

BOOK REVIEWS

Title	Author(s)/Editor(s)	Reviewer
<i>Between Craft and Class</i>	Jeffrey Haydu	Jonathan Zeitlin
<i>Politics and Production in the Early Nineteenth Century</i>	Clive Behagg	Neville Kirk
<i>Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism, 1872–1886</i>	Caroline Cahm	Rudolf de Jong
<i>La Grève des Cheminots 1920</i>	Annie Kriegel	Nicholas Papayanis
<i>Die Stachanov-Bewegung 1935–1938</i>	Robert Maier	Leo van Rossum
<i>Industriearbeit im "Dritten Reich"</i>	Rüdiger Hachtmann	Dietrich Eichholtz

HAYDU, JEFFREY. *Between Craft and Class. Skilled Workers and Factory Politics in the United States and Britain, 1890–1922*. University of California Press, Berkeley [etc.] 1988. x, 302 pp. \$ 32.50.

Few *métiers* are more difficult than that of comparative historical sociology. As in all historical sociology, empirical evidence must be brought to bear effectively on a clearly-defined problem of broader theoretical significance. As in all comparative history, the cases must be chosen appropriately in relation to the problem at hand, and the archives and secondary literature of two separate countries mastered. These are extremely demanding requirements, and few works in the field meet all of these criteria. Even a wrong-headed study, to be sure, may produce new insights about each national case by asking unfamiliar comparative questions; but the acid test must always be whether or not the theoretical analysis genuinely illuminates the historical material.

Unfortunately, however, Jeffrey Haydu's book illustrates all too clearly the many pitfalls of this genre. *Between Craft and Class* sets out to compare the "factory politics" of skilled metal workers in the United States and Britain during the era of the First World War, based on case studies of Coventry and Bridgeport, Connecticut. Its central problem is to identify the conditions under which such groups may be mobilized for radical goals of "workers' control" in alliance with the less skilled, as opposed to craft sectionalism or economic bargaining with management. The

main explanatory factors considered are the labour process, union structures and policies, industrial relations, and state intervention.

The first difficulty with Haydu's analysis is that he is never clear whether the contrasts or similarities between Coventry and Bridgeport are more significant. In both cities, his own findings suggest, wartime industrial mobilization provoked protests and strikes among skilled metal workers whose relationship to national union officials and state intervention was complex and ambivalent. In both cities, too, there were short-lived alliances with the less skilled over specific issues like shop steward recognition which collapsed as soon as new grievances emerged to divide the two groups, such as exemption from conscription in Coventry or job classification schemes in Bridgeport. In neither case, finally, does Haydu demonstrate much support for a programme of "workers' control": the Coventry Workers' Committee, for example, was never particularly influential even within the city's unofficial Engineering Joint Committee.

But Haydu also posits a sharp contrast between the trajectories of factory politics in the British and American metalworking industries more generally. Among the book's major claims is that "the labour process appears to be most conducive to radical factory politics where craftsmen and craft tradition are still strong but face a relatively sudden and far reaching challenge" (p. 213); and following James Hinton's *The First Shop Stewards' Movement* (1973), the author believes that the wider prevalence of these conditions in British metalworking accounts for the greater upsurge of radical factory politics during the First World War. Haydu's own case studies are poorly equipped to test this thesis, since as he himself admits Coventry was not a centre of craft tradition before 1914, so that his Anglo-American contrast therefore depends on a received picture of craft radicalization in other British towns based on secondary works such as that of Hinton. But Haydu is unaware of more recent research such as that of Alastair Reid or Iain McLean which downplays the role of radical shop stewards in wartime industrial conflicts even in the craft heartland of 'Red Clydeside'. Nor does he take notice of other research, including my own, which highlights the continuities in technology and working practices across much of British engineering before and after the First World War.

Similar empirical gaps mar the book's treatment of relations between national union officials and local militants in the two countries. In Britain, Haydu asserts, the prewar involvement of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) in formal industrial relations procedures made unofficial shop committees the major vehicle for rank-and-file protest; whereas the absence of such arrangements in the American International Association of Machinists (IAM) ensured that "challenges to national union authority came from militant lodges and metal trades councils rather than from any clearly defined shop-floor institutions" (p. 109). Although there were undoubted differences in the internal politics of the two organizations, this contrast overlooks the fact that district committees were the main focus of opposition to executive authority in the ASE before 1914, while also ignoring widespread evidence of collaboration between local officials and shop stewards during wartime industrial disputes. Haydu likewise claims that local militants are typically more open to solidarity with the less skilled than are national union leaders; while this may have been true of Bridgeport, it was not the case in Britain, where local ASE branches blocked recruitment of the semi-skilled into special sections promoted by

union executives. These and other errors are symptomatic of Haydu's perfunctory research on the British side and his limited command of even those secondary works which do appear in the book's bibliography.

Perhaps the most striking contrast between the British and American metalworking industries, as Haydu acknowledges, lies not on the side of the workers but on that of the employers. At the turn of the century, industrial relations in the two countries seemed set on similar paths, with the 1898 Terms of Settlement between the ASE and the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) echoed by the 1900 Murray Hill Agreement between the IAM and the National Metal Trades Association (NMTA). But whereas the EEF stuck with collective bargaining despite the resurgence of craft militancy within the ASE during the 1900s, the NMTA soon rejected national agreements in favour of the open shop, and its members successfully refused to deal with union officials in most areas before the 1930s. Haydu's explanation, which he has developed more fully in this journal, turns on the structural contrast between the metalworking industry in the two countries: American employers' larger average size and commitment to mass production gave them both greater power and greater incentives than their British counterparts to break free of the constraints placed by craft unionism on their freedom to transform the labour process.

Despite the evident force of this argument, it remains radically incomplete. For as Howell Harris has shown, American employers were able to impose the open shop even in cities like Philadelphia where as in Britain the local metal industry was dominated by fragmented family firms and skill-intensive production processes right through the interwar period. Hence a convincing explanation of Anglo-American divergence would also need to look more closely at the impact of legal and political differences between the two countries which encouraged employer unilateralism in the United States but constrained it in Britain. State intervention, contrary to what Haydu appears to suppose, was no less important even if less visible an influence before as during the First World War in shaping the contrasting trajectories of industrial relations in the two countries.

The Anglo-American metalworking trades, as the preceding discussion suggests, present a fascinating pattern of similarities and differences during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But this book's combination of malposed questions and misleading answers regrettably means that a satisfactory comparative analysis of these cases largely remains to be written.

Jonathan Zeitlin

BEHAGG, CLIVE. *Politics and Production in the Early Nineteenth Century.* Routledge, London, New York 1990. x, 273 pp. £ 30.00.

Clive Behagg's book presents a forceful challenge to the conventional wisdom that early-nineteenth century centres of small production were far more conducive to class harmony and overall stability rather than class conflict. Behagg also demon-