimar Republic. Schneider characterizes the stance taken by the majority of workers toward the national socialist state as "reluctant participation" (*widerwilliges Mitmachen*) and "reluctant loyalty" (*widerwillige Loyalität*). In one of the key passages of his conclusion, Schneider writes: "The terms 'reluctant loyalty' and 'reluctant participation', both characteristics of inherently contradictory 'strategies of survival', seem to accurately describe the attitude and behaviour of a large segment of the men and women in the labour force" (p. 1086). Workers were neither a bulwark of opposition nor a pillar of support for the system, but something in between: they were integrated, involved, and loyal – but always reluctantly. By so arguing, Schneider disassociates himself deliberately from the more extreme positions in the general debate, and attempts to do justice not only to the "depiction of an inherently contradictory social and political function of 'the' workers", but also to the irrefutable "ambivalence" that existed (p. 1089). Schneider depicts the workers as having been overwhelmingly passive. They only reacted to the exacting demands and concessions of the regime; they accepted the regime's overtures and tolerated its exercise of power (p. 1085).

Schneider has divided his study into four main chapters. In the first chapter, he describes the measures employed by the national socialist regime in 1933 to smash the existing organized labour movement and establish through *Gleichschaltung* a new form of organized labour. He thereby evaluates critically every effort to react to or avoid such assaults. In this section, Schneider sets the parameters for the rest of the study. By the summer of 1933 at the latest, no organized Marxist labour movement existed to speak of except for the party leadership in exile and the struggling remnants of a party structure gone underground. Against such a historical backdrop, Schneider makes a convincing case for devoting merely 300 pages of his book to the resistance, exiled and underground, but about 700 pages to government policy aimed at committing workers to the state and to the "life of workers in the new state".

"Courted, cared for and educated, ill-conceived and disciplined"– these are the key words Schneider uses in the second chapter on the measures applied by the regime to gain the commitment of the workers. This chapter features two central topics, namely the German labour front and the role of "education" in national socialist policy. In addition, Schneider explains the national socialist economic order and policy, the condition and structure of the labour market, and the various measures of the regime's social policies. He also includes in this chapter a description of the apparatus of persecution. To justify the latter, he explains: "In addition to the measures of economic,

job market, educational, and social policies, which – enhanced by the praises of propaganda – aimed as a whole to create approval and allegiance among the broad masses of the population, the threat and use of violence also belonged to the arsenal of national socialist policy" (p. 454). The everyday life of working men and women was altered considerably by measures introduced by the regime and by the consequences of economic expansion. Schneider examines these changes in his third chapter by looking specifically at three environments, namely the workplace, the private household, and recreational activities, and sketches for us a picture of workers' lives under the conditions created by national socialism. Not until he has described extensively the factors affecting the lives of the population at large does Schneider address the question concerning the "behaviour, sentiments, and attitude of the workers" (pp. 684–765). Unlike most of the other sections, which are based primarily on the evaluation of existing research, this section presents the findings of his own study of the sources. A major source for Schneider are the published reports of the exiled SPD (*Sopade*) and the group *Neu Beginnen* (New Beginnings) as well as the reports of the secret service of the SS, the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD). The evidence presented in this section constitutes the core of Schneider's concluding chapter.

The last of the four chapters is devoted to the resistance, both in exile and underground. Schneider's evaluation of the effectiveness of organized workers' resistance is sobering: "with all due respect to the moral value of resistance [...] it must be acknowledged that no chance ever existed to destabilize the national socialist dictatorship" (p. 1078). Even when Schneider describes the achievements of the resistance, he cannot make the overall result appear more positive. According to Schneider, the resistance put up by social democrats and communists contributed "to intensifying the resolve of their own supporters to resist the enticements and pressures of the national socialist regime" (p. 1066). As for the "social-moral milieu of the worker", Schneider believes there was "a (relative) resistance to the complete integration into the national socialist societal order" (p. 1083). The repeated qualifications Schneider makes – namely that the resistance was "relative" and can only be ascertained in terms of preventing "complete integration" – show that he is attempting to present a finding that is positive at least in part. Such efforts reveal his underlying assessment that workers were largely passive and reactive.

Schneider's book, with its comprehensive analysis of the existing literature and its coherent organization of the content, will be considered a handbook on the social history of national socialism. It shares the merits of the other books published in this series, but also suffers from similar problems evident in the other volumes. Schneider's work deals extensively with basic data on workers' households and attempts to describe the "lives of workers" through this data. However, the "worker's life" that is thus reconstructed has little to do with that which is understood by the term *Arbeiterhandeln*, the behaviour of workers.[1] In Schneider's study it is hard to find men and women who are acting individuals. Even the stories of various individuals presented in the fourth chapter cannot gloss over this deficit because most are limited to the presentation of some data. "The importance of the depiction lies inevitably in the workers' circumstances, since the organized labour movement had been smashed", writes Hans Mommsen about

1. See Klaus Weinhauer, "Arbeiterklasse ohne Arbeiterhandeln?", *1999. Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts*, 8 (1993), pp. 80–88.

Schneider's book.[2] At first glance, Mommsen's argument seems to be quite plausible. "Social-moral milieus", Schneider writes, "need certain social institutions if they are to remain vital over time; that is, they need organized or established centres that are, in turn, dependent on at least a minimal public following in order to do their work." (p. 1083). These organizations cannot tell us precisely what attitudes, views, and opinions were held by the individuals they represented. However, historians can use them as a gateway to better research, because these organizations were mediating agents in shaping and upholding collective attitudes, views and opinions. Such an approach was not available to Schneider because the organized labour movement had been destroyed, and the analysis of the "conditions of the workers" is not a viable alternative to solve this methodological problem. Schneider's book illustrates this. A greater part of his study is devoted to presenting the various factors affecting the condition of the worker, but this information is not the basis of his findings concerning the behaviour and attitude of the workers. Instead, the conclusions he draws on this central question are derived primarily from the reports of the organizations *Sopade* and *Neu Beginnen*.

Against the backdrop of the research debates started by the works of Christopher R. Browning and Daniel J. Goldhagen, Schneider's analysis of the reports pose additional questions. In each of their studies on the murder of European Jews, both Browning and Goldhagen did not choose a structural approach, but focused their analysis instead on the perpetrators and their deeds. Once we understand that these perpetrators were "ordinary men" (Browning) or "ordinary Germans" (Goldhagen), we must acknowledge the consequences for research on workers under the national socialist regime. Although it is difficult to quantify, we can be certain that a percentage of the perpetrators in the police battalions were workers. Browning and Goldhagen have offered impressive evidence showing that the majority of the policemen assigned to do murderous acts did not take advantage of available opportunities to refuse. Therefore, Goldhagen labelled them as "willing executioners". The designation contrasts sharply with Schneider's term of "reluctant participation". Goldhagen presses the point further by deriving conclusions about the German societal mindset by way of a "thick description" – as borrowed from Clifford Geertz – of the perpetrators' actions. Yet even if the point is not taken as far as Goldhagen takes it, the question does arise whether the perpetrators he describes were not in part the same people to whom Schneider attributes an attitude of "reluctant participation" from 1933 to 1939.

Even Schneider offers evidence in his evaluation of the reports from *Sopade* and *Neu Beginnen* that indicates more was involved than merely "reluctant participation". Several times he cites reports that refer to the enthusiasm of many workers – even some who had previously voted for the SPD and KPD – for the "foreign policy successes" of the regime. Schneider is also convinced that "foreign policy successes" contributed significantly toward stabilizing public opinion in the Reich. "What is difficult to decide", Schneider writes, "is whether the foreign policy successes – from the reintegration of the Saar to the annexation of Austria – which sparked a short-lived enthusiasm also among workers, didn't have lasting effects" (p. 755). What Schneider fails to ask is why the regime's acts of revanchism and annexation could evoke "enthusiasm" among the workers in the first place. If workers had really demonstrated the fundamental distance

2. Hans Mommsen, "Widerwillige Loyalität. Michael Schneiders große Untersuchung über die Lage der Arbeiter im 'Dritten Reich', ihre Anpassung und ihren Widerstand", *Die Zeit*, 7 October 1999, p. 57.

from the regime Schneider claims they did in his thesis on the reluctance of participation, then any satisfaction with the government's successes would be puzzling. Perhaps what we are seeing here is something completely different. This approval should be evaluated as active participation. It far transcends the exacted rituals of conformity; even more importantly, it is an act of self-definition. In approving these actions by the government, people were defining themselves as members of a national collective and were thereby accepting the national socialist premise of the priority of the national collective. In his remarks on the changes in the lives of workers, Schneider introduces the term "declassing" (*Ent-Klassung*) and states: "In view of the level of internal communication, a feeling of solidarity, and organizational networks achieved in the 1920s, it is possible to interpret the transformation process that was forced or introduced by National Socialist policy as having contributed to 'class-retrogression', to the 'declassing' of the working class. In this respect, the working class, which was on the road to becoming a 'class for itself', was pushed back to being merely a 'class in itself'" (p. 769). The reports documenting the approval received from large numbers of workers for Germany's aggressive foreign policy seem to indicate something else: by way of its actions, a considerable segment of the working class already defined itself as being part of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the nationalist, *völkisch* community that the national socialists sought to create.

Tobias Mulot

KALUZA, ANDRZEJ. Der polnische Parteistaat und seine politischen Gegner, 1944–1956. [Studien zur Europäischen Rechtsgeschichte, Band 110.] Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt/M. 1998. xvi, 353 pp. DM 118.00.

The collapse of the communist regimes in eastern Europe brought with it the collapse, too, of theories viewing communist systems as a stage in modernization. Such theories, favored by Western academics at the time when the East–West détente nourished the misconception of the Soviet Union as a state like any other, were never taken seriously in countries whose inhabitants knew better from first-hand experience. And once the inner workings of these systems could be studied from the archives as well – as the author of this thorough investigation of the Polish communist regime during the Stalin era has done to good effect – the fallacy of communism as an engine of progress became self-evident.

Dissecting the Polish regime in its role as machinery for the destruction of civil society, Kaluza explodes the myth, perpetuated by the apologists of the leading party figure of the postwar period, Władysław Gomułka, according to which the system only assumed its odious features after his fall from power in 1948. This book documents the basic continuity in the pattern of repression under Gomułka and his immediate successors. At the same time, Kaluza breaks new ground in explaining how, even at its peak, Polish Stalinism was different from its Soviet model.

Kaluza finds that Hannah Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism, in which suspects become "objective" enemies subject to destruction, does not apply in the Polish case. While given to Stalinist doublespeak (*nowomowa*) in their description of the opposition, the Polish communists mainly targeted persons they suspected of being real enemies, rather than seeking the annihilation of whole categories of "objective" ones, as was the

practice in both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. And while the Polish regime was capable of treating some of its many opponents quite ruthlessly, the difference was fundamental rather than merely semantic.

The fact that "under the surface of totalitarianism simmered mechanisms designed simply for the maintenance of power and systemic perpetuation of an authoritarian regime" is part of the explanation of the "Polish exceptionalism" that marked the Soviet empire as long as it lasted. One would have welcomed Kaluza addressing this important issue in his conclusion. Rather than merely describe – in the dense social-science jargon presumably required for a study undertaken under the auspices of the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History in Frankfurt – *how* the communist system operated in Poland, he could have elaborated on *why* it operated so differently from elsewhere.

Did the fact that nearly all Poles qualified as enemies of the system make the persecution of "objective" enemies simply impracticable? And was, perversely, the higher incidence of those actively resisting, the very reason why the regime avoided the excesses that persecution took in countries where enemies often had to be invented and manufactured? Did the basic rationality of repression in Poland, as opposed to its irrationality in countries where loyal communists were more plentiful and resistance more rare, pave the way in due course for more normal politics and, ultimately, the eventual surrender of power by the communists once their time was up? The Polish Communist Party – while never widely respected, much less loved – at least did not discredit itself, even at the time of its deepest infamy described in this book, to such an extent that it would be unable to become a negotiating partner later on. Above all, much as they tried, the Polish communists did not succeed in entirely extinguishing civil society, thus giving the nation a head start once their rule was over. This long-range perspective deserves to be borne in mind as we read Kaluza's competent account of these darkest years.

Vojtech Mastny

Frege, Carola M. Social Partnership at Work. Workplace relations in post-unification Germany. [Routledge Studies in Employment Relations, vol. 2.] Routledge, London [etc.] 1999. xiv, 256 pp. £55.00.

One aspect of the transformation of former centrally-planned economies of eastern Europe since 1989 has been the enormous implications for employment relations, in the development of society-wide institutions and in the workplace. These issues have attracted considerable scholarly attention, but to date empirical studies either have focused primarily upon the level of institution-building, or been based on very limited surveys of employees at the workplace level. In the case of Germany at least, Frege has undertaken the most extensive and rigorous study of postunification workplace relations so far, linking the process of institution-building and workplace relations. For this alone her book is a landmark achievement.

East Germany provided a unique case of transformation amongst the former socialist European countries, since it was totally absorbed into an existing capitalist society, West Germany, whose laws became applicable in the east from October 1990. These laws created in the east the characteristic West-German dual system of interest representation for employees through trade unions exercising a collective bargaining role at the industry level, and works councils exercising statutory "codetermination" and consultative rights

at the plant level. However, it is one thing to transfer institutions under the law, and quite another for these institutions to work as they have in the west. In order for interest institutions of employees – unions and works councils – to function effectively, they must be accepted by employees and employers, that is, they must become institutionalized or culturally embedded amongst the actors in industrial relations. Thus, whilst a number of observers have emphasized the success of institutional transfer, in the sense of unions, employer organizations and works councils becoming formally established in the east, others have suggested that they may not be working as effectively as in the west in terms of interest representation. The pessimist school has argued, in particular, that works councils in the east are "too cooperative", and more liable to being incorporated into management than in the west. The pessimist scenario is seen as the result of three factors: the legacy of the former socialist regime where unions were not independent interest representatives and works councils did not exist at all; the tremendous economic pressures for survival faced by eastern firms as well as the extremely high rate of labour displacement in the transformation process; and because of these factors, the relative passivity, greater individualism and instrumentalism of East German workers. All of these factors weaken the position of unions and works councils lacking the "necessary network of informal and formal norms, habits, cooperation, and forms of conflict resolution between the actors" (p. 4).

Against this background, Frege sets herself three tasks. First, she describes workplace transformation and the transfer of interest institutions in the clothing industry, focusing on works councils. This industry is an important one to focus upon, since it has undergone some of the most dramatic restructuring and job losses, and bargaining outcomes are less positive for employees than in other industries in the east and west. Secondly, Frege explores the success of the cultural embeddedness of the labour institutions, analysing workers' attitudes and behaviour toward their new interest institutions. And thirdly, she compares East and West German union members' attitudes and behaviour towards their collective interest representation (unions and works councils) in the clothing industry.

The methodology employed for these purposes is impressive in its breadth and depth, consisting of a survey of works councillors and union members in selected companies in the East and West-German branches of the clothing and textile union (GTB), regular interviews with union officials in the GTB's eastern branch over 1993–1994, and an intensive case study of a major East-German clothing firm, including interviews with all managers, supervisors and works councillors and a selection of workers over two years (1993–1994). It is an appropriate mix of quantitative, qualitative and documentary methods, which breaks new ground in conceptual terms as well as scope. One of the book's greatest contributions is to address social-psychological theories of collective action, particularly through comparison of West- and East-German workers for the first time. In this regard, it might have been further strengthened if the employee survey had been extended to nonunion members to discover why many do not join unions and if this affected their attitudes towards works councils. If there is an overall weakness, it is that the book reads a little too much like the doctoral dissertation upon which it was based, with little concession to a more general readership.

Frege concludes that in most important regards East-German workers and their interest representation institutions did not behave very differently to their western counterparts. Eastern workers expressed greater job dissatisfaction than those in the west (for understandable reasons, given the restructuring process), but this was not the major

factor in their attitudes towards participation in collective activities. Instead, Frege found that East German workers were guided by both instrumental and collective motives, that social identity and rational choice theories were complementary explanations for collective activities. Overall, postsocialist workers participated in collective activities to a similar level and for similar reasons to their western counterparts.

These conclusions have important implications for industrial relations theory and practice. They indicate that West-German institutions are stable and viable, notwithstanding the magnitude of transformation, and that the socialist legacy of industrial organization may be weaker than previously imagined. More generally, Frege's study shows that social-psychological explanations for collective participation are likely to be multidimensional, which is implicitly denied by all of the competing theories. Finally, Frege has provided a critical case study on institutional transfer, which should inspire further comparative research on the relationship between institutions and actors in a context of rapid institutional change often influenced by models adopted from other countries.

Ray Markey

PELOSO, VINCENT C. Peasants on Plantations. Subaltern Strategies of Labor and Resistance in the Pisco Valley, Peru. [Latin America Otherwise: Languages, Empires, Nations.] Duke University Press, Durham [etc.] 1999. xxi, 252 pp. Ill. Maps. £34.00. (Paper: £11.95.)

In 1968 a number of restless, progressive officers in the Peruvian army staged a coup and plunged the country into a revolution that would lead to seven years of military rule. The Peruvian Revolution enabled the implementation of a number of progressive laws, but by all accounts it must be considered a failure, leaving the country divided and frustrated, and paving the way for the violent utopia of Shining Path and a civil war that would last almost thirty years. However, in one respect the revolution was quite successful. It brought about an agrarian reform that expropriated many plantations and conveyed land to many poor peasant families.

As an unintended side effect of this reform, the Peruvian authorities came into possession of a great number of plantation archives. To the credit of the revolutionary cadres, these archives were rapidly placed at the disposal of historians, leading to a plethora of plantation and hacienda studies in late twentieth-century Peruvian historiography. Peloso's study of labour relations on coastal cotton plantations south of Lima is one of the most recent in this trend. It describes in meticulous detail the changing fortunes of large-scale cotton agriculture in Peru and the relations between owners, administrators and peasant producers. It is a study of labour relations, but may just as well be considered a typical example of agrarian business history and an analysis of global influences on local society.

The story of Pisco cotton production begins in the middle of the nineteenth century when a pioneering agrarian entrepreneur, Ramón Aspillaga, purchased a hacienda in the Pisco valley. The Aspillaga family would become one of the wealthiest and most important families in Peruvian twentieth-century politics. However, Peloso is not so much interested in the political importance and social-power position of the family. He focuses on the apparent paradox that, in spite of their power, the Aspillagas and their

administrators were unable to completely and permanently subdue the peasant population that provided the labour and agrarian produce necessary for the profitable exploitation of their possessions. It is to the explanation of this paradox that his book is devoted.

Peloso's study demonstrates how labour relations on the cotton plantations were a continuous field of contention between peasant labourers and plantation administrators. The outcome of these negotiations depended on a great number of variables, within and outside the plantations. The plantation archives allow Peloso to demonstrate convincingly the dynamic character of labour relations and their changing character over time.

To structure his narrative Peloso divides his analysis into three periods. The first runs from the establishment of market-oriented cotton plantations in the 1870s to the first few years of the twentieth century. This period was characterized by an insecure, experimental and at times wavering management of the plantations. Management's greatest concern was the provision of sufficient labour. After the abolition of slavery in 1854, they tried to ensure this by the importation of Asian indentured labour. When this failed to produce sufficient labourers, they resorted to the so-called *enganche* system, attracting peasant producers through a mix of seduction and repression. The main worry of the plantation administration in this period was the maintenance of a satisfying balance between a stable labour force that could guarantee sufficient production, and administrative flexibility that would allow management sufficient space to negotiate with their peasant labourers. The plantations did all they could to avoid paying wages to their labourers. This led to a variety of arrangements by which peasant producers continued to combine the production of food crops and cotton.

The test of the system came after the end of the War of the Pacific (1879–1883), when Chilean forces invaded the country and wrought havoc on the Peruvian elites. This difficult situation became even worse with the world depression of 1893. These two events severely reduced the prospects for cotton production and in this way brought about a realignment of labour relations. The administrators tried to increase their control over labour, especially by using credit as a means to exert pressure. For their part, the peasant labourers threatened to withhold their labour. This process led to a new differentiation among the labour force. Some peasants rose to a level of financial wellbeing and social status that allowed them to hire so-called *compañeros*, to whom they sublet land.

These developments within a system based on the labour of basically free peasants gradually led to a second stage in which open contention between administrators and peasant labourers evolved. The direct cause of this situation was the large-scale flooding that occurred in 1907 and that caused a severe loss of land and crops. An unexpected consequence of the Pisco River flood was the attack it precipitated on the independence of the peasant-labourer population. The plantations blamed the damage on the poor maintenance of the drainage ditches by the tenants. As a reaction they tried to obtain greater control over their labourers, basically by trying to replace fixed-rent tenants by sharecroppers (*yanaconas*). This was followed by other measures that tended to curtail peasant autonomy. These new plantation policies provoked a direct response from the tenants. They did everything they could to maintain their privileges. When letters to the owners about the misconduct of the administrators failed to produce the desired results, they resorted to open protest. Using their relatively high social status and showing great self-confidence, the tenants became temporary leaders of a peasant protest

movement, which, however, in the end was unable to change plantation policies. When it was clear they were losing the struggle and opportunities for independent farming were foreclosed, this class of middle peasants left the plantations. By 1920 the plantations had succeeded in evicting their independent tenant population and had replaced it by a much more vulnerable class of sharecroppers who were tied hands and feet to the plantations.

The year 1920 can thus be considered the beginning of a third phase. This period was characterized by two new developments. First, the plantation owners began to implement technological changes that made the process of cotton production and processing more efficient. The harvest was mechanized and ginning machines were introduced. This reduced the costs of cotton production and stimulated economies of scale. At the same time, it tended to limit the autonomy of the peasants and increased the demand for seasonal wage labour. This labour became easily available to the plantations as a result of a second development: the rapid growth of migration from the highland interior to the coast. The migrants (*nómadas*, as they were called) offered the plantations a large reservoir of cheap wage labour. In that way the new wave of migration undermined the social position of the existing tenant population. Increasingly, wage labourers were expected to add the unpaid labour of women and children to their own labour. These new labour relations were an important explanation for the boom that Peruvian cotton production underwent in this period and the huge profits made by the plantation owners. Peloso rightly points out that the higher degree of labour control was a key element in this golden age. This may also explain the increasing popularity of the radical ideas of the APRA party among the labourers on the cotton plantations. This last period remains somewhat obscure in Peloso's analysis, probably because his plantation archives did not offer enough information on the period. The political context and the significance of a new proletarian consciousness among the labour force remain particularly vague.

Peloso does not utilize many sources other than those of the plantations. The basic problem of his book is that it lacks solid information on the role of the labour force. Because of his somewhat forced emphasis on hegemony and resistance, Peloso is sometimes obliged to force his sources and resort to interpretations that they hardly substantiate. His sources are also conducive to a highly localistic and plantation-centred approach. This problem is clearest in the latter part of this study, when the growing importance of more general economic and political events in Peru gradually makes Peloso's plantation-centred approach unsatisfying and obsolete.

Thus, the almost exclusive reliance on plantation sources makes the book somewhat unbalanced. Although it is presented as a workers' history, the focus is much more on the internal organization of the plantation than on the characteristics and dynamics of the labour force. Issues of gender and generational differences are hardly touched upon in Peloso's analysis. What was the role of the women and children in the agricultural production process? What happened to the men and women who were too old to work? Another important theme deserving of more attention is the role of ethnicity. The first labourers were Asian and Afro-Peruvian. It is not clear whether the new migrants in the twentieth century originated in the indigenous highland communities, but that is quite likely. Peruvian society is conspicuously racist, and the indigenous origins of the migrants may explain the increasing repression of the labour force in the twentieth century. The absence of information on these issues makes it difficult to get a clear

picture of the situation. It makes it even more difficult to assess the value and originality of Peloso's analysis.

As a final point, I find it incomprehensible that the publisher has deemed it unnecessary to include a time period in the title of the book (nor in its chapter titles). This book covers a clearly demarcated historical period, 1870–1940. The potential reader should be informed about this basic historical attribute of Peloso's book.

Michiel Baud

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859000030261 Published online by Cambridge University Press